

Philosophy 100: Introduction to Philosophy

MWF 9:10 – 10:00 18 – 204 (CRN 82785)

Fall 2015

CSM

Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. David Danielson

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Office Hours:

MWF 7:30 - 8

MWF 10 – 11, 12 - 1

TTH 7:30 – 9:30

Texts: Required: Readings in Philosophy, James Ogilvy, Jerry Gill, Melvin Rader

Recommended: How to Get the Most out of Philosophy, James Soccio

Recommended: Looking At Philosophy, Donald Palmer

You will need to choose and read one of the following books for the final exam. Some of them may not be available in the bookstore.

You will need to hunt them down. See the website for help; I have links to them there.

Recommended: A Language Older Than Words, Derrick Jensen (This one is out of print but available on the used book market.)

Recommended: The Kin of Ata are Waiting for You, Dorothy Bryant

Recommended: The Story of B, Daniel Quinn

Recommended: Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance, Robert Pirsig

Recommended: An Unknown Woman, Alice Koller (This one is out of print but available on the used book market.)

Recommended: Sophie's World, Jostein Gaarder (Not in the bookstore, but it's in print.)

Recommended: The Island, Aldous Huxley

Course Description, Goals, and Objectives:

This class is an introduction to the discipline of philosophy. We will explore the good, the beautiful and the true. We will examine them historically to provide the context for the questions and answers that previous thinkers have provided. In addition to lectures, we will discuss specific readings found in the Reading in Philosophy text.

The goal of this course is for you to gain an understanding of the nature of philosophical questions and ideas, and to be able to participate in your own development of your life concerning these questions. Another goal is for you to experience the difficulty and joy of presenting, discussing, re-evaluating and understanding your own views and those of others. Part of this joy entails learning to recognize, evaluate and create well-reasoned arguments.

These are the Specific Learning Objectives:

Identify some of the central figures and main issues in the history of philosophy.

To be able to identify, explicate, and evaluate complex arguments.

Compare and contrast divergent philosophical theories on some issue.

Formulate a reasoned response to a philosophical position.

Analyze a philosophical position in terms of different cultural/social perspectives.

Grades:

- There will be three exams. The first is worth 100 pts., the second worth 250 pts., and a final exam worth 150 pts. (Total Exams = 500 pts., or 50% of final grade) A = 1000 - 900
B = 899 - 800
- There will be short homework and quizzes based on the readings, lectures and the discussions. These will count for 230 pts. [The first homework assignments are included below, read the due dates carefully.] C = 799 - 700
D = 699 - 600
F = 599 - 0
- You will need to attend an office discussion on one of the readings. 130 pts.
- There will be a philosophy notebook to complete worth 90 of the grade.
- Lastly, your participation will count for 50 pts.

The due dates for assignments will be indicated when the assignments are given. Late exams can be arranged with a drop in grade. Homework/ quizzes cannot be made up, but there will be extra credit assignments to augment some of the missed ones.

Office Discussion/ Reading Summary: Each student will meet me in the office to discuss one of the readings from Readings in Philosophy. These meetings will be scheduled for 30 minutes. Bring a 2 page summary which you will read to me and I will comment upon. The summary should not contain any quotations! It should be the essential ideas from the reading in your own words. Do not write an essay on the reading. I want a summary! If you do not know what a summary is, make sure to find out before you meet with me. (Bring two copies of the summary, one for you and one for me.) Then we will discuss the meaning of the reading. These meetings will take place no later than 2 weeks after we finish the discussion of the reading in class. Two students may meet with me at the same time, but each needs to have his, or her, own summary. Please make an appointment to meet with me rather than dropping in. Most of the readings are from the Reading in Philosophy text. (One is online. It is indicated with an * below.) The order for the readings: Freire, Plato, Descartes, Hume, Marx, Ophuls, de Beauvoir*, and Suzuki. I will allow only 7 persons per reading (and only 3 for Suzuki.). I have a sign-up sheet available to determine your choice. Look them over soon to decide which you would like to discuss in more detail. For full credit you must decide by 9/4.

Movie Night

This class is part of a learning community. It is a movie series that combines Philosophy 100 classes with Psychology 100 classes. There will be four films shown on Friday nights. (A handout is forthcoming.)

