



PH 125 Introduction to Philosophy (3) Fall 2013

Time: Tuesday & Thursday 1:00 – 2:15
Location: Airhart

Instructor Information:
Ken Nickel (MAR, MSc, PhD ABD)
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Course Description

The course introduces students to the broad survey of the Western philosophical tradition. Special attention will be given to enduring philosophical issues including, but not limited to, the nature of reality and knowledge, the existence of God, the mind/body problem, freewill and determinism, value theory and ethics.

Course Objectives

1. Students should learn and understand the classical and enduring philosophical issues related to metaphysics, epistemology, and axiology.
2. Students should gain knowledge of the most prominent and significant contributors to the Western philosophical tradition.
3. Students should develop an appreciation for the invaluable contribution that philosophy has made to other disciplines and fields such as natural science, social science, politics, law, education, and theology.

Required Textbook

- Abel, Donald C. (Ed.). (2012). *Fifty Readings in Philosophy* (4th ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Recommended Textbook

- Vaughn, Lewis, & McIntosh, Jillian Scott (2009). *Writing Philosophy: A Guide for Canadian Students*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Online Resource

- Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (*SEP*)
- <http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html>

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance and Participation** 10%
 - Please make every effort to be seated and prepared for class by 1:00. Attendance will be taken periodically over the course of the term at the beginning of class. Students are expected to attend each class session with **an engaged frame of mind**. Students should be prepared to contribute **thoughtful** conversation to the topics under discussion. **Absence from class may result a deduction of 1 mark.** Class participation is assessed on the balance. Periodically students will be called upon randomly (from the class list) to answer a question or to offer an insightful opinion. Quality of responses can contribute to class participation assessment.
 - Students *may* enhance their participation grade by contributing commentary and analysis to **online discussion forums found on Moodle.**
 - **Students in class but otherwise engaged in non-class activities are simply in the same room and may be assessed as absent.** Students who regularly arrive late, leave in the middle, or depart early may be marked as absent.

2. **Midterm Examination** 20%
 - Thursday, October 17th

3. **Research Paper** 25%
 - Due: December 9th @ 4:00 PM
 - A separate document regarding topics, format and submission guidelines, and late policy will be available on Moodle. Papers will be submitted to **“Turnitin”** for originality assessment. Personal privacy is protected.
 - Students who have not submitted research papers prior to the Final Exam will not be permitted to write the Final Exam.

4. **Final Exam** 45%
 - Date: Monday, December 16th @ 9:00 AM
 - **Students must pass the Final Exam** to ensure a passing grade in the course. A student who performs well during the term but fails the Final Exam may fail the course.
 - Students should refrain from scheduling flights or travel of any sort that will conflict with the Final Examination schedule. Final examinations will not be rescheduled to accommodate travel arrangements.

Grading:

Letter Grade	GPA	Description	Percentage
A+	4.0		96-100 %
A	4.0	Exceptional	91-95 %
A-	3.7		86-90 %
B+	3.3		82-85 %
B	3.0	Exceeds Expectations	75-81 %
B-	2.7		72-74 %
C+	2.3		68-71 %
C	2.0	Meets Expectations	63-67 %
C-	1.7		60-62 %
D+	1.3		56-59 %
D	1.0	Minimal Pass	50-55 %
F	0.0	Failure	≤ 49 %

Important Dates

- Last day to enter a course without permission, withdraw from course and receive tuition refund, and change from credit to audit is September 15th @ 11:59 PM.
- Last day to request revised time for a final examination is October 28th.
- Last day to withdraw from courses without academic penalty is November 12th.

