

PHILOSOPHY 100 – Spring 2010
Introduction to Philosophy I CRN 20366
F 8:15 am – 11:25 am Room 410

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Required Texts Louis Pojman and James Fieser. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Electronic Materials: Access at...

<http://sites.google.com/site/philosopherdavidburris/imperial-valley-courses-1/introduction-to-philosophy>

Course Description This course is an introduction to some of the philosophical issues associated with man's interpretation of the nature and meaning of reality. Emphasis is placed upon arguments for and against the existence of God, the free will versus determinism debate, and mind-body problems.

Student Learning Outcomes (SLO's):

By the conclusion of this course the students should be able to describe and critique major arguments in the three main philosophical fields of study.

Assessment Tool: Final

Institutional Outcome: ISLO1, ISLO2, ISLO4

Course Objectives:

- 1) Read philosophical literature and extract the information essential to the author's position and method of argumentation.
- 2) Explain how the philosophical ideas and concepts discussed are interrelated to one another.
- 3) Critique philosophical ideas, concepts, and arguments using reason and logical analysis.
- 4) Express themselves correctly and articulately in writing on philosophical topics.
- 5) Employ philosophical techniques and methodologies in providing justification for the student's own views and beliefs.

Course Requirements Student's final grade is the percentage they earn out of 100 possible points.

Exams (60 pts): There will be three exams total in the class. Each will be worth 20 pts each. All exam questions are either multiple choice, true/false, or fill in the blank. Students must bring a scantron sheet (882 E) to all exams. No retakes or make-ups are permitted unless special arrangements are made PRIOR to the exam with the instructor. Vacations and family events are not sufficient reasons to miss these exams.

Reading Outline Sheets (30 pts): As preparation to discuss the reading in class, each student must fill out a Reading Outline Sheet (ROS) prior to the class session for all reading assignments indicated by the instructor. These sheets will be supplied to the student by the instructor. On the sheet, the student will be asked to answer a number of questions about what they have just read. These questions are designed to cause the student to look for the information appropriate in providing a concise summary of the content relevant the author's position and method of argumentation. The goal is that the student interacts with the reading independent of class and begins to learn how to read complicated college level writing and extract the essential information out of what they are reading. These sheets will also be useful study guides to use for exams and prepare the student to participate in class. Four times during the semester I will randomly collect the daily ROS. On Friday May 28, ALL ROSs that I have assigned throughout the semester will be due.

-Participation Points (10 pts): The student must demonstrate preparedness for class sessions. This includes reading the assigned materials BEFORE the start of class, contributing to class discussions, asking thoughtful questions, and performing well on in-class quizzes. Genuine desire on the part of the student to improve throughout the semester will also be considered.

Another way to improve your all around grade in this area will be to bring into class various multimedia tools (e.g., music, you tube videos, movies, poems, etc.) that serve to illustrate the points being made in class. I'm always looking for new ways to creatively present this material and your (the student's) assistance is greatly appreciated.

-Extra Credit: Extra credit assignments are available to those students wishing improve their grades a slight incremental amount. These assignments will not be able to make up large amounts of ground, so the student should not think they have a safety net of extra credit should they get behind in this course.

Assignment #1 First, type in the following web address to your internet search navigation bar:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZawiNa8KgA&feature=Playlist&p=8D28F04331C84D5A&index=0&playnext=1>

What should come up is a formal debate between a philosopher named William Lane Craig and a scientist named Victor Stenger on the existence of God. Note: Do not be fooled by the time on this first video. You must keep clicking on succeeding videos to watch the entire debate which lasts about an hour and a half. Third, write a 1-2 page paper telling me who you think won the debate and why? The maximum amount of extra credit you can get on this assignment is 3 pts. (3%). The amount of extra credit will be determined by how well and detailed you explain WHY you think that person won.

Assignment #2: This assignment is just like assignment #1 except that you will be watching a different debate between William Lane Craig and Bart Ehrman on the Resurrection of Jesus:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AjOSNj97_gk

The maximum amount of extra credit you can get on this assignment is 3 pts. (3%). These are the only two extra credit assignments I will offer.

