

Spring 2009
Phil 1050 Introduction to Philosophy
Section 3: 10:00 a.m. -10:50 a.m.
Section 4: 12:00 p.m. -12:50 p.m.
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Office: EESAT Room 372 Telephone: 940-565-2823
Office Hours: MW 3:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.

Course Description

This course is a survey of the three main areas of philosophy: ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology. Ethics is the study of how we ought to act. Metaphysics is the study of reality -- of the nature of all things, and of what exists. Epistemology is the study of knowledge.

We begin by discussing some important ethical questions: How should one live? What is the meaning of life? How can I know what is right? Is it better to try to make the majority happy at the expense of the few, or make the few happy at the expense of many? Is there one standard of right and wrong for everyone, or are moral standards relative? What is the best form of government? Do animals have rights? Does nature have intrinsic value? We turn next to epistemology: Can we know anything about the external world? Can we be certain about anything? What is the source of knowledge? What justifies our beliefs about the world and our own mental states? Can we trust our senses? Finally we discuss metaphysical questions: What is really real? Are we free or determined? What am I? How are the minds related to bodies?

The objective of this course is: (1) to familiarize students with various facts and theories from the history of philosophy; (2) to develop students' ability to think carefully and critically; (3) to enable students to be reflective about the beliefs that their society have developed.

Required Texts

1. Gary E. Kessler, *Voice of Wisdom: a multicultural philosophy reader*, (7th edition, Thomson Wadsworth, 2008
2. *The Analects of Confucius: A Philosophical Translation* (Translated, with an Introduction, By Roger T. Ames and Henry Rosemont, JR; The Random House Publishing Group, 1998

Grading

Reading Quiz (40%)

Exam 1&2 (15% each) ; Final Exam (30%)

You will have twelve reading quizzes which are unannounced and two lowest quiz score will be dropped. Reading quiz will be given the first ten minutes of some classes and collected promptly. I will not accept them if you turn in your reading quiz late. Coming late for class means you will have less time for your reading quiz. The form of the reading quizzes will vary-true/false, fill in the blank, short essay, and multiple choices. I suggest you think about the study questions of each chapter when you read because the reading quizzes will be based on your understanding of those questions. **Note: There are no make-ups on quizzes even if you have good reasons. If you leave the class after you have taken the quiz unexcused, you will receive a zero grade on it.**

You will have **3 exams** (one of which will be the final.) These exams will be given in class on the assigned days. **I do not allow make up exams, so please do not ask.** I will only consider illness as an excuse when accompanied by appropriate documentation. The three exams consist of **20 True or False questions (2 points each), 10 short answer questions (3 points each) and two essays (15 points each).** The first two exams will be based on the study questions of the assigned readings and there is no review class for them. We only have review for final exam. Review sheet will be given one week before final exam.

Attendance and Participation

Attendance is essential for this course. A signup sheet will be passed for each class. It is your responsibility to make sure that you are on the attendance sheet. If students fail to sign the attendance sheet, students will be counted absent for that day. Each student has three free absences. After that, for each additional absence you will lose two points. Students who miss up to three weeks of class will not receive credit for this course. Students who sign the attendance sheet and then leave will be counted as absent even if you have good reasons. Class participation is not required but is highly encouraged; a borderline grade will be rounded up with regular class participation.

Technology Policy

Laptop computers are not allowed to be used in classroom. Cell phone use of any kind-voice, text messaging, calculator, photography is banned during class. Phone must be rendered inaudible during class.

Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to behave politely and professionally at all times in class. Unacceptable behaviors include: (1) private conversations, (2) reading newspapers, doing crossword puzzles, (3) receiving cell phones, (4) starting

packing up your belongings before class is over, and (5) coming late for class. When necessary, disruptive students may be asked to leave the class.

Tentative Schedule

Dates	Topics	Reading Assignments
1/21	Introduction to this Course	No Readings
1/23	The Value of Philosophy	Read: Bertrand Russell, "On the value of philosophy"
1/26	Buddhism	Read: Walpola Rahula: The Four Noble Truth
1/28		
1/30		
2/2	Confucius and the Life of Virtue	Read: D.C. Lau: Confucius and Moral Character; Read Analects (Books 1-6) focusing on: 1:12; 3:3; 4:5,6,9; 2:16; 6:22; 11:12;
2/4		Read Analects (Books 7-14) focusing on 1:11; 2:5-8; 4:18-21; 17:21
2/6		Read: Analects (Books 15-20) focusing on 1:14; 2:13; 4:17,24; 7:10,19,22; 8:11; 15: 19,20,21;
2/9	Socrates on Living the Examined Life	Read: Plato, "The Apology"
2/11		
2/13	Aristotle on Happiness and the Life of Moderation	Read: Aristotle: Nichomachean Ethics (Book I)
2/16		Read: Aristotle: Nichomachean Ethics (Book II)
2/18	The Virtue of Selfishness	Read: Ayn Rand: The Ethics of Emergencies
2/20	Kant and Categorical Imperative	Read: Immanuel Kant: Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals
2/23		
2/25	Utilitarianism	Read: John Stuart Mill: What Utilitarianism Is
2/27		
3/2	The Ethic of Care	Read: Nel Noddings: Caring
3/4	Moral Relativism	Read: David Wong: Relativism
3/6	EXAM 1	No Reading Assignments
3/9	Capitalism and Exploitation	Read: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels: Manifesto of the Communist Party
3/11	The Original Position	Read: A Theory of Justice
3/13	Our Obligation to the State & Civil Disobedience	Read: Plato: Crito and Martin Luther King, Jr.: Letter from Birmingham Jail
3/23	Justice and the Land	Read: Aldo Leopold: The Land Ethic

3/25	Animal Rights	Read: Tom Regan: The Case for Animal Rights
3/27	Is Certainty Possible?	Read: Rene Descartes: Meditations I and II
3/30	Empiricism and Limited Skepticism	Read: David Hume: An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding
4/1	Kant's epistemology	Handouts
4/3	Should we believe beyond evidence?	Read: William K. Clifford: The ethics of Belief and William James: The Will to Believe
4/6	Sufi Mysticism	Read: Al-Ghazali: Deliverance from Error
4/8	EXAM 2	No Reading Assignments
4/10	The Dao	Read: Lao Tzi: Dao De Jing
4/13		
4/15	Platonic Dualism	Read: Plato: The Republic
4/17		
4/20	Subjective Idealism	Read: The Principles of Human Knowledge
4/22	We Are Determined	Read: Robert Blatchford: Not Guilty
4/24	We Are Free	Read: Jean-Paul Sartre: Existentialism
4/27	We Are Both Free and Determined	Read: Bruce N. Waller: Chanelle, Sabrina, and the Oboe
4/29	You Are Your Mind	Read: Rene Descartes: Meditation VI
5/1	You Are an Embodied Self	Read: Eve Browning Cole: Body, Mind, and Gender
5/4	You Are a Computing Machine	Read: Bruce H. Hinrichs: Computing the Mind
5/6	Review	
5/8	Q&A	
5/11	Section 3 FINAL EXAM	Time: 8:00 a.m.-10:00 a.m. ENV190
5/15	Section 4 FINAL EXAM	Time: 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. ENV190