

Fall Semester 2015

PHILOSOPHY 102

Introduction to Philosophy

Knowledge And Reality

Section 3 (Course #22650)

SH-119

Class Sessions: M&W 14h-15h15m

Professor: Mark R. Wheeler

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OFFICE HOURS IN AL-434

Mondays and Wednesdays 12h45m-13h45m

Tuesdays 16h30m-17h30m

(Other times by appointment.)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce students to some of the central issues in Western philosophy, with special emphasis on the theory of knowledge and reality.
2. To introduce you to the fundamental methods of Western philosophy, with special emphasis on the methods of conceptual and logical analysis.
3. By the end of the semester you will be able to recognize and critically assess the basic concepts and arguments that define the study of the following philosophical topics:
 - a. God,
 - b. Evil,
 - c. Knowledge,
 - d. Skepticism,
 - e. Mind and Bodies,
 - f. Persons,
 - g. Freedom, and
 - h. The Essential and the Existential
4. By the end of the semester, you will have acquired the following philosophical skills:
 - a. To formulate, analyze, and critically assess philosophical definitions of concepts,
 - b. To formulate, analyze, and assess inductive arguments for strength and cogency, and
 - c. To formulate, analyze, and assess deductive arguments for validity and soundness.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

An Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, 7th edition, edited by Perry, Bratman, Fischer. Oxford University Press.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS

1. Every class session will focus on the assigned readings. Please read the assigned texts before the class sessions for which they are assigned. Please bring the textbook to class.
2. At the beginning of each class session, I will ask students questions about the assigned readings.
3. During class, we will discuss the assigned readings. I will present additional information.
4. I will encourage students to ask questions and express opinions.
5. Students are welcome to use computers and other electronic devices in order to take notes or to otherwise improve participation in class. Please do not use your computers for other purposes unrelated to the class.
6. Please put your phones and other such devices on silent mode. Unless it is an emergency, please do not talk on the phone or text during class.

READING ASSIGNMENTS

1. The reading assignments for each week are listed below in the “Assigned Readings and Important Dates” section.
2. Classroom discussion and exams will focus on the assigned readings.
3. Take notes while you read. Below, in the “How to Read the Assigned Texts” section, I have provided a set of tools that will help students to read and to understand the assigned texts. Please use these tools.
4. Do not expect—on a first or even second reading—to fully understand the assigned texts. Complete the assigned reading, understanding as much of it as possible. If a part of the assigned reading is difficult, make a note of that and ask me to explain that part of the text.

GRADED WORK

Your final grade for the course will be based on your exam grades and the grade for your essay.

EXAMS:

There will be 3 exams—two midterms and a final. The exams are designed to test and reinforce your understanding of the assigned readings, the lecture material, and the methods of conceptual and logical analysis.

Each exam will involve multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. Each midterm is worth 20% of your final grade. The final is worth 30% of your final grade. You will take both midterm exams in class during regular class time.

The first midterm will take place on 30 September.

The second midterm will take place on 4 November.

The final exam will be administered in the regular classroom on 14 December from 13h-15h.

ESSAY:

You will write a 3 to 4 page paper. It is worth 30% of your final grade.

The paper is due by the end of 9 December. Please submit your paper as an email attachment.

You must follow—strictly—both the MECHANICAL and the COMPOSITIONAL guidelines for the paper. If you violate any of the MECHANICAL Guidelines (see below), then the highest possible grade you will receive on the paper is a B. For each COMPOSITIONAL Guideline you violate (see below), you will lose 5 points.

MECHANICAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PAPER:

1. The paper must have a title page with your Red I.D. on it.
2. The paper must be machine-written on standard letter-size (8 ½" x 11") paper.
3. The type-font must be standard and *no larger than* 12 point.
4. The paper must be double-spaced.
5. The margins must be no more than inch from the edge of the paper.
6. If you turn in a hardcopy of your paper, the pages of the paper must be either stapled or clipped together.
7. The pages must be numbered, except for the title page.
8. There must be fewer than 3 misspellings.
9. There must be fewer than 5 grammatical mistakes (not including misspellings).
10. The paper must be handed in on time. For each day late, a letter grade will be deducted from your final grade.

COMPOSITIONAL GUIDELINES FOR THE PAPER:

1. State and explain at least one argument presented in one of the unassigned readings from Parts I-IV or Parts VI-VII in the textbook. This means you must:
 - a. State—in your own words—the conclusion of the argument(s) in question and the premises presented in support of that conclusion.
 - b. State where in the text you found the argument(s).
 - c. Explain all of the concepts that appear in the argument.
2. State and explain why the argument is important *in the context of the reading in which it is found*.
3. Develop at least one objection to the argument presented in section (1).
4. Explain how someone might defend the argument in section (1) against the objection you raised in section (3).
5. Write your paper in the first person singular.
6. Limit your paper to at least 3 full pages and to no more than 5 full pages in length, not including the title page.

