

MORAVIAN COLLEGE
COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall 2011

PHIL 120 Introduction to Philosophy

TR (1:10-2:20 PM)

Instructor: Dr. Bernie Cantens

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Text

Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy, (9th Edition) editor, G. Lee Bowie, Meredith W. Michaels, and Robert C. Solomon (Belmont, CA: Thompson-Wadsworth Publishers)

ISBN-10: 0495007110 | ISBN-13: 9780495007111 | 848 Pages

*** Make sure you bring the text to every class!**

Course Description

Tasks and subject matters of philosophy, including major theories of reality, knowledge, religion, morality, and social justice. Attention to several classic philosophical texts as primary source readings. (M3)

100-Level Course

This course is meant as a first course in philosophy. It will introduce students to basic vocabulary. It is a general survey course, touching on various areas of philosophy (e.g., Philosophy of Religion, Epistemology, Metaphysics, Ethics, Social Political Philosophy, etc.)

Course Goals

The objectives of this course are the following: 1) to study the origin and nature of philosophy and philosophical reflection; 2) to study the various branches of philosophy (ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, etc.) and how these relate to everyday practical concerns; 3) to examine the methods and nature of philosophical inquiry; 4) to study the difference between inductive and deductive reasoning; 5) to develop critical reading and writing skills; 6) to understand the central role of the discipline of philosophy in relation to the arts and sciences, and 7) to introduce students to the thought of some of the most prominent philosophers in history through primary texts.

Learning Outcomes

The following outcomes are expected of the students who complete this course: 1) to think and write intelligibly about ultimate questions; 2) to recognize the relevance and importance of ultimate questions for the prosperity of individuals and society; 3) to critically evaluate their own and others' beliefs about ultimate questions; 4) to write clearly about the views of prominent philosophers in the history of philosophy; 5) to recognize, identify and explain basic ethical,

metaphysical, and epistemological concepts, doctrines, and theories; 6) to identify the nature of philosophical inquiry and explain how it relates to inductive and deductive reasoning; and 7) to recognize the central role of philosophy for a liberal arts education.

Grading and Assignments

Exams (40%)

There will be two exams throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 20 % of the final grade. The exam will be composed of essays and short answers. It is within the instructor's purview to apply qualitative judgment in determining grades for an assignment or for the course.

4 Short Papers (60%)

Students will complete three philosophical writing assignments on a topic *directly* related to this course and assigned readings. The writing assignment is a *top-down, thesis-governed paper* approximately 2-3 pages long, double-spaced and 12-Times New Roman font. A thesis-governed paper is a more formal academic style paper – “the prototypical structure of academic prose. Such writing begins with the presentation of a problem to be addressed; near the end of the introduction, after the writer has presented the problem, the writer states his or her thesis, often accompanied by a purpose statement or a blueprint statement that gives the reader an overview of the whole essay. The body of the paper then supports the thesis with appropriate arguments and evidence” (John C. Bean, *Engaging Ideas*, 87). The students will be graded according to four criteria: (1) whether the introduction has a clear and explicit thesis and organized developing statements; (2) whether the paper is well organized and demonstrates a logical flow of ideas (in accordance with the introduction); (3) whether there are well constructed and developed arguments and/or critical explanations of philosophical problems and solutions; and (4) whether the writing skills, such as word use, sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation are correct.

In an effort to provide opportunities for the writing process to work the papers will be completed in 4 parts: (1) Thesis, (2) Introduction and Outline, (3) 1st Draft, and (4) Final Paper. Each part will be checked by the professor.

4 Required Paper Assignment Due Dates

September 8, 2011

September 27, 2011

October 25, 2011

November 15, 2011

December 6, 2011 (optional)

The Writing Center is located in a building that is not accessible to persons with mobility impairments. If you need the services of the Writing Center, please call 610-861-1392.

Exams (40 %)

There will be two exams throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. The exam will be composed of essays and short answers.

Exam 1: October 6, 2011

Exam 2: December 12, 2011, Monday 1:30 PM

Class Participation

Attendance will be taken every class period and students will be marked down for unexcused absences. Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students who attend all the classes on a timely basis will earn 5 points in class participation. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions. Unexcused absences included only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors' note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

Learning Methods

Multimedia This course will combine traditional classroom lecturing with multimedia presentations. Every lecture will be supplemented with power point presentations and internet information. All course materials, such as syllabus, review questions, term paper information, etc., are posted on my website: <http://berniephilosophy.com> . This will give the students direct access to most of the materials for this class at their convenience.

