

Introduction to Philosophy

Survey of Problems

SE '03
PH10020

Chaminade University of Honolulu -- Kane'ohē MCBH, Buildings 219 and 221
PH 100-20. Thursdays, April 7 to June 16, 2003, 5:30-9:40 p.m.
Instructor: Robert Buss (Phone: 528-4067, home; email: rbuss@hihumanities.org)

Introduction to Philosophy: Survey of Problems -- An examination of the role, themes, arguments, and discursive styles that characterize philosophy as an intellectual discipline. Traditional and critical theories from Western and Eastern philosophy will be considered.

Text: -- *Exploring Philosophy: An Introductory Anthology*
(Oxford University Press, 2000) -- edited by Steven M. Cahn.
-- There will also be occasional handouts and study aids.

Organization of Course and Basis for Grading

The course will be divided into units, with readings from primary and secondary sources of key figures in the history of Western philosophy. Occasional references will be made to Asian and non-Western philosophy, however this material will not be covered on the exams unless students choose to incorporate such ideas into their responses to essay questions. You will be assigned three essay projects (4-5 pp each) on subjects designated on the course outline; you will receive handouts and guidelines for each essay. A final exam will cover the entire range of topics covered in the class. Class participation and special written assignments -- home work and in-class projects -- will count toward your final grade.

Your final grade will be determined as follows --

- Three thought pieces (essays) 40 percent of final grade
- Final Examination 40 percent of final grade
- Class participation, attendance, and special in-class assignments and exercises 20 percent of final grade

"People would rather die than think... and most do." (Bertrand Russell)

"Arguments, like men, are often pretenders." (Plato)

**"The philosopher's treatment of a question is like the treatment of an illness."
(Ludwig Wittgenstein)**

**"To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust. It is to solve some of the problems of life, not only theoretically, but practically."
(Henry David Thoreau)**

GENERAL OUTLINE OF TOPICS

DATE	TOPICS AND ISSUES	ASSIGNED READINGS FROM TEXT
April 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction: What is Philosophy?• "Philosophy & the Examined Life."• The Activity, Practice & Limits of Philosophy• "opinion" or faith (<i>pistis</i>) vs "ideas" (<i>eidos</i>)• Breaking through Dogmatism: "Right You Are If You Think You Are"	<p><i>What is Philosophy?</i> page 3 <i>Defense of Socrates.</i> page 13</p> <p>Handout: "Writing About Moral Issues"</p>

DATE	TOPICS AND ISSUES	ASSIGNED READINGS FROM TEXT
April 17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reasoning: Thinking About Thinking. • Logic and Critical Thinking Skills. • Models of Critical Thinking (Toulmin) • Making Moral Arguments • <i>Ethnic Notions: Racism in America</i> 	Handouts on Logic and Critical Thinking <i>The Scope of Logic & Improving Your Thinking</i> pages 43-56 Handout: "The Conscience of Huckleberry Finn" by Jonathan Bennett
First Essay Topic: What is Conscience? -- Racism and Its Sources in Human Feelings, Imagination and Knowledge Claims		
April 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy of Morality. • The Moral Challenge of Relativism. • Three Traditions of Moral Argument. (Virtue Ethics, Duty Ethics & Utilitarianism) • Ethics at the Beginning of Life: Abortion 	Essays on Ethics. pages 245-65 Reading by Aristotle. page 303 Readings by Feinberg and Held pages 270-87
May 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy of Morality. • Moral Principles, Character and Liberty. • Three Traditions of Moral Argument. • Ethics at the End of Life: Euthanasia Active and Passive 	Essays on Ethics. pages 265-70 Readings by Kant & John Stuart Mill. pages 308-18 Readings by Rachels, Sullivan and Hook pages 288-302
Second Essay Topic: An Ethical Controversy and Corresponding Responsibility (1984 catastrophe at the Union Carbide chemical plant in Bhopal, India)		
May 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Philosophy. • Concepts of Equality, Justice, Fairness, Human Rights, and Social Responsibilities. • Moral Problem: The Death Penalty 	Essays on Society. pages 321-34 <i>Crito</i> by Plato. page 373 <i>The Death Penalty</i> page 334 <i>Capital Punishment</i> page 336
May 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Philosophy. • Concepts of Equality, Justice, Fairness, Human Rights, and Social Responsibilities. 	<i>Democracy</i> by Dewey. page 321 <i>On Liberty</i> by J.S. Mill. page 386
May 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Just War Theory, Terrorism and the Modern World 	Handout: "The Ethics of Retaliation" Handout: "Terrorism, Innocence and War" From Text: "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands" by Michael Walzer (p. 326)
Third Essay Topic: Terrorism as a Philosophical Problem		
May 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and Self. • Appearance and Reality. • Free Will and Determinism • The Crisis of Modernism 	Essays on Theory of knowledge pages 71-80 <i>Meno</i> by Plato. page 117 <i>Meditations on First Phil</i> by Descartes. page 151 Free Will / Determinism pages 88-101
June 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Philosophy of Religion. • The World as <i>mythos</i> and <i>logos</i> • God, Reason and Faith. • The Problem of Evil. • Philosophy and the Meaning of Life. • The Value of Philosophy. • Review for Final Exam 	Essays on God. pages 175-97 Essays on Faith. pages 198-209 Readings by Plato, Aquinas and Hume pages 210-41 Essay by R. Taylor. page 405 Essay by B. Russell. page 413
June 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Exam (in-class) 	