Extra Credit

There are several ways to earn extra credit for the class. By attending Movie Night you will receive 10 pts. If you miss a film, you may watch it on your own and write a two-page answer to various questions provided for 10 pts. Also there will be Philosophy club meetings approximately 3 times during the semester. These are also held on Friday nights TBA. Finally here will be announced talks held on campus that you can attend. In order to receive extra credit for events other than attending the films, write a 1 – 1& 1/2 page summary of the main ideas you learn at the talks, or Philosophy Club meetings. Any extra credit will be offered to all students.

Further Important Information:

You can expect me to meet the class for all the sessions unless unavoidably detained. If I know ahead of time that I will be unable to meet the class, you will be forewarned. Since these topics touch on very emotional issues, I will at times ask the discussion to stop in order to preserve the integrity of the discussion. I will be emailing you often using the school-provided gmail address. Either check this email site regularly or forward that mail to your usual email address. Thanks

Attendance: You are allowed 3 unexcused absences. After that, your absences count against your participation grade. If you want an absence excused, submit a written explanation; verbal explanations won't be considered. If you miss more than a week's worth of classes, see me immediately. (One week constitutes the number of sessions the class meets weekly.)

I expect that you will attend class and show up on time. Repeated failure of either disrupts the learning environment. Since we will often be discussing the readings, I expect that you will come to class having read the assignments and ready to participate. If for some reason you know that you have to leave early, please sit by the door to cause the least disruption to the learning environment. If you need to make arrangements to miss a class and get an assignment, please let me know ahead of time and put it in writing. (I have found I cannot remember all the verbal details.)

Electronic Devices: If you carry a cell phone, unless you need to take an emergency call, please turn it off/ silent during class time and don't have it out. If you must take a call for emergency reasons, let me know beforehand. Checking these electronic leashes disrupts the learning environment. Don't text message: if I notice anyone text messaging, then there will be consequences. If you use a computer in class for taking notes, that is okay. However, you must sit in one of the first two rows and email me a copy of your notes after each class; if you don't, you will lose computer privileges. If I suspect you are inappropriately surfing the web, email etc. during class, I will ask you to stop and I will check your computer. If you aren't taking notes, there will be consequences.

For the 2nd class session you attend please bring to class a 4X 6 card with your name and a phone number or e-mail address that you don't mind that I have. Please put the info at the very top of the card and leave a lot of space below. Please make sure it is a 4 X 6 card. This is the first homework assignment! (There are 4X6 cards available outside my office door if you don't have any.)

Note: It is ultimately your responsibility to drop, so don't expect me to drop you if you walk away. I do retain the option to drop any student for excessive absences (more than two weeks' class sessions.) Failure to drop will result in your receiving a failing grade for the class. If you ask me to drop you and the request is made before the final drop date, I will drop you. (An email or a phone message will suffice: include your student g number.) You cannot receive an incomplete without a written request that is approved.

Plagiarism

Due to increases in plagiarism, a brief reminder: When you submit work make sure it is your work. If you use someone else's work, use quotation marks and cite sources. This includes internet sites! Although it is easy to find information on the web, it is easy to find plagiarized material as well. Failure to cite sources etc. results in a failing grade for the assignment! There is an explanation of plagiarism in the Socio text and a link on the website for this class.

If you have a documented disability and need accommodations for this class, please see me as soon as possible or contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) for assistance. The DRC is located in Bldg. 10 - 120. 650.574.6438: TTY 650.574.6230

Important Dates: See the schedule below

Last Day to Drop with no record 8/28	Last Day to drop with a "W" 11/16
Last day for the brief office visit 8/31	Thanksgiving Holiday 11/25 - 29
Labor Day Holiday 9/7	Exam 1 Wednesday 9/30 In-class (10%)
Last Day to sign up for the office discussion 9/4	Exam 2 Friday 11/13 Take Home (25%)

Philosophy 100

Fall 2015

Topic Schedule: Discussion/ Homework Assignments

Here is the schedule we will follow up to the first exam. There are times when the discussion will focus on a specific reading from our main text. Come prepared to analyze the readings together in class discussions.

