

Introduction to Philosophy

01:730:103

Spring 2014

Instructor: Lucy Jordan

Email: lucyjordan25@gmail.com

Meeting time: Tuesday/Friday 11:30-12:50pm

Location: FH-B1

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description:

This course is designed to give students an introduction to some longstanding and centrally important questions in the Western philosophical tradition, as well as teach students to engage in contemporary philosophical methods of analysis with respect to such questions.

The primary goal of this course is to help students develop the kinds of critical thinking and writing skills that will be valuable to them regardless of their particular academic interests or goals.

Core Curriculum and Learning Goals:

This course satisfies Core Curriculum Goal 'o': Examine critically philosophical and other theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and/or cultural production.

Texts:

The text for this course is *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, 6th edition, Ed. John Perry, et al. All required readings will either come from this text or be posted under 'Resources' on the course Sakai site.

Course Requirements and Grading:

Quizzes: Students are expected to complete **all** required readings and attend every class. There will be a short quiz at the *beginning* of every class based on the assigned reading. Students who miss a quiz for any reason (whether absent or late to class) will get a zero for that day's quiz. At the end of the semester, I will drop each student's two lowest quiz grades. The remaining grades will count for 30% of the final grade.

Papers: There will be three required papers for this course: two short papers (3-5pgs) and one longer final paper (5-7pgs). Students will be required to submit drafts of their final paper for peer review; their comments on another student's paper will count as 5% of their final grade. Paper topics will be provided for all three papers; however, students will have the option of proposing their own topic for the final paper. All papers must be turned in **both** to Sakai (by midnight the night before class) and in class (as a hard copy) at the designated times in order

for the student to receive a grade. Papers should be put in my box ahead of time if a student has to miss class on the day a paper is due. There is no final exam for this class.

Grades:

Quizzes.....	30%
Paper 1 (3-5pg).....	20%
Paper 2 (3-5pg).....	20%
Paper 3 (5-7pg).....	25%
Peer Review.....	5%

Late Work Policy:

Late work **will not be accepted** without proper documentation of a valid medical excuse or family emergency, unless arrangements are made with the instructor **prior to** the assignment's due date.

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend and participate in every class. If a student misses **or arrives late** to class he or she will receive a zero for that day's quiz grade.

Sakai:

There will be a Sakai site for this course that all students must have access to. I will use Sakai to make important announcements, post required readings/paper assignments, and to post student grades.

Academic Honesty:

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will result in an automatic failing grade for the course. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he or she fully understands the university's policy on academic integrity (for more information, see: <http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu>).

Academic Accommodations:

If you require academic accommodations please let me know as soon as possible and provide me with the appropriate documentation, so that we may arrange things accordingly. (More information about disability services can be found here: <http://disabilityservices.rutgers.edu/request.html>)

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments:

(This schedule is tentative and subject to change.)

Each reading is to be completed before class on the day listed.

<u>Unit I: What is Philosophy? Philosophical Arguments/Basic Logical Concepts</u>
Introduction to course
Introduction to arguments: Rachels, "How to Evaluate Arguments" Sakai
Arguments, cont.: "Logical Toolkit" pp.9-14
<u>Unit II: Philosophy of Religion - God and Evil</u>
II.1 Arguments for the Existence of God
Ontological Arg. - Anselm, "The Ontological Argument" pp.42-43
Cosmological Arg. - Aquinas, "The Existence of God" pp.44-46
Design Argument: Paley, "Natural Theology" pp.47-51
II.2 Arguments Against the Existence of God
Problem of Evil: Perry, "Dialogue on Good, Evil, and the Existence of God" pp. 97-109
Evil, cont.: Perry, "Dialogue on Good, Evil, and the Existence of God" pp.109-120, <i>optional</i> : Rachels, "Ch. 2: God and the Origin of the Universe" Sakai How to write a philosophy paper: reading TBA
<u>Unit III: Epistemology</u>
III.1 Skepticism
Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy" (Meditations I-II) pp.136-142
Movie day: (clips from) <i>The Matrix</i> ; FIRST PAPER DUE in class (hard copy)
Grau, "Bad Dreams, Evil Demons, and the Experience Machine: Philosophy and The Matrix" pp. 160-167.
III.2 What is Knowledge?
Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?" pp.133-135
<u>Unit IV: Mind, Body, Self</u>
IV.1 Free Will, Determinism, and Responsibility

Sider, "Ch. 6 Free Will and Determinism" on Sakai
Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self" pp.377-384
Van Inwagen, "The Powers of Rational Beings: Freedom of the Will" pp.385-396
IV.2 The Mind-Body Problem
Introduction to the Mind-Body Problem Rachels, "Ch.6: The Mind-Body Problem" Sakai
Functionalism: Lewis, "Mad Pain and Martian Pain" Sakai
Churchland, "Eliminative Materialism" pp.277-281
The Knowledge Argument: Jackson, "What Mary Didn't Know" pp.281-284
IV.3 Personal Identity
Perry, "A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality" pp.312-332
SECOND PAPER DUE in class (hard copy)
<u>Unit V: Topics in Ethics</u>
Rachels, "Ch. 12: Why Should We Moral?" Sakai
Animal rights: "Do Animals Have Rights?" Sakai
Animal rights contd.: Singer, "Down On the Factory Farm" Sakai; Singer, "Animals and the Natural Environment"
DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS - Peer review day
Utilitarianism: Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" pp.495-503
Ethical/Cultural Relativism: Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism" Sakai
Moral Psychology: Steven Pinker, "The Moral Instinct", Sakai
FINAL PAPER DUE in class - Ethics of Animals cont./Prisoner's Dilemma