

Moravian College

Phil 120: Introduction to Philosophy

Fall 2011

Class: MWF 7:50-8:40

Instructor: Dr. William Falla.

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Office Hours: Comenius 205: MWF 9:30-11:00, R 2:00-3:00 and by appt.

Course Description: The exploration of the tasks and subject matter of philosophy, including major theories of reality, knowledge, religion, morality and justice. Attention will be paid to classic philosophical texts as primary reading sources.

Course Objectives:

- A. To acquaint the student with a variety of philosophies and ideas both historical and recent that influence contemporary understandings and values.
- B. To broaden one's philosophical perspectives by studying contrasting views.
- C. To develop the habit of considering philosophically, in agreement for or against, a solution to a problem.
- D. To develop the ability to think critically and logically, and to evaluate ideas.
- E. To formulate an argument and support it with reasonable justification.
- F. To develop the ability to reflect and philosophize concerning life and its meaning.
- G. To relate the discipline of philosophy to other academic disciplines and to see how these disciplines impact philosophical thinking.

Course Materials:

- A. Required Books:
Introduction to Philosophy, John Perry et.al., 5th edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2010
- B. Supplementary Materials:
Assigned reading and movies will be on reserve at Reeves Library. You will receive handout as required

Course Evaluation:

Students will be evaluated on the following items:

A. Reflection Papers (40%)

A series of three (3) original reflection papers will be assigned. In these papers you will address specific assigned question relates to the philosophical area of study. With reference to the assigned class materials, you will answer the question as completely as possible in 2-3 pages. They will be graded on your understanding of course materials, the quality of your philosophical argumentation and presentation. They will also serve as the basis for in-class discussion.

B. Exams (40%)

There will be a take home midterm and an in-class final each worth 20%. The Midterm will be 2-3 pages in length while the final will be in a Blue Book. They will be evaluated using the same criteria as the papers.

C. Class Participation (20%)

Discussion is at the heart of the philosophical enterprise, therefore active participation in the class and class discussion are required. Active participation is defined as the voluntary asking of questions and involvement in class discussions.

D. Extra Credit

You will have the opportunity to raise the grade of your lowest reflection paper grade by a maximum of 10 points by critically analyzing in 2-3 pages one of the following three readings: Peter Singer, p. 495, Onora O'Neill, p. 538 or Kwame Appiah, p. 634. The paper will be evaluated by the same criteria as the other reflection papers. It is due at the last class period (no extensions).

Grading Scale:

A 92.5 and up

A 89.5-92.4

B 87.5- 89.4

B 82.5- 87.4

B 79.5- 82.4

All work will receive a numerical grade. Your final grade will be rounded to the nearest whole integer.

Attendance and Honor Policy:

Students are expected to regularly attend class regularly and class attendance factors into your class participation grade. If you must miss class, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor and to insure that all missed work is made up. All assignments are expected to be handed in on time. If you must be late with your work, you must make arrangements with the instructor prior to the due date. Failure to do so may result in the lowering of your grade.

Students have the obligation to exhibit honesty in all their work. You will be found to have violated this obligation if you plagiarize or cheat. Plagiarizing is presenting the work of others as one's own; cheating is taking, giving or accepting illicit advantage for any course work inside or outside the classroom. Any violation will result in the lowering of your grade.

Special Announcements:

Students with special situations who believe they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Learning Center as soon as possible.

Course Syllabus

Aug. 29: Introduction to Philosophy I

Perry: 3-37

Sept. 5: God & Evil I

Perry: 39-54

Sept. 12: God & Evil II

Perry: 94-5

Movie: *Contact*

Sept. 19: Knowing & Reality

Paper #1 Due: 9/23

Perry: 121-32

Sept. 26: Knowing & Skepticism

Perry: 136-51, 153-60

Oct. 3: Knowing & Skepticism II

Perry: 160-7

Movie: *The Matrix*

Oct. 10: Knowing & Skepticism III **Mid-term Due: 10/14**

Perry: 176-90

Oct. 17: Mind & Body

Perry: 239-59

Oct. 24: Mind, Consciousness & AI

Perry: 285-319

Oct. 31: Personal Identity

Perry: 347-57; 383-91

Nov. 7: Mind & Identity **Paper #2 Due: 11/7**

Movie: *Gattaca*

Nov. 14 Freedom & Determinism

Perry: 392-400; 423-30

Nov. 21 Justice & Equality

Perry: 578-91, 620-33

Nov. 28 Existential Issues **Paper #3 Due: 11/30**

Perry: 755-68, 775-7, 794-806

Dec. 5 Ethics

Perry: 449-57

Dec. 15 Final Exam: 8:30 AM