Homework Assignments

The homework assignments are to be typed and ready at the beginning of class. If you arrive without the assignment, or it's not typed, it cannot be turned in late. We may begin class by exchanging papers and discussing your answers in small groups; so in order to participate you need to have them ready.

You will be given a new list of the questions after each exam. I will be choosing to read and grade most very carefully. For others you will receive full credit automatically for submitting them on time.

The answers are evaluated on your understanding of the material and on your use of reasoning. (We will be spending time on explaining the elements necessary for correct reasoning.) Do not merely quote the texts or the lectures. I want the writing in your own words. (Write to an audience who has not read the material.)

1. Turn in a 4X6 card with the appropriate information. This is due on the second class session you attend. (I will take these late for reduced credit, but I need these!) Please make sure they are 4 X 6 cards. (There are cards available at my office door.) (10 pts.)
2. Meet me during office hours for a brief 5-minute chat. There is no writing for this. (You have until **8/31** to meet for credit.) (15 pts). (Just drop in during office hours; no appointment is needed.)
3. In a short paragraph describe the purpose of the notebook. Due on **8/21** (Don't turn in any notebook assignments.) (10 pts.)
4. In one short paragraph describe the difference between "Argument" and "Dispute" as we will use the terms in this class. Due on **8/26** (10 pts.)

Read Paolo Freire's: The Pedagogy of the Oppressed for class on Monday 8/31. (This means you should have read and digested the article before class.)

5. Using only one sentence – what is Freire's main conclusion? Due on **8/31** (10 pts.)
6. In three sentences name three significant reasons why banking education is problematic? Due on **9/2** (10 pts.)
7. Make a one paragraph argument defending either Heraclitus or Parmenides's ideas as more accurate. Due on **9/14** (10 pts.)

Read Plato's: The Divided Line - Have this part of Plato's dialogue read for class on Monday 9/14. (This means you should have read and digested the article before class.)

8. In class project – (10 pts.)

Read Plato's: The Myth of the Cave - Have the second half of Plato's dialogue read for class on 9/21.

9. In one short paragraph identify Plato's argument why only those who have left the cave can be good leaders of the society. Due on **9/28** (10 pts.)

The 1st Exam will be in-class on **Wednesday 9/30**. You will have the questions a week before hand. I encourage you to meet with other students to prepare.

Philosophy Notebook

One major credo in Philosophy is to “*know thyself*.”

In an effort to aid in that process I ask you to keep a notebook. It is a place to explore who you are in more depth than is usually possible in your hectic daily life. What I mean by a “notebook” is not the type of book or paper used, essentially it does not matter. It is the writing at a very intimate level of self-understanding. I have found for myself that a profound path towards self-knowledge is to write. Writing makes possible the grasping of an often-elusive sense of who I am. It gives form to a chaotic, swirling flux of my existence. It is also a practice which allows you to see yourself more objectively and relates to the following quote from Robert Keegan “The subject of one stage [of growth] becomes the object of the subject at the next stage.”

The notebook for this class can be of several different types that will be discussed in class. What I expect from you is an authentic attempt to take yourself seriously. I will ask that you attempt the examples that are discussed in class. And there will be times when we write in class. I expect to see those sessions reflected in the paper at the end.

You may at this point have questions regarding “How much do I have to write?” and “How will this be graded?”

There is no easy answer as to how much to write. Some people are prolific, others are less so. Thus quantitative benchmarks alone are not helpful. As long as it is a truthful process, the results will be important. A minimum amount is to attempt those assigned on the notebook assignment handouts. (Merely doing the minimum, writing on the topics I provide is the equivalent of a “B” grade.) But the more that you do, the easier the assignment at the end will be to accomplish.

At the end of the semester I will ask you to reread all you have written and provide me a summary description and critical reflection on what you learned in the process. This written assignment will be the item graded. I will **NOT** be reading your notebook, EVER! Other questions you may have regarding this process I hope to answer as we progress in the semester. I will ask you to include the number of entries you have made as part of the grade.

