Spring 2018

Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 100—3

Class Time: 11:00am—12:15pm

Monday, Wednesday

CCC 213

**Instructor:**

Charles Joshua Horn, Ph.D.

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Office Location: CCC 418

Office Phone: (715) 346-2849

Office Hours: MW, 1:00pm—2:00pm

**Course Description:**

One of the typical misconceptions of philosophy is that it is often understood merely as the study of old books that have no bearing or practical beneficial consequences for those who study it. While philosophy does sometimes involve the study of old books, the thought that philosophy cannot benefit us is simply false. Studying philosophy correctly can cultivate skills that can be used in a wide variety of settings—both academic and otherwise.

Philosophy is sometimes understood as a discipline that deals with “the big questions”, those which have no easy answers and which empirical study might not be able to answer. Our focus in this class will be on some of these big questions:

1. Does God exist? Is there a way that we could *prove* this one way or the other?
2. How do we explain the existence of suffering in the world?
3. What is the nature of consciousness?
4. What kinds of things can be conscious? Humans? Animals? Plants? Computers?
5. What does it mean to be a “good” person?
6. What is the nature of justice?

**Text:**

Rental:

1. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings*

Oxford University Press

ISBN: 978-0-19-020023-7

**Course Goals:**

* Demonstrate an ability to read carefully, speak clearly, think critically, or write persuasively about cultures and cultural works/artifacts (including texts, images, performances, and technologies, as well as other expressions of the human condition).
* Identify and analyze how beliefs, values, languages, theories, or laws shape cultures and cultural works/artifacts.
* Engage a variety of ideas and worldviews critically by formulating reflective and informed moral, ethical, or aesthetic evaluations of cultures and cultural works/artifacts.

**Expectations:**

Students are expected to attend every class and remain for the entire time. Do not come late or leave early. Students must complete the necessary readings prior to class and be prepared for discussion and participation. Students will treat other students with respect. This means, turning off all electrical equipment, including cell phones, laptops, and tablets. Students must also address their peers in a respectful tone. It is important to note that the nature of this class will inevitably result in disagreements among colleagues; however, it is essential to maintain respect toward one another despite disagreement.

Additionally, this course will utilize the Desire2Learn online system to facilitate certain aspects of the class. It is required that you check in with D2L regularly to find class updates, submit work, check grades, etc.

**Grading Criteria:**

Final grades will be calculated based upon the following. Late work will never be accepted unless an extension has been granted by Dr. Horn prior to the due date. Extensions will only be granted in extreme circumstances.

* 1. Three In-Class Exams: 60% Total (20% Each)
     1. Exams will be multiple-choice and cover the material for the given unit.
  2. Two Essays: 20% Total (10% Each)
     1. Each essay will be one single-spaced page and will address each film that we watch in the course. An additional prompt will be given out in class with a detailed rubric.
  3. Ten Quizzes 20% Total (2% Each)
     1. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of random classes and will be on the reading material for the day. It is not possible to make up quizzes, as they are meant to assess attendance and reading comprehension.

\*Grading will be anonymous when possible and will follow this scale:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **A Range**  **(90—100%)** | **B Range**  **(80—89%)** | **C Range**  **(70—79%)** | **D Range**  **(64—69%)** | **F Range**  **(0—63%)** |
|  | B+ (87—89) | C+ (77—79) | D+ (67—69) | F (<63) |
| A (94—100) | B (84—86) | C (74—76) | D (64—66) |  |
| A- (90—93) | B- (80—83) | C- (70—73) |  |  |

**Academic Integrity:**

Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism or helping others to commit these acts will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty will result in severe disciplinary action including, but not limited to, failure of the student assessment item or course, and/or dismissal from the University. Additional information can be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/SRR-2010/rightsChap14.pdf>

**Disability Information:**

Students with disabilities should register with the ADA coordinator on campus and let me know at the beginning of the semester. I would be happy to accommodate you in any way that I can. Just let me know. More information can be found at:

<http://www.uwsp.edu/stuaffairs/Documents/RightsRespons/ADA/rightsADAPolicyInfo.pdf>

**Course Schedule:**

January 22 Syllabus/Course Introduction

What is Philosophy?

**Unit I: God and Evil**

January 24 St. Anselm, “The Ontological Argument” 40

January 29 St. Thomas Aquinas, “The Existence of God” 42

January 31 Gottfried Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best of All Possible Worlds 89

February 5 David Hume, “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion 54

February 7 David Hume, “Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion 54

February 12 Film: Life of Pi

February 14 Film: Life of Pi

February 19 Review Day

February 21 Exam I

**Unit II: Minds, Bodies, and Persons**

February 26 Rene Descartes, “Meditations on First Philosophy (1 and 2)” 157

\*ESSAY I DUE\*

February 28 No Class

David Hume, “Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding” 211

March 5 A.M. Turing, “Computing Machinery and Intelligence” 295

March 7 John R. Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Programs” 308

March 12 Frank Jackson, “What Mary Didn’t Know” 291

March 14 Daniel Dennett, “Where am I? 378

March 19 Film: Ex Machina

March 21 Film: Ex Machina

March 26 Spring Break—No Class

March 28 Spring Break—No Class

April 2 Exam II Review

April 4 Exam II

**Unit III: Ethics and Society**

April 9 Herodotus, “Morality as Custom” D2L

Louis Pojman, “Who’s To Judge? D2L

\*ESSAY II DUE\*

April 11 Robert Mortimer, Morality is Based on God’s Commands D2L

John Arthur, Why Morality Does Not Depend on God’s Commands D2L

April 16 Jeremy Bentham, “The Principle of Utility” 480

April 18 John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism” 483

April 23 Immanuel Kant, “Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals” 527

April 25 Immanuel Kant, “Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals” 527

April 30 Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics” 568

May 2 Nietzsche, “Excerpts from Beyond Good and Evil” D2L

May 7 Exam III Review, Course Evaluations, About the Department/Major/Minor

May 9 Exam III

By the way, if you find that this class speaks to you and are interested in adding Philosophy as a major or minor, then please come and talk to me in my office. Studying philosophy is one *excellent* way to prepare for graduate school or law school and, when paired with another major or minor, has a tendency to significantly increase performance in other classes too.