

Introduction to Philosophy · Phil 101C

Prof. Jeffrey Dunn

Fall 2010
M,W,F 12:30-1:30
HH 101
DePauw University

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Description

Does God exist? Do you know that you're not now dreaming? Is there any moral truth or is it all just people's opinions? Is the sentence: "This sentence is false," itself true or false? In this course we will investigate these questions among others. In doing so, you will be introduced to several major themes in philosophy and works by important philosophers. We will be reading works from ancient philosophy through to contemporary philosophy, including philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Hume, and Bertrand Russell. By the end of the course you should have a better understanding of what philosophy is, and should have cultivated the ability to think and write clearly.

Textbook

Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings (5th Edition), Perry, Bratman, & Fischer, OUP.

Course Requirements

Homework Assignments

This course is divided into four units. Each of the first three units has a homework assignment:

HW 1: Due 9/8

HW 2: Due 10/6

HW 3: Due 11/10

Late homework assignment will rarely be accepted. A late homework assignment prevents me from discussing the homework in class, which is unfair to other students who have turned in their homework on-time. In rare cases late homework may be accepted, but it will always be penalized.

Essay Assignment

The fourth unit has no homework assignment, which will give you time to work on your essay. Your essay should be 1,000 - 1,500 words. It is due on **12/10**.

To help you write a strong essay, you are required to turn in a first draft of your essay before Thanksgiving Break on **11/23**.

Later in the semester, I will be handing out a list of questions. You need to pick *one* question, which your essay will then answer.

Please turn in your essay on time. All late essays will be penalized.

* I strongly recommend that you take advantage of the Writing Center in the Academic Resource Center, located in 115 Asbury. After scheduling an appointment, you will have the chance to meet with a trained tutor who will read your work and offer feedback. This is a great way to improve your writing, however, slots can fill up quickly, so please plan ahead and take advantage of this great resource.

Exams

At the conclusion of each of the four sections, there will be an in-class exam. The exam will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

Exam 1: 9/17

Exam 2: 10/13

Exam 3: 11/15

Exam 4: 12/16 (finals week)

Other Requirements

You should keep up with the readings, attend class, and participate in discussions. To facilitate this there will be occasional short reading quizzes and in-class assignments. Consistent with university policy, you may be dropped from the class if absences are too frequent.

You should also make arrangements to meet with me if you are falling behind or are confused about something.

Things You Can Expect From Me

I will give clear and prompt feedback on your work.

I will assist you in choosing a paper topic.

I will be available for extra help when needed.

Grading

Homework Assignments (3): 15% (5% each)

Essay: 15% (first draft must be submitted on-time for full credit)

Exams (4): 60% (15% each)

Participation/Reading Quizzes 10%

Special Considerations

DePauw University is committed to providing equal access to academic programs and university-administered activities and reasonable modifications/accommodations to students with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended in 2008. Any student needing special accommodations due to a disability should contact the Coordinator of Student Disability Services, Pam Roberts, 302 Harrison Hall or call (765) 658-6267. It is the responsibility of each student to discuss implementation of approved modifications/accommodations with each faculty member and/or staff member within one week of the date of receiving a modification/accommodation approval memo or within the first two weeks of the academic semester.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is very important, and violations are serious offenses, which I take it very seriously. There is a clear Academic Integrity Policy that can be found here:

<http://www.depauw.edu/univ/handbooks/dpuhandbooks.asp?ID=101parentid=100>

It is your responsibility to read the university policy. If you are unclear about what constitutes a violation of academic integrity, it is your responsibility to contact me with any questions so that you are clear about it. Ignorance is not an excuse. The *minimum* penalty for violations of Academic Integrity is a 0 on the relevant assignment and a further reduction in your overall grade.

Tentative Schedule

*Unless otherwise noted, all readings are in our textbook.

Philosophy of Religion		
Date	Topic	Reading
8/25	Introduction	–
8/27	Logic and Argument	“On the Study of Philosophy” “Logical Toolkit”
8/30	The Cosmological Argument	Aquinas, “The Existence of God”
9/1	The Ontological Argument	Anselm, “The Ontological Argument”
9/3	The Argument from Design	Hume, “Dialogues. . .” (parts II and V) HW1 Assigned
9/6		Paley, “Natural Theology”
9/8	Pascal’s Wager	Pascal, “The Wager” HW1 Due
9/10	Definition of ‘God’	Ayer, “The Meaninglessness of ‘God’ ” (on Moodle)
9/13	The Problem of Evil	Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best. . .” Perry, “Dialogue. . .” (Part 1)
9/15		Perry, “Dialogue. . .” (Parts 2-4)
9/17	Exam 1	Exam 1

Epistemology		
9/20	Defining Knowledge	Plato, "Theaetetus"
9/22		Gettier, "Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?"
9/24	Skepticism	Descartes, Meditations I and II
9/27		Descartes, Meditations III and VI
9/29		Grau, "Bad Dreams, Evil Demons. . ."
10/1		Moore, "Proof of an External World" HW2 Assigned
10/4	Hume's Problem	Hume, "Enquiry" (Section IV)
10/6		Hume, "Enquiry" (Section V) HW2 Due
10/8		Salmon, "The Problem of Induction"
10/11		Salmon, "The Problem of Induction"
10/13	Exam 2	Exam 2
Ethics		
10/15	Introduction to Ethics	Introduction (pp. 449-456)
10/25	Response to Famine	Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"
10/27		O'Neill, "Kantian Approaches. . ." Recommended: Velleman, "A Brief Introduction to Kantian Ethics"
10/29	Is Morality Objective?	Mackie, "The Subjectivity of Values"
11/1		Harman, "Ethics and Observation"
11/3		Sturgeon, "Moral Explanations"
11/5	Why Be Moral?	Plato, "The Republic" (Part I) HW3 Assigned
11/8		Hume, "Enquiry. . . Principles of Morals" (Section I, Appendix I, II)
11/10		Gauthier, "Morality and Advantage" HW3 Due Essay Assigned
11/12		Mackie, "Law of the Jungle"
11/15	Exam 3	Exam 3

Paradoxes		
11/17	Sorites	“Paradox of the Heap” “Quinn’s Puzzle of the Self-Torturer”
11/19	Persistence through Time	“The Paradox of Identity” “The Ship of Theseus” (on Moodle)
11/22	Surprises	“The Surprise Examination”
11/23		First Draft Essay Due
11/29	Induction	“Goodman’s New Riddle of Induction”
12/1	Choice	“The Prisoner’s Dilemma”
12/3		“The Monty Hall Paradox” (on Moodle)
12/6	The Liar	“The Paradox of the Liar” “Other Versions of the Liar” “Russell’s Paradox” “The Bridge” (on Moodle)
12/8	A Puzzle in Ethics	“The Trolley Problem”
12/10	Wrap-Up Day	Final Essay Due
12/16	Final Exam	Final Exam

Last updated: August 24, 2010