ASSIGNED READINGS and IMPORTANT DATES

You should complete the readings before the class for which they are assigned.

Assignments for class sessions:

1. *For 24 August:* Introductory session.
2. *For 26 August:* Bertrand Russell, “The Value of Philosophy”
3. *For 31 August:* Plato, “Apology: Defence of Socrates”
4. *For 2 September:* Plato, “Apology: Defence of Socrates”
5. *For 7 September:* **No Class.**
6. *For 9 September:* Saint Anselm, “The Ontological Argument”
7. *For 14 September:* Saint Thomas Aquinas, “The Existence of God”
8. *For 16 September:* Saint Thomas Aquinas, “The Existence of God”
9. *For 21 September:* Gottfried Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best of All Possible Worlds”
10. *For 23 September:* Marilyn McCord Adams, “Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God”
11. *For 28 September:* Eleonore Stump, “The Mirror of Evil”
12. *For 30 September:* **EXAM #1.**

13. *For 5 October:* René Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy”, Meditation 1
14. *For 7 October:* René Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy”, Meditation 4
15. *For 12 October:* David Hume, “Of Skepticism with Regard to the Senses”
16. *For 14 October:* David Hume, “Of Skepticism with Regard to the Senses”
17. *For 19 October:* Bertrand Russell, “The Argument from Analogy for Other Minds”
18. *For 21 October:* Gilbert Ryle, “Descartes Myth”
19. *For 26 October:* Frank Jackson, “What Mary Didn’t Know”
20. *For 28 October:* A.M. Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”
21. *For 2 November:* A.M. Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence”
22. *For 4 November:* **EXAM #2.**
23. *For 9 November:* Bernard Williams, “The Self and the Future”
24. *For 11 November:* Bernard Williams, “The Self and the Future”
25. *For 16 November:* Roderick Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self”
26. *For 18 November:* Roderick Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self”
27. *For 23 November:* Susan Wolf, “Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility”
28. *For 25 November:* **No class.**
29. *For 30 November:* Albert Camus, “The Myth of Sisyphus”
30. *For 2 December:* Dan Moller, “Love and Death”
31. *For 7 December:* The Part VII, B, “The Paradox of Identity”
32. *For 9 December:* **Last day of class. Paper due by end of day.** The Part VII, B, “Goodman’s New Riddle of Induction”
33. *For 14 December:* **FINAL EXAM: 13h-15h in regular classroom.**

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact Student Disability Services at (619) 594-6473. To avoid any delay in the receipt of your accommodations, you should contact Student Disability Services as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive, and that accommodations based upon disability cannot be provided until you have presented your instructor with an accommodation letter from Student Disability Services. Your cooperation is appreciated.

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 if you plan to be absent for religious observance.

How to Read the Assigned Texts

A. Getting the Main Ideas

Use this method to become familiar with the main concepts used in the assigned reading:

1. Quickly look through the text.
 - a. In your notebook, note any words that are bolded, underlined, italicized, or otherwise highlighted in the assigned text.
2. Skim the introduction and conclusion.
 - a. In your notebook, list any word(s) appearing in both.
 - b. List any word(s) unfamiliar to you.
3. Skim the first and last sentence of each textual division.
 - a. In your notebook, list any word(s) appearing frequently, and
 - b. List any word(s) unfamiliar to you.
4. Skim the assigned reading one textual division at a time.
 - a. In your notebook, list any word(s) appearing frequently, and
 - b. List any word(s) unfamiliar to you.
5. Look up the words on your lists in:
 - a. An ordinary dictionary (which you should own), and
 - b. A Dictionary of Philosophy (which can be found in the reference section of the library).

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B. Finding the Arguments:

Read the assigned text slowly! As you read each sentence, ask yourself the following questions. For some sentences, you can answer “yes” to more than one of these questions; for others, you can answer “yes” to none. If you aren’t sure of the answer, put a question mark next to the sentence and move on:

1. Is the author presenting a definition of a word or concept? If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or underline the word/concept,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a definition,
 - c. Write the definition in your notebook, preferably in the words of the author and in your own words.

2. Is the author presenting a conclusion of an argument? (Hint: Look for conclusion indicators such as ‘therefore’, ‘hence’, ‘thus’, ‘it follows that’, and ‘in conclusion’.) If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or underline the sentence,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a conclusion,
 - c. Write the conclusion in your notebook, preferably in the words of the author and in your own words, and
 - d. Note whether or not the conclusion serves as a premise in another argument.

3. Is the author presenting the premise of an argument? (Hint: Look for premise indicators such as ‘since’, ‘because’, ‘if’, and ‘either’.) If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or note the premise,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a premise,
 - c. Write the premise in your notebook, preferably in the words of the author and in your own words, and
 - d. Note whether or not the premise is the conclusion of another argument.