I would like you to begin as soon as possible. A good place to begin is to ask yourself “Where am I now in my life?” Asking this question gives you a sense of the current situation you are in. Part of answering this question is to list the important people, events, situations, circumstances, “works”, hopes, plans, dreams, religious / spiritual experiences, and bodily awarenesses you have. Finally, make sure to date each entry, including the year.

Keep in mind that no one will be reading this notebook, it is for you. So you need not write it for anyone else. (You are the audience.) Dive deep into yourself; the more that you give to the process, the more you will learn.

I wish you well on this journey.

(Many of the assignments are inspired by the work of Ira Progoff Ph.D. in his book At a Journal Workshop, and by Byron Katie's book Loving What Is.)

Notebook Assignment Topics

These can be written at the beginning of class if you arrive early, or they can be done outside of class. The notebook will not be turned in so feel free to write whatever comes to mind. You are encouraged to write more than on these topics, these are assignments and I want you to at least try these. You need not write these on the dates they are assigned.

- 8/17 Why am I here?
- 8/19 Which of the red or blue pills would you take? Why?
- 8/21 Where am I now in my life? (see notebook handout)

- 8/24 What are your goals for this class? What do you hope to learn?
- 8/26 Steppingstones: list 8 – 12 events in your life, beginning with “I was born.” Spontaneously list other events that mark key moments in your life.
- 8/28 Record any dreams you have. (Feel free to keep adding to this list as the semester progresses. You may want to make a separate section to record your dreams.)

- 8/31 Reflect on your reactions to the first reading of Freire’s essay.
- 9/2 Recall any important school/learning moments in your life.
- 9/4 Dialogue with Persons: Pick some person important to you. Write a brief history of the relationship. Then write a conversation with that person. Allow yourself to be in a “twilight state” of consciousness so that you are not merely directing the words. Allow the other person to speak from his or her perspective.

- 9/7 Holiday
- 9/11 What are your reactions to the ideas of the Pre-Socratics?
- 9/13 Who are you today?

- 9/14 What are your first reactions to the Plato reading?
- 9/16 Follow the instructions on this website: Byron Katie’s Do the Work.
- 9/18 Pick another sentence to do the work. (Feel free to do more of these at your leisure.)

- 9/21 How certain are you of what you know?
- 9/23 Dialogue with the Body: Consider that your body is the other with whom you have a conversation. First, list 8 – 10 body memories that come to mind. Then write a brief statement summarizing your current physical state of being. Then have a dialogue with your body.
- 9/25 Start a dialogue with Plato about some aspect of his ideas with which you disagree.

- 9/28 Do you think you are living in a “cave?”
- 9/30 How did you prepare for the exam?
- 10/2 Who are you today?

“we must not cease from exploration
and the end of all our exploring
will be to arrive where we began
and to know the place for the first time.”

T.S. Eliot “Little Gidding” V. in The Four Quartets

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Monday	Wednesday	Friday
8/17 Intro	19 Syllabus / Notebook	21 What is Philosophy?
24 Logic	26 Logic and Reasoning	28 Logic
31 Begin Freire Discussion (Office meeting)	9/2 Freire	4 Pre-Socratics Movie Night #1
7 Holiday	9 Pre-Socratics	11 Pre-Socratics
14 Pre-Socratics / Begin Plato Discussion	16 Plato	18 Plato
21 Plato	23 Plato	25 Plato
28 Plato	30 Exam #1 (In class)	10/2 Aristotle Movie Night #2
5 Aristotle	7 Aristotle	9 Aristotle
12 Aristotle	14 Aristotle	16 Stoicism
19 Begin Descartes discussion	21 Descartes	23 Descartes
26 Begin Hume discussion	28 Hume	30 Hume
11/2 Mindwalk	4 Mindwalk	6 Mindwalk Movie Night #3
9 Holiday	11 Begin Marx Discussion	13 Marx 2 nd Exam Due
16 Marx	18 Begin Ophuls	20 Ophuls
23 Ophuls	25 No Class	27 Thanksgiving Holiday
30 Begin de Beauvoir discussion	12/2 de Beauvoir	4 de Beauvoir
7 Begin Suzuki Discussion	9 Suzuki	11 Suzuki Movie Night #4
14	16 Final Exam Meeting 8:10 – 10:40	18

