

Philosophy 1000: Introduction to Philosophy

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Office Hours: Wednesday 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 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 classic works in the history of philosophy. There are three main objectives. First, my hope is that students leave the course with a deeper understanding of philosophical questions, knowing what philosophers have said, and why they've said it. Second, the course should develop one's ability to assess whether or not a philosophical thinker has good reasons for making their claims. This involves understanding difficult texts, thinking clearly about the truth and significance of the text, and evaluating arguments on both sides of an issue. Finally, it is my hope also that students develop their intellectual character, leaving with a better understanding of themselves, and an enlarged sense of intellectual curiosity with respect to the world they live in.

II. Course Texts:

- (1) *Philosophy: The Quest for Truth* (10th Edition) Louis Pojman (ed). Oxford University Press, 2017
- (2) *Happiness: Classic and Contemporary Readings in Philosophy*, Cahn and Vitrano (ed). Oxford University Press, 2007

- 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, Friday February 17th)
- (2) Quiz Two—20% of course grade (in class, Monday April 3rd)
- (3) Three Short Papers (1-2 pages)— 30% of course grade (10% each)
- (4) Quiz Three— 30% of course grade (in class, Friday April 28th)

(5) Attendance & Participation—10% 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.

Attendance will be taken at the beginning of lecture a total of ten times throughout the semester, on random days. These ten attendance points will be factored into your course grade, together with some participation considerations.

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 or assignments. This policy may be overridden only by extenuating cases. In order to make-up a quiz or a paper, 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 or paper 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. The abbreviation “PQT” refers to our first textbook, *Philosophy: The Quest for Truth*, the abbreviation “HCC” refers to our second textbook, *Happiness: Classical and Contemporary Readings*.

Topic 1: Introduction to Philosophy and Logic

Readings: *What is Philosophy* (PQT p.1-14); *The Logical Toolkit* (posted on website); Plato, *Apology* (PQT p.27-38)

Topic 2: Plato and the Form of the Good

Readings: Plato, *Republic* Book IV (HCC p.11-15, and selections posted on website); *Allegory of the Cave* (PQT, p. 39-42)

Topic 3: Aristotle and the Human Function

Readings: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (HCC p.19-34)

- Paper 1 (due Friday, February 3rd)

Topic 4: Stoicism and Cosmic Fate

Readings: Epictetus, *Enchiridion* (PQT p.637-646) and *Discourses* (selections posted on website); Seneca, *On the Happy Life* (HCC p. 41-51)

- Quiz 1 (in class, Friday, February 17th)

Topic 5: Arguments for the Existence of God

Readings: Anselm and Gaunilo, *The Ontological Argument*, (PQT p.102-104); Aquinas, *The Five Ways* (PQT p.60-63); Paley, *The Watch and the Watchmaker*, (PQT p.92-94); Collins, *God, Design and Fine-Tuning* (posted on website)

Topic 6: The Problem of Evil: An Atheistic Argument

Readings: Hume, *Critique of Teleological Argument*, (PQT p.95-101); Johnson, *Why doesn't God Intervene to Prevent Evil* (PQT p. 123-127); Hick, *There is a Reason God Allows Evil* (PQT p. 128-132); Rowe, *The Problem of Evil and Some Varieties of Atheism* (PQT p. 133-140)

- Paper 2 (due Wednesday, March 13th)

Topic 7: The Human Will: Freedom and Determinism

Readings: Pojman, *Freedom of the Will and Determinism* (PQT p. 390-394); Van Inwagen, *The Powers of Rational Beings* (posted on website), Frankfurt *Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person* (p.407-414)

- Quiz 2 (in class, Monday, April 3rd)

Topic 8: Human Motivation: Egoism and Altruism

Readings: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (HCC p.68-77); Plato, *Republic* (HCC p.3-11); Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature* (selection posted on website); Butler, *Upon the Love of our Neighbour* (HCC p.77-86); Kant, *A Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals* (HCC p. 103-112)

- Paper 3 (due Friday, April 14th)

Topic 9: Human Knowledge: Rationalism and Empiricism

Readings: Pojman, *What Can We Know? Classical Theories of Knowledge* (PQT p. 192-194); Descartes, *Cartesian Doubt and the Search for Foundational Knowledge*, (PQT p.195-200); Locke, *An Empiricist Theory of Knowledge* (PQT p.201-212); Hume, *The Origin of Our Ideas* (PQT p.222-224); Locke, *On Enthusiasm and the Quest for Truth* (PQT p.42-48)

- Quiz 3 (in class, Friday April 28th)