4. Is the author presenting an example? If yes, then:
 - a. Highlight or note the example,
 - b. Note in the margin that it is a example,
 - c. Note what the example supports or undermines, and
 - d. Write the example, and what it supports, in your notebook (preferably in the words of the author and in your own words).

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C. Organizing the Arguments

1. For each of the conclusions you noted in part B2 (above):
 - a. Determine which of the premises you discovered in part B3 (above) relates to that conclusion.
 - b. Using your argument patterns, organize these premises into valid or strong arguments in support of the conclusion.
 - c. Determine whether the conclusion is the main conclusion of the work you are reading:
 - i. If it is, then the argument in support of it is the main argument.
 - ii. If not, then ask how it is related to the main conclusion of the work.
2. State the main argument of the work you are reading:
 - a. State the main conclusion of the work.
 - b. State the premises supporting that main conclusion.
 - c. Using your argument patterns, determine whether the argument is valid or strong.
3. State any arguments that support the premises of the main argument:
 - a. State the premise of the main argument.
 - b. State the premises supporting that premise.
 - c. Using your argument patterns, determine whether the argument is valid or strong.
4. Note any premises presented without supporting argument.
5. State any arguments presented against any premises in the main argument.
6. Evaluate the main argument:
 - a. If any of the premises of the main argument are not supported by further argument, then present the best reasons you can discover for thinking those premises are false.
 - b. For those premises supported by further argument:
 - i. If any of the premises of these arguments are not supported by further argument, then present the best reasons you can discover for thinking those premises are false.
 - ii. For those premises supported by further argument, repeat Step C6b for these premises.

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7. Ask yourself how the main argument presented in the assigned reading relate to the main arguments made in the previous assigned readings? Note your answer.
8. Ask yourself what argument is the author likely to present in the next part of the text? Note your answer.
9. If you are having difficulties:
 - a. Reread the assigned reading, and try again.
 - b. Review previous assignments and class notes, and try again.
 - c. Skim the next part of the text, and try again.
 - d. Note the words, sentences, and/or paragraphs that you don't understand, and explain in your own words what you don't understand.
 - e. Raise questions either in class or during office hour.

Cheating and Plagiarism

From the "University Policies" section of the SDSU General Catalog:

Institutions of higher education are founded to impart knowledge, seek truth, and encourage one's development for the good of society. University students shall thus be intellectually and morally obliged to pursue their course of studies with honesty and integrity. Therefore, in preparing and submitting materials for academic courses and in taking examinations, a student shall not yield to cheating or plagiarism, which not only violate academic standards but also make the offender liable to penalties explicit in Section 41301 of Title 5, California Code of Regulations as follows: Expulsion, Suspension, and Probation of Students. Following procedures consonant with due process established pursuant to Section 41304, any student of a campus may be expelled, suspended, placed on probation, or given a lesser sanction for one or more of the following causes that must be campus related.

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Cheating

Cheating is defined as the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work by the use of dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Examples of cheating include, but are not limited to copying, in part or in whole, from another's test or other examination; discussing answers or ideas relating to the answers on a test or other examination without the permission of the instructor; obtaining copies of a test, an examination, or other course material without the permission of the instructor; using notes, cheat sheets, or other devices considered inappropriate under the prescribed testing condition; collaborating with another or others in work to be presented without the permission of the instructor; falsifying records, laboratory work, or other course data; submitting work previously presented in another course, if contrary to the rules of the course; altering or interfering with the grading procedures; plagiarizing, as defined below; and knowingly and intentionally assisting another student in any of the above.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the act of incorporating ideas, words, or specific substance of another, whether purchased, borrowed, or otherwise obtained, and submitting same to the university as one's own work to fulfill academic requirements without giving credit to the appropriate source. Plagiarism shall include but not be limited to: submitting work, either in part or in whole, completed by another; omitting footnotes for ideas, statements, facts, or conclusions that belong to another; omitting quotation marks when quoting directly from another, whether it be a paragraph, sentence, or part thereof; close and lengthy paraphrasing of the writings of another; submitting another person's artistic works, such as musical compositions, photographs, paintings, drawings, or sculptures; and (f) submitting as one's own work papers purchased from research companies.

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Disciplinary Action

Cheating and plagiarism in connection with an academic program at the university may warrant two separate and distinct courses of disciplinary action that may be applied concurrently in response to a violation of this policy: academic sanctions, such as grade modifications; and punitive sanctions, such as probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Academic sanctions are concerned with the student's grades and are the responsibility of the instructor involved. Punitive sanctions are concerned with the student's records and status on campus and shall be the responsibility of the university president or designated representative. The Coordinator of Judiciary Procedures shall be the president's representative in matters of student discipline.