Fall 2016

Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 100—5

Class Time: 2:00pm—3:15pm

Monday, Wednesday

CCC 303

**Instructor:**

Charles Joshua Horn, Ph.D.

[Joshua.Horn@uwsp.edu](mailto:Joshua.Horn@uwsp.edu)

Office Location: CCC 470

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 which 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 which can be used in a wide variety of settings—both academic and otherwise.

Philosophy is sometimes understood as a discipline which 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. What happens after we die?
3. What is a soul? Does everyone have one?
4. What is the nature of consciousness?
5. Do we have free will?
6. How do we explain the existence of evil in the world?
7. What is the “good” life?

**Text:**

Purchase:

1. *Phaedo*

Oxford University Press

ISBN: 978-0-19-953893-5

1. *Meditations, Objections, and Replies*

Hackett Publishing

ISBN: 978-0872207981

1. *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*

Hackett Publishing

ISBN: 978-0-87220-402-7

**Course Goals:**

By carefully examining historical and contemporary philosophical literature related to the nature of reality, knowledge, and ethics, students will gain a better understanding of themselves and their role in the world. By the end of the semester, students will have a better understanding of what it means to be a responsible and self-reflective global citizen.

**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.

Students will be permitted four unexcused absences. Any absence after four will result in a 5% deduction from the overall grade. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class, so if students are late, they will not be counted present for the day.

* 1. Four In-Class Exams: 80% Total (20% Each)
  2. One Group Presentation: 20% Total (20% Each)

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

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **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:**

September 7 Syllabus/Course Introduction

What is Philosophy?

**Unit I**

September 12 Plato Phaedo 59c—69e

September 14 Plato Phaedo 69e—84b

September 19 Plato Phaedo 84c—107b

September 21 Plato Phaedo 107c—118a

September 26 Exam I

**Unit II**

September 28 Descartes Meditation I

October 3 Descartes Meditation II

October 5 Descartes Meditation III

October 10 Descartes Meditation IV

October 12 Descartes Meditation V, VI

October 17 Exam II

**Unit III**

October 19 Hume Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion

October 24 Hume Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion

October 26 Film: Life of Pi

October 31 Film: Life of Pi

November 2 Davis D2L, Theistic Arguments

November 7 Howard-Snyder D2L, God, Evil, and Suffering

November 9 Exam III

**Unit IV**

November 14 Aristotle D2L, Happiness and the Virtues

November 16 MillD2L, Utilitarianism

November 21 Kant D2L, Good Will, Duty, and the Categorical Imperative

November 23 No Class—Group Presentation Preparation

November 28 Nietzsche D2L, Beyond Good and Evil

November 30 Exam IV

December 5 Group Presentations 1-2

December 7 Group Presentations 3-4

December 12 Group Presentations 5-6

December 14 Group Presentations 7-8

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.