

Steven Schlesinger Philosophy102-Knowledge and Reality Fall 2012

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Office hours:

MWF 7:30-8 & 9-9:45

T-TH 8:45-9:15 & 12:30-1

Required text: First Philosophy, edited by Bailey.

Course Objectives: The aim of this course is to acquaint the student with the basic principles of the major theories of knowledge and to show how the principles can be applied to Religion, Ethics, and Political Philosophy.

Learning outcomes: 1) Students should be able to describe the main tenets of the major theories of knowledge in essay form. 2) Students should be able to apply these theories to major philosophical issues concerning what we can "know" about the nature of Reality regarding Religion, Goodness, and Government.

Sequence of topics/readings:

- 1) What is Knowledge? Reading: Chapter 3-Epistemology.  
Paper topic: What is knowledge?
- 2) What can we Know about our Origin and Nature—Creation vs. Evolution.  
Reading: Chapter 2- Philosophy of Religion. Chapter 6- Metaphysics/ Freewill and Determinism. Paper topic: What am I?
- 3) What can we know about Right and Wrong? Reading: Chapter 7-Ethics.  
Paper topic: Fully explain and evaluate either Utilitarian or Kantian ethics.
- 4) What can we know about the best form of Government? Reading: Chapter 8-Social and Political Philosophy. Paper topic: What is Democracy?

Papers 1 and 3 count half of papers 2 and 4. Each paper may be rewritten several times with the higher grade replacing the previous. The next-to last draft of paper 1 will be on Oct. Oct31, paper 2 will be Nov. 9, paper 3 on the day before Thanksgiving and paper 4 on the day we return from Thanksgiving. Include the previous drafts with the rewrite and Highlight the new words on the new draft.

## **Learning Disabilities:**

If you have special needs due to a learning disability, please avail yourself of the resources in the Student Disability Services (the new name) in now in Calpulli Center, room 3101 (594-6473). The CSU Office of the Chancellor defines a learning disability as "a generic term that refers to the heterogeneous group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning or mathematical abilities. These disorders occur in persons of average to very superior intelligence and are presumed to be due to central nervous system dysfunction. Even though a learning disability may exist concomitantly with other handicapping conditions (e.g., sensory impairments) or environmental influences (e.g., cultural/language difficulties), it is not the direct result of these conditions or influences." If you think something might prevent you from doing well in this course, you should discuss this with me so that proper arrangements may be made to accommodate your needs.

## **Religious Observances:**

The University Policy File includes the following statement on Absence for Religious Observances: By the end of the second week of classes, students should notify the instructors of affected courses of planned absences for religious observances. Instructors shall reasonably accommodate students who notify them in advance of planned absences for religious observances. California Education Code 89320 states: The Trustees of the California State University shall require that each state university, in administering any test or examination, to permit any student who is eligible to undergo the test or examination to do so, without penalty, at a time when that activity would not violate the student's religious creed. Please notify me by the end of the second week of classes if you plan to be absent for religious observance.

## **Academic Misconduct:**

All students are expected to follow the administrative rules and standards of conduct detailed in the San Diego State University catalog. Students are expected to submit only their own work on papers and examinations. While you may discuss the assignments with others in the class, collaboration on the preparation of a paper is not permitted. Unless the assignment specifically directs otherwise, papers should be based entirely on your own study of the assigned material and not on secondary sources of any kind.

Turning in someone else's work, whether from printed sources or material available electronically, as if it were your own constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is an act of intellectual dishonesty. The academic consequences of plagiarism range from failure for the tainted assignment to failure for the course, depending on the seriousness of the offense. All such offenses are reported to the college dean, who will impose additional administrative consequences, which can include suspension or expulsion from the university.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following: turning in another student's paper as if it were your own; collaboration with another student in writing the paper; quoting, paraphrasing, or borrowing ideas from published or unpublished material written by someone other than yourself, without specific acknowledgment of the source.

**NO COLLABORATION- NO SHARING NOTES OR PAPERS**

**NO TAPE RECORDERS**

**NO LAP TOPS**

**ALWAYS KEEP A COPY OF YOUR PAPER**