

PHILOSOPHY 100-02: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

FALL 2008 MWF 10:30-11:20 AM

1. COURSE INFORMATION

Instructor:: Tracy Finn

email:: tracyfinn1@gmail.com

Office: HH 320

Office hours:: Tuesday and Thursday 2-3 pm, or by appointment

2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce you to many of the longstanding philosophical problems. Over twelve weeks, we will discuss these problems and various arguments philosophers have made about them. We will tackle questions like "does God exist?" "what is the nature of our reality?" "is the mind something separate from the brain?" These questions still spark debate among philosophers, so there are no obvious solutions. It will be our job in this class to start to critically analyze and evaluate philosophical arguments regarding these issues. If this is your first philosophy course, heed the words of Douglas Adams and DON'T PANIC.

We will spend the first week going over 'the basics' - the philosophical background you'll need to get started. This will provide the foundation on which the rest of the course will be built. The readings in the textbook will provide the backbone of the material for each class, but we will engage the philosophical problems and issues more deeply in lecture. That means you need to come to class prepared (i.e. familiar with the readings and the arguments contained in them) - you'll get much more out of the lecture and ensuing discussions, and that is the most effective way to practice the critical skills vital to a successful run at a philosophy course.

3. REQUIRED AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS

Required: Pojman, L. P. & Vaughn, L. (eds). *Philosophy: The Quest for Truth* 7th Edition.

Recommended: Perry, J., Bratman, M. & Fischer, J. M. (eds.) *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings* 4th Edition

While it is recommended that you purchase the Perry, Bratman and Fischer volume as well, I will provide some photocopies of the relevant readings from this textbook in class. However, you must buy the required text. I expect you to have the readings completed by the time class starts.

4. REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DATES

- : 10 Weekly Summaries (1 page) (10%) Due **every friday by 5:00 pm**
- : Short Paper (5-7 pages) (20%) due Friday October 24
- : Major Paper (15-20 pages) (30%) due Friday November 28

: Final Exam (40%) TBA

Students will be required to hand in hard copies of their papers in class on the day that they are due. Late papers or assignments will not be accepted, unless there is a medical or compassionate reason (see academic guidelines). The weekly summaries are a way gauge how well you are doing with the readings, and a chance for you to receive feedback. The summaries should be no longer than one page, and should provide an overview of the readings and the arguments contained in them, and some brief commentary on the questions or concerns you had about the readings. They will be marked on a pass/fail basis, so if you hand in all ten (regardless of whether you've got the concepts right or not) you will receive 100% on this component.

The papers give you an opportunity to critically analyze and discuss the material in more depth and detail. I will provide topics for each of the papers as the due dates approach. Philosophy papers demonstrate a good understanding of the material in question, and contain arguments and reasons to support those arguments. **You will be required to submit papers that include each of these elements.**

The final exam will be **cumulative**, and will consist of short answer, long answer, and an essay question. The date and location of the exam will be provided closer to the examination period.

5. ACADEMIC CONDUCT AND AVOIDING ACADEMIC OFFENSES

5.1. Definition of Plagiarism: According to the University's *Policy 71 (Student Discipline)*, plagiarism is defined as "...the act of presenting the ideas, words, or other intellectual property of another as one's own. The use of other people's work must be properly acknowledged and referenced in all written material....Use of [source material] without complete and unambiguous acknowledgement...is an offence under this policy." It is vital for students to understand that plagiarism can occur inadvertently, but that it still constitutes an academic offence, whether intentional or not. It is therefore extremely important for students to understand how to carry out research and provide citations in an appropriate manner. It is also very important to understand that plagiarism is not an offence limited to the world of academia. Theft of intellectual property and violation of copyright are offences in the "real world" too, offences that can and do result in lawsuits.

5.2. Categories of Written Offences Other Than Plagiarism: Submission of work not written and prepared by you, including (but not limited to):

- (1) Copying or stealing the work of another student
- (2) Paying for the creation of work by a commercial service or by an acquaintance to be submitted by you
- (3) Acceptance of such service for free
- (4) Purchasing already existing written work
- (5) Using an essay for submission by you which was found on one of the free Internet essay sites
- (6) Writing a paper for course submission by another student
- (7) Excessive unauthorized collaboration with another student(s)
- (8) Submitting the same paper to more than one course without the permission of all instructors