

PHIL 3228: THE RATIONAL ANIMAL HONORS

Fall 2012

M & W 12:30-1:45/NAC 6/112

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Office Hours: M & W 11:00am-12:00pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The general aim of this course is to serve as an introduction to central philosophical problems and methods of philosophical argumentation and analysis. We will consider some of the following questions: How can we know there is an external world? Can we be free if the world is determined by physical laws? Are our minds just physical entities? What makes an action right and/or good?

READING: All of the primary reading for this course will be posted on the course website

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: You will be required to take an in-class exam and to write 6 1-page reading responses, a 3-page paper, and a 5-page final paper. You are **required** to bring a **draft** of each paper to class for a peer-review writing workshop on the assigned dates (see schedule). We will also occasionally have in-class quizzes or assignments.

Exam #1	15%
Paper #1 (3-4 pages)	20%
Paper #2 (4-5 pages)	30%
7 Reading Responses	20%
In-Class Quizzes/Assignments	5%
Participation	5%
Attendance	5%

LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY: **NO LATE Reading responses** will be accepted (no exceptions!). Late papers will only be accepted in cases of emergency AND arrangements must be made with me at least **48 hours in advance**. No exams will be issued after the exam date, except for in extreme medical circumstances with a hospital note.

ATTENDANCE: **Regular attendance is required.** You will be granted up to **3 excused absences** (medical, family emergencies, etc) throughout the term, any absences above that number will affect your grade significantly. If you arrive **late to class**, you will be called on to contribute to the class discussion upon your arrival.

PLAGIARISM: Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be subject to penalties in conformity with the College's policy on Academic Integrity.

LEARNING COURSE OBJECTIVES: By the end of this course you should: (1) Be able to read philosophy; that is, to identify the thesis of a piece of philosophical writing and the arguments or evidence adduced in support of that thesis. (2) Be able to write philosophy; that is, to present a claim in clear terms and to defend it in a logically coherent manner. (3) Be able to reconstruct and debate some foundational issues in the Western philosophical tradition.

As part of the College's General Education Curriculum, this course is designed to satisfy the requirements for a *Logical-Philosophical Perspective* course. Students successfully completing this course will develop the following proficiencies: will have had multiple experiences in communicating ideas in writing and speaking by completing assignments totaling at least 3500 words of writing, will have had experiences that emphasize analytic and/or philosophical reasoning to critically examine fundamental questions of ethics, justice and epistemology, and will have had multiple experiences in finding information and evaluating the reliability of this information.

Date		Reading	Assignment
M	08/27	Introduction/Jim Pryor's "Guidelines on Reading Philosophy"	
ETHICS			
W	08/29	Singer, <i>Famine, Affluence, and Morality</i> /Vaughn, Chapter 1 of <u>Writing Philosophy</u>	
W	09/05	Rachels, <i>The Challenge of Cultural Relativism</i>	
M	09/10	Mill, Selections from <u>Utilitarianism</u> (Chapters 2 & 4)	Reading Response #1
W	09/12	Rachels, <i>Egoism and Moral Skepticism</i> / <u>Writing Philosophy</u> Chapter 2	
W	09/19	Nagel, <i>War and Massacre</i>	
M	09/24	Kant, Selections from <u>Groundwork For The Metaphysics Of Morals</u>	
M	10/01	O'Neil, <i>Kantian Ethics</i>	Reading Response #2
W	10/03	Aristotle, "The Nature of Virtue" (selections <u>Nichomachean Ethics</u>)	
W	10/10	Wolf, <i>Moral Saints</i>	
M	10/15	Thomson, <i>A Defense of Abortion</i>	Reading Response #3
W	10/17	Review	
M	10/22	Exam #1 (In Class)	
FREEDOM & DETERMINISM			
W	10/24	Stace, <i>Free Will & Determinism</i> / <u>Writing Philosophy</u> Chapter 3	Paper Topics Distributed
M	10/29	HURRICANE SANDY/CLASS CANCELED	
W	10/31	HURRICANE SANDY/CLASS CANCELED	
M	11/05	Van Inwagen, <i>The Incompatibility of Free Will & Determinism</i>	Reading Response #4
W	11/07	Kane, <i>Responsibility, Luck, and Chance</i>	
M	11/12	Strawson, <i>Freedom and Resentment</i> / <u>Writing Philosophy</u> Chapter 4	Reading Response #5
THE MIND-BODY PROBLEM			
W	11/14	Paper Writing Workshop	Paper #1 Draft Due
M	11/19	Descartes, <i>Meditations I & II</i>	Paper #1 Due
W	11/21	Ryle, <i>Descartes' Myth</i>	Topics #2 Distributed
M	11/26	Smart, <i>Sensations and Brain Processes</i>	Reading Response #6
W	11/28	Armstrong, <i>A Causal Theory of Mind</i>	
M	12/03	Jackson, <i>What Mary Didn't Know</i>	Reading Response #7
KNOWLEDGE OF THE EXTERNAL WORLD			
W	12/05	Paper Writing Workshop	Paper #2 Draft Due
M	12/10	Descartes, <i>Meditations I & II</i> (Reread)/Moore, <i>Proof of an External World</i> (pp 145-150)	Paper #2 Due
W	12/12	Russell, <i>The Value of Philosophy</i>	Reading Response Make-Up