-Grading Scale:

90% - 100% = A

80% - 89.9% = B

70% - 79.9% = C

60% - 69.9% = D

<60% = F

NOTE: If the student has a discrepancy or issue about a grade, they must write up a written statement that includes: 1) Their name, course title, time, and the assignment in question, 2) In what way do they believe they have been graded unfairly or incorrectly, and 3) What do they expect the instructor to do to fix it. I will not discuss the graded work with the student until this statement has been written, been given to me, and I have had some time to investigate the problem. Do not try to confront me during or after class until I have looked into it. After my review, I will arrange a time to meet the student to discuss it.

Attendance Policy Given that this class only meets once a week, there is one unexcused absence allowed during the semester. Unexcused absences which exceed this number will result in a deduction to the student's grade at a rate of 3% per absence. After three absences (excused included), the student will be automatically dropped from the class. Note: Vacations and family events are not sufficient reasons to miss class. Additionally, if the student is not present for more than twenty minutes at any time during the class meeting, it will go down as an unexcused absence.

Classroom Conduct Most days, each class session will contain a lecture on the content of the assigned readings, some group work, a chance for questions, an introduction to the next topic, and maybe a quiz. Due to the fact each class session goes for three hours, even on test days we shall follow a similar format. In other words, students are not advised to leave after the test is over, as we will use the remaining time to cover more material.

While in this classroom, students will show respect for the instructor and their fellow classmates. Students must show up to class on time, or if they are late, come in the least disruptive way possible. Constant tardiness will go down as an unexcused absence. Students are expected to stay awake and alert throughout the class. Distracting other students by talking during lectures or presentations may result in the student being asked to leave the class. Negative cultural, ethnic, political, racial, sexist, or religious comments are strictly prohibited, and will result in strong disciplinary measures.

Due to the sensitive nature of a number of issues we will discuss in this class, it is imperative that if the student cannot participate without getting angry, rude, disruptive, hateful, or intolerant, that they simply do not participate. All issues must be discussed with an air of academic and scholarly open-mindedness and objectivity in order to foster a learning environment of mutual respect where students can ask honest questions and present their ideas and opinions without fear of being judged and ridiculed. After all, we are all essentially after the same thing, the truth. And the truth is rarely found in the person with the loudest voice. Part of what makes a good critical thinker is the ability to assess an issue, idea, or proposition without getting emotionally attached or outraged by it. The idea is evaluated on its own merits and not merely assumed to be true or false based on some prejudice we may already have.

Cheating: Cheating is strictly forbidden. By cheating, I mean any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes or tests. All personal belongings must be kept off your desk and tucked away in a backpack or knapsack. If you are talking during the exam, your eyes begin to wander to another student's exam, or you take out a cell phone, ipod, itouch, etc. during the test, I will automatically assume that you are cheating. If you are caught cheating you will receive a 0 on the exam as well as become in danger of incurring stronger disciplinary measures.

Plagiarizing: Plagiarism is defined as stealing and passing off the ideas or words of another as one's own. However, if due credit is given or acknowledged, usually by using quotations, works cited pages, and bibliographies, then using the ideas of others to supplement your own is permitted. Any student caught plagiarizing on any homework assignment, quiz, paper, or exam will receive an automatic 0 on the assignment.

Student Services Students with special needs due to a learning or physical disability are encouraged to avail themselves of the resources in the Disabled Student Programs and Services office in the 2100 Bldg. (760-355-6312). If you think something might prevent you from doing well in this course, you should discuss this with the instructor so that proper arrangements may be made to accommodate your needs.

Tutoring is available to all IVC students on a walk-in basis in the Spencer Library Media Center. The center also provides study skills workshops which may prove to be invaluable to those just beginning their college experience.

Success My primary goal as an instructor is to help you, the student, succeed in this class. Throughout the semester, if there is anything that I can better do to help you succeed and flourish in this class, feel free to talk to me about it. An A for every student is a very reachable goal and I greatly desire to help each of you achieve it. Here are some tips to help you succeed:

-In the past, students who succeeded in this class typically are the ones who...

