

Philosophy 1000: Introduction to Philosophy**115 Old Main | MWF 3:30 – 4:20***Instructor:* Justin Clark | *Office:* Old Main 202 H | *Email:* justin.clark@usu.edu*Office Hours:* Thursday 9:00-11:00, or by appointment*Course Website:* phil1000.posthaven.com

I. Course Description: This course is an introduction to some of the major methods and topics in the discipline of philosophy. How should we understand our *nature* as human beings? What constitutes a good and happy life? How can we *know* anything about the world we live in? What are the foundations of reality, and what can really be said to *exist*? Does God exist? What kind of existence does consciousness have? Do human beings possess freedom of will? If not, how can we be held *morally* responsible for our actions? And where does rightness and wrongness come from in the first place? How can we expect to find answers to these questions? To what extent can we (as human beings) really understand ourselves and the world we live in?

An emphasis will be placed on great works in the history of philosophy. There are two main objectives. First, students should leave the course with a deeper understanding of philosophical questions, knowing what philosophers have said, and why they have said it. Second, the course should develop each student's ability to assess whether or not philosophers have good reasons for making their claims. In other words, the course should enhance your ability to reason (critical thinking skills). This involves understanding difficult texts, thinking clearly about their truth and significance, and evaluating arguments on both sides of an issue. It is the instructor's hope that students develop their intellectual character in the process, leaving the class with an enlarged sense of wonder and curiosity with respect to philosophical issues.

II. Texts:

- (1) *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (6th Edition) Perry, Bratman, and Fischer (eds). Oxford University Press, 2012.

- Additional readings will be posted on the course website at the following:
phil1000.posthaven.com

III. Requirements:

- (1) Quiz One—10% of course grade (in class, Monday October 3rd)
- (2) Quiz Two—30% of course grade (in class, Friday November 4th)
- (3) Three One-Page Papers— 30% of course grade (10% each)
- (4) Final Exam (Quiz 3)— 30% of course grade

Evaluation of papers and written exams will be based on three criteria: (a) the clarity and organization of your written work, (b) the degree of understanding demonstrated, and (c) the depth of personal engagement and argumentation.

Late work will not be accepted. Do not use the work of another student, and do not use anything from the web when writing your papers. If you must use the web (although I urge you not to), quote and cite everything you have used. If you do not quote and cite material that you have used, it is plagiarism. Any student caught plagiarizing will fail the class. As a general policy, there will be no make-up quizzes. This policy may be overridden only by extenuating cases. In order to make-up a quiz or exam, the following conditions *must* be met: (i) the instructor must be notified well in advance, (ii) the student must have a formal written excuse, and (iii) the exam must be made-up within one calendar week.

Handouts will be made available on all topics; they will *not* be posted on the website or emailed to you. Handouts can be acquired by attending lecture or office hours.

IV. Tentative Schedule: The following schedule is subject to change.

Topic 1: Introduction to Philosophy and Logic

Readings: *Logical Toolkit* (p.9-14); Plato, *Apology* (p.22-37)

Topic 2: Plato and the Form of the Good

Readings: Plato, *Republic* (Chapter XIII, p.699-675, and selections posted on website)

Topic 3: Aristotle and the Human Function

Readings: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (p.545-558)

- Paper 1 (due Friday, September 16th)

Topic 4: Stoicism and Cosmic Fate

Readings: Epictetus, *Enchiridion* and *Discourses* (selections, posted on website)

- Quiz 1 (Monday, October 3rd)

Topic 5: Arguments for the Existence of God

Readings: Anselm, *The Ontological Argument*, (42-44); Aquinas, *The Existence of God* (p.44-47); Paley, *Natural Theology*, (47-51); Collins, *God, Design and Fine-Tuning* (posted on website)

Topic 6: The Problem of Evil: An Atheistic Argument

Readings: Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, (p.60-94); Leibniz, *God, Evil, the Best of All Possible Worlds* (p.95-96); Adams, *Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God* (posted on website)

- Paper 2 (due Wednesday, October 26th)

Topic 7: The Will: Freedom and Causal Determinism

Readings: Van Inwagen, *The Powers of Rational Beings* (p.385-396), Hume, *Of Liberty and Necessity* (p.397-406), Frankfurt *Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility* (p.407-414)

- Quiz 2 (Friday, November 4th)

Topic 8: Human Motivation: Rational Self-Interest and the Passions

Readings: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (posted on website); Plato, *Republic* (p.654-659); The Prisoner's Dilemma (p.832); Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature* (posted on website); Kant, *A Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals* (p. 504-513)

- Paper 3 (due Monday, November 21st)

Topic 9: Descartes, the Mind, and the Foundations of Knowledge

Readings: Descartes, *Meditations of First Philosophy*, (p.136-159); Ryle, *Descartes' Myth* (p.250-256); Armstrong, *The Nature of the Mind* (p.257-264); Nagel, *What is it Like to Be a Bat?*

- Final Exam (Quiz 3) TBA