

Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 110 – CRN 25219 – Sec 018

Fall Term 2009 – Purdue University

Instructor: Daniel Kelly

Syllabus

1. Course Description

There are two main goals of this course. The first is to introduce students to the Western philosophical tradition, its major figures and defining themes. Those themes include religion and the existence of God, perception and the nature of knowledge, the nature of the self, the mind-body problem, free will, and morality. The second is to provide students with the tools to think clearly, articulate their own views, and evaluate the arguments of others.

2. Class Meetings

Class meets Tuesday and Thursday from 10:30am – 11:45am in Room 1268 on the first floor of Beering Hall.

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Office: 7126 Beering Hall

Office Phone: 732-932-9861 ext. 114

Email: drkelly@purdue.edu

Fall Term Office Hours: Wednesday, 1:00 – 4:00 pm and by appointment

4. Course Requirements and Grading

Grades on papers and exams will be given on the standard 0-100 point grading scale:

100-93:	A
92-90:	A-
89-87:	B+
86-83:	B
82-80:	B-
79-77:	C+
76-73:	C
72-70:	C-
69-60:	D
59-0:	F

Final grades will be determined by 3 papers, a midterm, and a final exam. They will be weighted as follows:

Three Papers	20% each (60% total)
Midterm	15%

Final Exam 25%

Exams will be closed book short essay format. A list of potential exam questions will be made available before both the midterm and the final.

Papers will be 3 ½ – 5 pages, and paper topics will be posted roughly 2 weeks before they are due. EMAILED AND ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. Papers not turned in by the end of class the day they are due are LATE. For each day late, 7 points will be deducted.

5. Course Policies

Class sessions: I will try to begin on time, and will usually go right up until the end of the class session. Please come on time. Do not pack up your materials until class has been dismissed. Talking during lectures will not be tolerated. Repeat offenders will be asked to leave.

Attendance: See Attendance Policy for details.

Emergencies: In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances.

Plagiarism: With the advent of the internet, plagiarism has become an increasingly serious problem at universities around the country, particularly in classes like this one, where papers determine a substantial part of the grade.

In order to avoid plagiarizing from a source, both direct quotations *and paraphrases or summaries* of material found in traditional print media or on the internet must be acknowledged. If you have any questions about how this definition will be interpreted, please do not hesitate to discuss the matter with me.

Plagiarism and cheating on exams undermines the integrity of the academic community. When undetected, it gives the perpetrator an unfair advantage over students who are graded on the basis of their own work. In this class we will do our best to detect plagiarism and cheating. Students who are aware of violations by others should bring this to my attention. This is the right thing to do. It is also in your own self-interest.

There will be zero tolerance for plagiarism in this course. Plagiarized papers will receive a 0, the student will automatically fail the course, and their name will be handed given to the university authorities. For more on the Purdue University policy on plagiarism, see the following website:

http://www.purdue.edu/univregs/pages/stu_conduct/stu_regulations.html

With each paper assignment, a handful of students may be selected at random to submit their papers to TurnItIn, an online service that maintains an enormous database of papers that it uses to check for instances of plagiarism.

External Sources: Using sources not listed on the syllabus in researching and writing your papers is fine, as long as they are both to the point, and are properly cited. And at all times, when in doubt, *cite your sources!* It is the best way to avoid being accused of plagiarism.

This is probably the best place to make this point, too: Wikipedia can be valuable for getting a very broad grasp of positions and debates, but when it gets into details, especially on philosophic topics, it is very often horrible – sketchy, convoluted, misinformed, and often simply wrong. If you wish to consult online resources, I suggest you use some of the other, much better sites. Most prominent is the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, but others are useful as well:

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://plato.stanford.edu/>
The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>
Episteme Links <http://www.epistemelinks.com/Main/MainEncy.aspx>

6. Website

Information and comments will often be posted on the course website, which can be reached via my homepage:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/>

I am teaching 2 different Introduction to Philosophy courses this semester, so make sure that you click on the correct link, or else you will get incorrect information about this course. I mark this as my “Section” course (the other is marked as “Lecture”). To go directly to this course’s website, the address is:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/KellyIntroPhilSectionFall2009.html>