Class Dynamic Class participation is expected of all students enrolled in this course. Questions and class discussions are encouraged as an effective vehicle to motivate students' interest in the subject matter. *If there are few questions and little discussion taking place in the classroom, the professor reserves the right to choose individual students to answer questions or give their view and the arguments on a particular issue.* Therefore, careful daily reading of the text and handouts is essential for success in this course.

Attendance Policy:

Attendance is mandatory. Students **must** bring their text to every class! Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions or attending out-of-class philosophy lectures and events. Unexcused absences include only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors' note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

Extra Credit

Students can earn 3 extra points by attending 3 Philosophy Club meetings or other Philosophy department related event.

Academic Dishonesty Policy

See Student Handbook pp. 32 – 38.

Students Disability Policy

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Mr. Joe Kempfer, Assistant Director of Learning Services for Disability Support, 1307 Main Street (extension 1510). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the office of Learning Services.

Student Behavior:

See Student Handbook pp. 38 – 40.

Course Requirements

Reading of assignments before class is essential to succeed in this course. Students are expected to be ready for class and to write intelligibly in their journals every class period. This means that he or she should read the assigned chapters before the professor introduces them. Class participation, note taking, and discussion are highly encouraged. The study of philosophy does not only consist of memorization; students must also read analytically and reflect critically on the texts and reading assignments. When studying difficult material, it is often necessary to read it several times before a proper understanding is achieved. Do not be disappointed if you do not understand a philosophical reading assignment on your first try.

Grading/Measures of evaluations:

Exam 1: 20 %
Exam 2: 20 %
Papers: 60 %

A=100-94; A- =93-90; B+=89-87; B=86-84; B- = 83-80; C+=79-77; C = 76-70; D=69-60;
F=<59

PROGRAM AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK 1	INTRODUCTION
August 30	Introduction
September 1	What is Philosophy?
WEEK 2	ETHICS
Sept. 6	The Importance of Philosophy?
Sept. 8	The Logic of Argumentation and Fallacies 1st Paper Assignment Due
Sept. 8	Plato, <i>The Ring of Gyges</i> , 507
WEEK 3	
Sept. 13	James Rachels, <i>Ethical Egoism</i> , 520.

Sept. 15	John Stuart Mill <i>Utilitarianism</i> , 598.
WEEK 4	
Sept. 20	Immanuel Kant, <i>The Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , 594
Sept. 22	Aristotle, <i>Happiness and the Good Life</i> , 584.
WEEK 5	APPLIED ETHICS
Paper Due	2nd Paper Assignment Due
Sept. 27	Judith Jarvis Thompson, <i>A Defense of Abortion</i> , 405
Sept. 29	Anthony Kenny, <i>The Beginning of Individual Human Life</i> , 415 Lynne Rudder Baker, <i>When Does a Person Begin?</i> 421
WEEK 6	
Oct. 4	Susanne Gibson, <i>The Problem of Abortion: Essentially Contested Concepts and Moral Autonomy</i> , 429
Oct. 6	Midterm
WEEK 7	EPSTEMOLOGY
Oct. 11	Recess
Oct. 13	Plato, <i>The Myth of the Cave</i> , 264
WEEK 8	
Oct. 18	Rene Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> , 266

Oct. 20	John Locke, <i>Where our Ideas Come From</i> , 274
WEEK 9	
Oct. 25	3rd Paper Assignment Due
Oct. 27	George Berkeley, <i>To Be Is To Be Perceived</i> , 278
WEEK 10	PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION
Nov. 1	William Paley, <i>Teleological Argument</i> , 60
Nov. 3	David Hume, <i>Why Does God Let People Suffer?</i> 63
WEEK 11	
Nov. 8	William James: <i>The Will to Believe</i> P.74
Nov. 10	Review
WEEK 12	AESTHETICS
Nov. 15	Roger Scruton, <i>Art, Beauty, and Judgment</i> , 625 4th Paper Assignment Due
Nov. 17	C.J. Ducasse, <i>What Has Beauty to do with Art?</i> 628
WEEK 13	
Nov. 22	Noel Carroll, <i>Art, Practice and Narrative</i> , 631
Nov. 24	Thanksgiving

WEEK 14	SOCIAL JUSTICE
Nov. 29	Adan Smith, <i>Benefits of the Profit Motive</i> , 725
Dec. 1	Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, <i>The Immorality of capitalism</i> , 729
WEEK 15	
Dec. 6	Peter Singer, <i>Rich and Poor</i> , 704 5th Paper Assignment (Optional)
Dec. 8	Review
Dec. 14	Final Exam: December 12, 2011, Monday, 1:30 PM

PLEASE, as a courtesy to the other students in the class, turn off all phones u