

## Philosophy 100: Introduction to Philosophy

(A02; CRN = 13614 [Fall 2017])

### General Course Information & Class Schedule

#### 1. General Course Information

<u>Instructor:</u>	David Scott
<u>Meeting Place &amp; Times:</u>	CLE A127, Mon & Thurs, 8:30 am - 9:50 am.
<u>Office:</u>	CLE B320
<u>Office Hours:</u>	Mon. & Thurs. 11:30-12:30 a.m. (or by appointment)
<u>Telephone &amp; Email:</u>	250-721-7517; djfscott@uvic.ca

#### ABOUT THIS COURSE:

This course is intended to provide students with a wide-ranging introduction to the main areas of philosophy and to some of the main philosophers in the Western tradition. Students will be introduced to basic metaphysical world-views and classical questions concerning, e.g., the reality and nature of the universe, the mind, the self, God. The course also focuses on basic questions in epistemology (theory of knowledge) and value theory (ethics).

#### TEXT AND COURSE MATERIAL:

- *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings* (4<sup>th</sup> edition), edited by Louis P. Pojman and James Fieser. Oxford: Oxford University Press 2008.

#### MARKING SCHEME & CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION:

a) First term: take-home essay (20%); Christmas exam (30%). Second term: take-home essay (20%); final exam (30%).

(b) In this course you can assume that all essay or exam topics are intended to test you on *the material covered in class*. You are of course permitted and encouraged to supplement class discussion of the subject with outside material, but the minimum expectation is that you deal with the material covered in class, and that you address the points raised there about that material. This does not mean that for tests and essays you are expected merely to repeat the in-class proceedings. Rather, it means that you are expected to take account of or do justice to in-class discussion. The reason for this requirement is that the tests and essays for this course constitute part of a continuous whole with the lectures and in-class discussions. They do not float free of the work done in the classroom, though of course the tests and especially the essays also provide you with room to explore topics outside of the classroom confines. Roughly speaking, “B+” and “A-“ papers take account of and rise to the level of the class discussion; “A” and “A+” papers take that discussion to a higher/deeper level.

c) Criteria for evaluation: The criteria I use to evaluate essays are, I believe, criteria which common sense would suggest in the assessment of a philosophy essay. Primarily my concern is with content or substance. Of course, this does not mean that form or style count for nothing (and indeed it may not ultimately be possible to divorce form from content). In indicating these evaluation criteria I emphasize that philosophy is an *arts* or *humanities* subject, which means that assessing the merits of a philosophy paper ultimately requires qualitative evaluation or judgment on my part. Therefore, I do not assign precise numerical values to the following assessment criteria; nor is there a mathematical formula I can employ to judge the quality of philosophical writing. However, as a rough guide I employ a list of relative values, presented here in ascending order of importance:

- spelling/grammar
- organization & clarity of expression
- accuracy of exposition
- use of examples reflecting understanding of the subject
- breadth of analysis, i.e. number of points covered
- depth of analysis, i.e. how far into the issue analysis is pushed
- resourcefulness, originality and imagination
- tightness, rigor or logical coherence of analysis
- overall degree of philosophical insight

I stress that the order of these criteria is not absolute. Thus, sometimes less important criteria will be given more weight than more important ones. For instance, a student's use and analysis of examples might be so good that I am led to conclude that that student has an excellent understanding of the subject. In such a case the value I attach to the use of examples might increase significantly, and I might overlook the fact that, for instance, the student has failed to cover as many points as other students.

d) Academic Honesty: Cheating of *any* kind, including collusion (working with others too closely) and plagiarism from (i) books and/or articles, (ii) other students' papers, and (iii) papers or other material on the internet, is a serious academic offence. University regulations also prohibit students from submitting the same work for two different courses; in other words, plagiarizing or "recycling" one's own work is not permitted. If detected, cheating can result in dismissal from this course (with an "F"), and dismissal from the university. Here is a link to the University's Academic Integrity policy:

<http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-05/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html>

#### SUBMITTING AND RETURNING GRADED WORK:

(a) All essays must be *typed (12-font, Times), double-spaced, paginated, and contain the word-count on the front cover*. Essays should be stapled, *not* paper-clipped. I will not accept essays submitted as email attachments; nor will I accept essays that exceed the maximum word limit. In cases where I think the word limit has been exceeded, I will require an electronic copy to check. I'm afraid I will not be available to discuss test or essay questions on the day before or on the day they are due to be submitted, as I need to avoid being swamped by last-minute enquiries.

(b) In general, I will return your graded work during class time, within two weeks of its having been submitted. If you are not there to receive your work when I return it in class, you can pick it up either from me in my office or, if you are willing to sign a waiver form, from the box outside the departmental office. The Protection of Privacy Act prevents me from placing your work in that box unless you have signed the waiver form.

