

Oxford College of Emory University

PHI 100
INTRODUCTION TO

PHILOSOPHY

Fall 2013

Prof. Joshua Mousie

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Office: Faculty Trailer, Tues./Thur. 12-3pm, Ex:44577

Course Description and Goals

In this introductory course in philosophy, we will read contemporary and classic texts in the history of philosophy with an emphasis on understanding how philosophy relates to our social lives. We will use the readings to discuss the nature of the self (**self-knowledge**), what it means to have knowledge/truth (**enlightenment**), and how our view of these two things is relevant to our daily lives, relationships with others, and our attempts to envision a better world (**politics and justice**).

The goals of the course are as follows:

- 1) To understand key concepts in the history of philosophical thinking.
- 2) To understand how to approach a topic in a philosophical manner/how to apply philosophical concepts and methodology beyond the study of philosophy.
- 3) To learn how to clearly articulate philosophical ideas in writing, speaking, and in conversation with others.

Course Readings

Reading assignments will come from the assigned textbooks for the course. I will also be posting essays online, which you are responsible for either 1) printing out and bringing to class for discussion or 2) bringing an electronic reader or laptop to class in order to have the text accessible. You will be tested on all of the assigned readings.

Required Texts:

Plato, *The Republic* ISBN: 158510261X

Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* ISBN: 0872201929

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism and Human Emotions* ISBN: 080650902

Mary Midgley, *Beast and Man* ISBN: 0415289866

Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* ISBN: 0801484634

Course Requirements

Discussion Starter	15%	Midterm Exam	20%
Daily Assignments	15%	Final Exam	25%
Research Paper	25 %		

Description of Course Requirements

Discussion Starter

Students will form groups of 3 (no more, no less) during the first week of class. Groups will sign-up to play the role of discussion starter 3 times throughout the semester, and only one group can be discussion starter per day. For sign-up instructions, see the course's Blackboard page. On your group's assigned days, you will initiate class discussion twice: 1) at the beginning of class you will identify and discuss a passage that you think captures the thesis of the reading for that day; 2) halfway through class you will level one form of critique against the reading (a stock of suggested types of critiques are provided). Preparing for this assignment will mean meeting with your group outside of class. See the Discussion Starter document posted on Blackboard for more details, a stock of critique formats, and a grading rubric.

Daily Assignments

These assignments will differ throughout the semester. Sometimes they will consist of pop quizzes and in-class work, and sometimes they will be assigned homework. Other than homework assignments, they will not be announced in advance. Their aim is to gauge your preparation for class and to develop your ability to clearly express philosophical ideas. Your lowest two scores will be dropped, and **there are no makeups**.

Research Paper

You will be required to **develop, research, and write a 5-8 page paper**. The paper will be something you work on throughout the semester, first coming up with a thesis and researching and developing an outline, then writing a draft and having a peer read and critique the paper, and lastly completing a final draft responding to your peer's critiques. The details of the paper (e.g., acceptable topics), due dates of each part of the assignment, and a grading rubric will be posted on Blackboard.

Exams

There will be two exams (Oct. 11th and final exam week). **Every exam will be cumulative**. The exams will primarily be short answer and essay questions.

Grading Scale

94 – 100 = A	77-79 = C+
90 – 93 = A-	73-76 = C
87 – 89 = B+	70-72 = C-
83 – 86 = B	60 – 69 = D
80 – 82 = B-	< 60 = F

Note: I NEVER round final grades or curve grades on assignments. Instead, I offer 2 extra credit opportunities throughout the semester.

Additional Information and Class Policies

Electronics

You are not allowed to have laptops or cell phones out during class. Although laptops are useful in many classrooms, they will not be needed for our purposes. The class will be heavily discussion-based and note taking can easily be done with paper and pen. On days when the reading comes from a pdf posted online, bringing a laptop or electronic reader is permissible.

Academic Dishonesty

Cheating/plagiarism is not tolerated. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will forfeit any possible credit for that assignment, and following school policy you will be reported to the Honor Council (Please consult the Academic Honor Code in the Student Handbook). If you have ANY questions concerning what constitutes plagiarism, don't hesitate to contact me, or visit someone in the writing center!

Disability Accommodations

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Alternatively, you can contact the Office of Disability Services (www.ods.emory.edu).