

OXFORD COLLEGE
PHILOSOPHY 100: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Dr. Ken Anderson
Spring 2005
Office: 106A Language Hall
X 4-8384

SYLLABUS:

The objective of the course is to introduce the student to a range of philosophical methods and problems. We will try to accomplish this through the close reading and discussion of some fundamental texts in the philosophical tradition. The course will be divided roughly into three parts. The first part will consist of texts by the seminal figures of the Ancient and Modern traditions, Plato and Descartes. The second part will consist of two approaches to the possibility and meaning of human values, Epictetus' Stoicism and Sartre's Existentialism. The third part will consist of the reading of an existential novel and a consideration of the meaning of life as it is seen by a selection of contemporary Western philosophers.

Also, we will be watching and discussing a number of movies during the semester. These will be seen as exemplifying or challenging the philosophical concepts we will be considering. I plan to have five films over the course of the semester.

TEXTS: Plato, Trial and Death of Socrates
 Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy
 Epictetus, The Handbook
 Sartre, Existentialism and Human Emotions
 John Barth, The End of the Road
 Westphal and Levenson, Life and Death

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Two essays: first at 3 pages, second at 5 pages
- 2) Three exams: 2/18, 4/1, 5/11 9:00-12:00
- 3) A number of quizzes and short writings
- 4) Class participation
- 5) Attendance is mandatory. More than three absences will affect your grade.

GRADING: The exams, the second essay, the quizzes and short writings, and class participation will each count approximately equally toward the final grade. The first essay will be counted a bit less. I will use +/- grading.

"Every thinker puts some portion of an apparently stable world in peril and no one can wholly predict what will emerge in its place." -John Dewey