

PHI 1: INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Fall 2007

INSTRUCTOR

Michael Glanzberg

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Office hours: M 11:00-12:00, W 2:00-3:00

TIME AND PLACE

Lectures: M, W, F 10:00-10:50, 194 Chemistry

Discussion Sections: Various locations.

Teaching Assistants:

Christopher Buckels

David Gilbert

Lucas Halpin

Ian Spencer

Ora Sraboyants

DESCRIPTION

This course has two central goals. The first is to give you an understanding of what philosophical problems are and how they might be solved. This will be done through consideration of some perennial philosophical problems, drawing on readings from important figures in the history of philosophy, as well as contemporary authors. It should be stressed that we will not survey the history of philosophy, or even the history of the problems we deal with. The second goal is to develop your analytic and argumentative skills.

PREREQUISITES

There are no prerequisites for this course.

TEXTS

Reason and Responsibility, Thirteenth Edition, edited by Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau.

REQUIREMENTS

Attendance: Attendance at lectures and recitation sections is required. Lectures will introduce material not in the readings. One of the goals of the course is to help students develop their critical and argumentative skills. Because of this, participation in section is especially important.

Readings: Reading, discussing, and writing about the assigned readings are essential. There are readings assignment for each class meeting. They are not easy: they are not introductions to philosophy but rather examples of it. Though the number of pages in each readings is small, you should expect them to require careful and often slow reading.

Papers: Two papers of approximate 5 pages each.

Short Assignments: Very brief preparatory assignments to prepare for sections will be due (more or less) weekly in section.

Final Exam: The course will have a 2-hour final, Wednesday December 12, 8:00 am.

GRADING

Grades will be based on the following distribution.

10% section grade: based on contribution to discussion, and short assignments, as well as attendance and preparation

55% papers: 25% first paper, 30% second paper

35% final exam

SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

All readings are from Feinberg and Shafer-Landau, *Reason and Responsibility*.

Week 1
September 28 Organization and Introduction.

Questions and Arguments

Week 2
October 1, 3 Anselm, "The Ontological Argument."
Rowe, "The Ontological Argument."
Guanilo, "On Behalf of the Fool."

Knowledge

Week 2 continued
October 5 Pollock, "A Brain in a Vat."

Week 3
October 8, 10, 12 Unger, "An Argument for Skepticism."
Chisolm, "The Problem of the Criterion."

Week 4
October 15 Chisolm continued.

Mind and Brain

Week 4 continued
October 17, 19 Carruthers, "The Mind is the Brain."

Week 5
October 22, 24, 26 Carruthers continued.
Jackson, "The Qualia Problem."

[Paper 1 due Monday, October 22, in class.]

Week 6
October 29 Lycan, "Robots and Minds."

Freedom of Will

Week 6 continued
October 31,
November 2 Feinberg and Shafer-Landau, pp. 408-413.
Kane, "Free Will: Ancient Disputes, New Themes," section I.
Ayer, "Freedom and Necessity."

Week 7
November 5, 7, 9 Ayer, continued.
Kane, continued

Ethics

Week 8
November 14, 16
(Note Monday Holiday) Mill, "Utilitarianism."

Week 9 Mill, continued.
November 19, 21
Thanksgiving holiday November 23

[Paper 2 due Monday, November 19, in class.]

Week 10 Kant, "The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative."
November 26, 28, 30

Week 11 Kant, continued.
December 3, 5

Week 11 continued Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Subjectivism."
December 7

Writing Assignments

The due dates for papers are:

Paper 1: October 22

Paper 2: November 19

You are encouraged to discuss writing assignments with your TA, and with each other, but of course, the written work you submit must be entirely your own.