

Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 110

Spring Term 2013 – Purdue University

Instructor: Daniel Kelly

Teaching Assistants: Brian Johnson and Natalia Washington

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 lectures meet Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30pm – 9:20pm in Room 172 of the Wetherill Hall of Chemistry. Recitation sections are as follows:

REC

| | | | | | |
|---------|-------|---|----------------|-----------|--------------------|
| 005 REC | 23952 | F | 8:30 – 9:20a | BRNG 1254 | Brian Johnson |
| 006 REC | 23953 | F | 9:30 – 10:20a | BRNG 1254 | Brian Johnson |
| 003 REC | 23950 | F | 11:30 – 12:20p | BRNG 1254 | Natalia Washington |
| 002 REC | 23949 | F | 12:30–1:20p | BRNG 1254 | Brian Johnson |
| 001 REC | 23948 | F | 1:30 – 2:30p | BRNG 1254 | Natalia Washington |
| 004 REC | 23951 | F | 2:30 – 3:20p | BRNG 1254 | Natalia Washington |

3. Office Hours and Contact Information

Professor Kelly

Office: 7126 Beering Hall

Office Phone: 765-494-4290

Email: drkelly@purdue.edu

Spring Term Office Hours: 11:00am – 1:00pm Wednesdays and by appointment

Brian Johnson

Office: 6175 Beering Hall

Email: johns383@purdue.edu

Spring Term Office Hours: 10:30am – 11:30am Tuesday/Thursdays and by appointment

Natalia Washington

Office: 7143 Beering Hall

Email: nwashin@purdue.edu

Spring Term Office Hours: 10:00am – 12:00pm Wednesdays 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 roughly as follows:

| | |
|--------------|----------------------|
| Three Papers | 20% each (60% total) |
| Midterm | 15% |
| Final Exam | 25% |

The date and time for the Final Exam are not scheduled yet.

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 4 – 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

Lectures: 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.

Laptop computers: I would prefer that you exercise enough self-restraint to keep from texting for the 50 minutes that lectures are in session, but since a formal prohibition would be too difficult to enforce, this remains a preference. Use of laptop computers and iPads during lectures will not be allowed, however.

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. Information about emergencies changes in the course can be gotten by contacting either instructor via email or phone, or by consulting

the course website. Purdue's Emergency Procedures Handbook and other important emergency planning information is available online at

http://www.purdue.edu/emergency_preparedness/

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 or your TA.

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 websites:

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

<http://www.purdue.edu/odos/osrr/academicintegritybrochure.php>

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 useful 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 website, which can be reached via my homepage:

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

To go directly to this course's website, the address is:

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~drkelly/KellyIntroPhilSpring2013.html>

7. Topics and Readings

Here is a tentative schedule of topics and readings. Depending how fast we are going, amendments and alterations will be announced in class as we go, on the webpage. Since reminders and other information will be posted on the course website, *make sure you check that website on a fairly regular basis.*

Week 1: January 7th

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*; Anselm, *Proslogium, Or Discourse on the Existence of God*

Week 2: January 14th:

Philosophy of Religion: 3 Arguments for the Existence of God (cont.)

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: January 21st **No Class Monday 21st – Martin Luther King Jr. Day** (Doesn't affect us)

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*

Week 4: January 28th

Finish up Philosophy of Religion: Epistemic Arguments

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

Begin Epistemology: The External World

Readings: Descartes 1st reading, *Meditations on First Philosophy*;

Week 5: February 4th

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

First Paper due in Sections Friday February 8th

Week 6: February 11th

Epistemology: Finish up The External World

Epistemology: The Problem of Induction

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

Week 7: February 18th

Epistemology: Finish up The Problem of Induction

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

Week 8: February 25th

The Mind-Body Problem: Dualism and Reductive Materialism

- Readings: Descartes 2nd reading, *Meditations on First Philosophy*
Midterm Exam Thursday February 28th
- Week 9: March 4th
The Mind-Body Problem: Alternatives to Dualism
Readings: Lycan, *The Mind-Body Problem*; Fodor, *The Mind-Body Problem*
Spring Break: Week of March 11th
- Week 10: March 18th
The Mind-Body Problem: The Limits of Materialism
Readings: Searle, *Minds, Brains, and Programs*, Nagel, *What is it Like to be a Bat?*
Free Will, Responsibility, and Determinism: Compatibilism and Libertarianism
Readings: Timpe, *Free Will*; Holmstrom, *Firming Up Soft Determinism*
- Week 11: March 25th
Free Will, Responsibility, and Determinism: Compatibilism and Libertarianism
Readings: Nahmias, *Neuroscience and the Death of Free Will?*
Second Paper due in Sections Friday March 29th
- Week 12: April 1st
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*,
- Week 13: April 8th
Personal Identity: Memories and Brains
Readings: Locke, 2nd reading, *Of Identity and Diversity*; Perry 2nd reading, *A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality*
MetaEthics: The Meaning of Morality
Readings: Plato 2nd reading, *Euthyphro*; Rachels 1st reading, *Does Morality Depend on Religion?*; Antony, *Good Minus God*
- Week 14: April 15th
MetaEthics: The Meaning of Morality
Readings: Rachels 2nd reading, *Subjectivism in Ethics*; Rachel's 3rd reading, *The Challenge of Cultural Relativism*
- Week 15: April 22nd
MetaEthics: The Meaning of Morality
Readings: Rachel's 3rd reading, *The Challenge of Cultural Relativism*
Normative Ethics: Utilitarianism (Time permitting)
Readings: Mill, *Utilitarianism*
Third Paper Due in Section Friday April 26th

Final Exam:

TBA Room 172 in the Wetherill Lab of Chemistry