7. Topics and Readings

Here is a tentative schedule of topics and readings. Amendments and alterations will be announced in class as we go, on the webpage. Since reminders and other information will be distributed of the email list, *make sure you check the website on a fairly regular basis.*

Week 1: August 24th

Introduction & Overview of the Course

Readings: Russell, “The Value of Philosophy”; Plato 1st reading, *Apology*,

Philosophy of Religion: Groundwork, Questions, and Distinctions

Readings: Aquinas, *The Summa Theologica*,

Week 2: August 31st

Philosophy of Religion: 3 Arguments for the Existence of God

Readings: Anselm, *Proslogium, Or Discourse on the Existence of God*; Paley, *Natural Theology*; Hume 1st Reading, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*; Dennett 1st reading, “Show Me the Science”

Week 3: September 7th

Philosophy of Religion: The Problem of Evil, and Pascal’s Wager

Readings: Hume 2nd reading, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*; Mackie, *Free Will and the Problem of Evil*; Pascal, *Notes on Natural Religion and Other Subjects*; Saka, *Pascal’s Wager about God* (from IEP)

Week 4: September 14th

Philosophy of Religion: Epistemic Arguments

Readings: James, *The Will to Believe*; Plantinga, *An Interview with Alvin Plantinga*

Week 5: September 21st

Epistemology: The External World

Readings: Descartes 1st reading, *Meditations on First Philosophy*; Locke 1st reading, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

First Paper due in Lecture Tuesday 22nd

Week 6: September 28th

Epistemology: The External World

Readings: Locke 1st reading, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*; Berkeley, *Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous*

Week 7: October 5th

Epistemology: The Problem of Induction

Readings: Hume 3rd reading, *An Inquiry Concerning Human Understanding*; Salmon, *An Encounter with David Hume*

Week 8: October 12th: **No Class Tuesday 13th – October Break**

The Mind-Body Problem: Dualism

Readings: Descartes 2nd reading, *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Week 9: October 19th

The Mind-Body Problem: Alternatives to Dualism

Readings: Lycan, *The Mind-Body Problem*

Midterm Exam Tuesday 20th

Week 10: October 26th

The Mind-Body Problem: The Limits of Materialism

Readings: Searle, *Minds, Brains, and Programs*; Nagel, *What is it Like to be a Bat?*

Week 11: November 2nd

Free Will, Responsibility, and Determinism: Compatibilism and Libertarianism

Readings: Timpe, *Free Will* (from IEP)

Week 12: November 9th

Free Will, Responsibility, and Determinism: Compatibilism and Libertarianism

Readings: James, *The Dilemma of Determinism*

Personal Identity: Selves and Souls

Readings: Perry 1st reading, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*,

Second Paper due in Lecture Thursday 12th

Week 13: November 16th

Personal Identity: Memories and Brains

Readings: Locke, 2nd reading, *Of Identity and Diversity*; Perry 2nd reading, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*

Week 14: November 23rd: **No Class Thursday 26th or Friday 27th – Thanksgiving Break**

Personal Identity: Memories and Brains

Readings: Perry 3rd reading, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*

Week 15: November 30th

MetaEthics: The Meaning of Morality

Readings: Plato 2nd reading, *Euthyphro*; Rachels 1st reading, *Does Morality Depend on Religion?*; Rachels 2nd reading, *Subjectivism in Ethics*

Week 16: December 7th

MetaEthics: The Meaning of Morality

Readings: Stevenson, *The Emotive Meaning of Ethical Terms*; Firth, *Ethical Absolutism and the Ideal Observer*

Normative Ethics: Utilitarian and Deontological Theories

Readings: Mill, *Utilitarianism*; Kant, *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* (time permitting)

Third Paper Due at Last Discussion Section Dec 11th

Final Exam: Tuesday 12/15, 7:00pm – 9:00pm, in Room 1268 in the Beering Hall (where class is held).