- 1) come to class regularly prepared to talk about the material
- 2) ask a lot of questions
- 3) take good notes during the lecture
- 4) come to my office hours for extra help
- 5) look for examples in their everyday lives of the things we discuss in class
- 6) join a study group with classmates for the exams
- 7) do the assigned reading
- 8) get the help they know they need through student services or through myself
- 9) are able to think through an issue calmly and objectively instead of emotionally or through their personal prejudices.
- 10) are able to write at the college level.

It will take some hard work, but the skills you will gain as a result of your efforts in this class will benefit you the rest of your lives.

Course Calendar

All reading assignments on this schedule are mandatory and must be done BEFORE each class session. The student should not think that the contents of the readings not explicitly covered or emphasized in class will not be included on the exam. Exam dates may be flexible; however, the date of the paper and the date of ROS turn in are not. Readings come from either the Course Reader by Pojman or from my website.

- 2/19 Introduction; What is Philosophy? Why is it important?
-Appendix II: *A Little Bit of Logic* (C.R. 668-679)
-Plato, *Socratic Wisdom* (C.R. 11-19)
-Russell, *The Value of Philosophy* (C.R. 25-29)
- 2/26 Does God exist?
- How to Read and Write a Philosophy Paper (C.R. 665-667)
- Traditional Arguments for the Existence of God (C.R. 175-182)
- 3/5 The Cosmological Argument; The Kalam Cosmological Argument
- Aquinas, *The Five Ways* (C.R. 183-185)
- Clarke and Hume, *The Argument from Contingency* (C.R. 185-188)
- 3/12 The Teleological (Design) Argument; The Fine Tuning Argument
- Paley, *The Watchmaker* (C.R. 196-198)
- Hume, *A Critique of the Teleological Argument* (C.R. 199-205)
- 3/19 The Ontological Argument, The Moral Argument
- Anselm versus Gaunilo, *The Ontological Argument* (C.R. 6-10)
- 3/26 EXAM 1; Modal Logic and Possible Worlds; The Problem of Evil
- Voltaire, *The Best of All Possible Worlds?* (C.R. 222-226)
- Moreland and Craig, *The Problem of Evil* (Website)
- 4/2 Religious Epistemology; Faith and Reason; Miracles
- Flew, Hare, and Mitchell, *A Debate on the Rationality of Religious Belief* (C.R. 251-256)
- Pascal, *Faith is a Rational Wager* (C.R. 256-258)
- 4/9 SPRING BREAK
- 4/16 Epistemology
- Theory of Knowledge (C.R. 31-35)
- Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (C.R. 49-52)
- David Hume, *Experience and the Limits of Human Reasoning* (C.R. 112-126)
- 4/23 Epistemology Cont; The Methods of Science
- Roderick Chisholm, *The Problem of the Criterion* (Website)
- Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Website)
- 4/30 EXAM 2; The Problem of Free Will and Moral Responsibility
- Free Will, Responsibility, and Punishment (C.R. 387- 395)
- Holbach, *A Defense of Determinism* (C.R. 396-400)
- Nagel, *Moral Luck* (C.R. 655-662)
- 5/7 The Mind-Body Problem
- Philosophy of Mind (C.R. 281-286)
- Descartes, *Interactive Dualism* (C.R. 286-290)
- Churchland, *A Critique of Dualism* (C.R. 305-314)
- 5/14 Mind-Body Problem Cont.
- Nagel, *What is it Like to be a Bat?* (C.R. 329-335)
- Chalmers, *Against Materialism: Can Consciousness Be Reductively Explained* (C.R. 336-348)
- 5/21 Personal Identity; Artificial Intelligence;
-Personal Identity (C.R. 356-360)
-Locke, *The Self as Psychological Properties* (C.R. 361-363)
-Hume, *The Self as a Bundle of Perceptions* (C.R. 364-366)
- 5/28 ROSs DUE; Immortality; The Meaning of Life
- Plato, *Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul* (C.R. 372-376)
- Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*
(<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>)
- 6/4 Flex Week
- 6/11 FINAL EXAM