Important Notes

- **Students are responsible to check the Moodle** course site and their Ambrose e-mail accounts regularly. Moodle will remind students of upcoming topics and readings. E-mail may be used to notify students of cancelled classes or other important details relating to the course.
- Use of cell phones, recording devices, head phones, and all other non-essential technology is **prohibited**. **Text messaging** during class is prohibited.
- Phones must be put away during class.
- **Lap top computers, I-pads, tablets, etc., are prohibited** from general use during class. Exceptions may be made on an individual basis for students with relevant disabilities and needs. Students wanting to use lap tops in class must discuss this with me personally. Lap tops used for purposes unrelated to taking lecture notes are prohibited.
- Students are expected to respect the learning environment of the classroom. Make every attempt to be on time and to remain seated until the class session ends. Keep unnecessary conversations to a minimum as they are distracting to both the instructor and fellow classmates.
- *Ambrose is committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.*
- *Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.*
- *Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension." Alternative times for final examinations cannot be scheduled without prior approval. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."*
- *Students are advised to retain a copy of this syllabus for their records.*

PH 125 COURSE OUTLINE¹

SEP 5 Introduction

SEP 10 Plato's *Apology* (Reading **1**: pages 5-24)

SEP 12 Plato's *Euthyphro* (Reading **11**: 108-123)

Epistemology: What is knowledge? How is it acquired? What can be known? What is 'Truth'?

SEP 17 Platonism: The Cave and the Divided Line (Reading **13**: pages 133-143)

Is Justified True Belief Knowledge?; Gettier Problems²

SEP 19 Rationalism: Descartes (Reading **14**: pages 144-154) & Spinoza (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/spinoza/>)

SEP 24 Empiricism: Locke & Hume (Readings **15 & 16**: pages 155-174)

SEP 26 **NO CLASS**

OCT 1 Constructivism: Kant (Reading **17**: pages 175-187)

OCT 3 Truth Theory (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/truth/>)

OCT 8

OCT 10 Feminist Epistemology: Jaggar (Reading **18**: pages 188-198)

Metaphysics: What is reality? Of what does a human being consist? What is the relationship between physics and metaphysics?

OCT 15 Materialism vs Idealism: Locke (p 161-164),
Berkeley (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/berkeley/>)

Hegel (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hegel/>)

Rorty (SEP <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rorty/>)

OCT 17 **Midterm Exam**

OCT 22 The Mind-Body Problem: Cartesian Dualism vs. Physicalism
Nagel: *What is it like to be a bat?*
(Readings **19-21**: pages 201-228)

¹ This course outline is provisional and may, at the discretion of the instructor, require revision over the course of the term. The instructor reserves the right to deviate from the outline to accommodate timely issues or pressing pedagogical concerns.

² Gettier, Edmund. (1963). Is Justified True Belief Knowledge? *Analysis*, 23, 121-123. (Link provided.)

OCT 24

OCT 29 The Christian Debate: Plantinga's *Against Materialism*³
 OCT 31

The Problem of Self Identity

NOV 5 Minds, Bodies, and Souls: Plato, Locke, Hume, and Dennett
 (Readings **22-25**: pages 229-265)

NOV 7

The Problem of Freewill

NOV 12 Indeterminism, Determinism, Compatibilism, and Weakness of Will
 (Readings **26-29**: pages 269-303)

NOV 14

Philosophy of Religion: Metaphysical, Epistemological, and Moral Considerations

NOV 19 (Summary of Readings **3-12**: pages 31-129)
 Ontological, Cosmological Arguments; The Problem of Evil; The
 Rationality of Belief

NOV 21 Compatibility of Science and Religion: Contemporary challenges of
 "New Atheism"

Ethics: What is the good life? What is morality about? What should motivate us to be moral?

NOV 26 (Summary of Readings **32-38** : pages 328-396)
 The Right and the Good: Aristotle, Aquinas, Kant, & Mill

NOV 28 Utilitarianism vs. Deontology

DEC 3

DEC 5 Creating Meaningful Lives: Sartre, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and
 Christian Existentialism.

³ Plantinga, Alvin. (2006). Against Materialism. *Faith and Philosophy*, 23, 3-32. (Link provided.)