(c) When graded work is returned to you it will frequently be annotated with comments. If you wish to discuss your work with me, please read those comments first. To give you a chance to do this, as a matter of policy I do not discuss work on the same day as it is returned.

#### LATE ASSIGNMENTS / MISSED TESTS:

Late assignments will be accepted without penalty only with medical or other compelling reason. Otherwise, late assignments will be accepted with penalty. The penalty is a reduction of 10 percentage points from the assessed grade of the paper per (working or non-working) day or part thereof, up to a maximum of 4 days. After 4 days late papers will not be accepted. Missed tests can be made up, but only with medical or other compelling reason.

#### OFFICE HOURS:

Because of demand (especially near test days or essay due-dates), you will need to make an appointment to see me both during my office hours or, if you are unable to see me then, at some other time. Appointments are generally limited to about fifteen minutes per student, so it's best to come prepared with specific questions.

#### MISCELLANEOUS NOTES AND CLASS POLICIES:

(a) Class discussion & participation: In general, my classes tend to involve lots of discussion. I encourage and greatly value your in-class contributions, and I can assure you that other students do too. It is a frequently unacknowledged fact of the classroom that if you have a question or comment, it's likely that others have the same one too. So go ahead and ask your question, or make your comment: it helps me, you, and your classmates. If, however, you are more shy or reserved but still have comments or questions, please see me during office hours.

(b) Emailing me: Because of problems with SPAM and viruses transmitted by email, I have to request that whenever you email me you make sure to put something in the "subject" line of your email to identify you as a student in this course. If you don't do this, and I don't recognize your name, I will delete your email without opening it.

(c) Coming late to class: The classroom is a work environment. It can be a distraction when people walk in late. So please try to be on time.

(d) Visits to the classroom by non-registered students: As the instructor for this class I am *duty*-bound to ensure that a work environment is preserved in the class. Both students and I can find it a distraction for strangers to walk into the classroom. It takes some students a good deal of time before they gain confidence to participate in the class proceedings, and the presence of a stranger can be disruptive in that regard. If, as sometimes happens, you wish to invite a friend to attend my class to check it out, you need to ask permission ahead of time.

(e) Use of computers in the class: For the purpose of taking notes, you are welcome to use laptops with quiet keyboards in the classroom. Watching films and other distracting uses of computers are prohibited.

## 2. Class Schedule (1<sup>st</sup> Semester)\*

### Part One: Philosophy and Theories of Reality (Weeks 1 – 5):

#### WEEK 1: (Sept. 7)

Thurs. Sept. 7 - Introduction to Philosophy: Plato, “Socratic Wisdom,” pp. 11-19.

#### WEEK 2 (Sept. 11 & 14)

Mon. Sept. 11 - Plato, “Socratic Wisdom,” p. 11-19.

Thurs. Sept. 14 - Plato, “Appearance & Reality,” in *Republic* (474b - 480) (supplementary text – CourseSpaces).

#### WEEK 3 (Sept. 18 & 21)

Mon. Sept. 18 - Plato, “Appearance & Reality” (supplementary text – CourseSpaces).

Thurs. Sept. 21 - Aristotle, *Categories* (supplementary text – CourseSpaces).

#### WEEK 4 (Sept. 25 & 28)

Mon. Sept. 25 - Aristotle, *Categories* (supplementary text – CourseSpaces).

Thurs. Sept. 28 - Descartes, *Meditations*, pp. 49-79 (omit Meditations IV & V, pp. 286-290). **Essay Assigned.**

#### WEEK 5 (Oct. 2 & 5)

Mon. Oct. 2 - Descartes, *Meditations*, pp. 49-79 (omit Meditations IV & V), pp. 286-290.

Thurs. Oct. 5 - Descartes, *Meditations*, pp. 49-79 (omit Meditations IV & V), pp. 286-290.

### Part Two: Knowledge and its Sources (Weeks 6 - 10):

#### WEEK 6 (Oct. 9 & 12)

Mon. Oct. 9 - **Thanksgiving Day Holiday:** no classes.

Thurs. Oct. 12 - Plato, “Theory of Forms & Recollection,” pp. 36-41.

#### WEEK 7 (Oct. 16 & 19)

Mon. Oct. 16 - Locke, “Knowledge Through Experience,” pp. 80-88.

Thurs. Oct. 19 - Hume, “Experience and the Limits of Human Reasoning,” pp. 112-127.

#### WEEK 8 (Oct. 23 & 26)

Mon. Oct. 26 - Hume, “Experience and the Limits of Human Reasoning,” pp. 112-127.

Thurs. Oct. 29 - Nagel, “What is it Like to Be a Bat?” p. 329-335.

#### WEEK 9 (Oct. 30 & Nov. 2)

Mon. Oct. 30 - Nagel, “What is it Like to Be a Bat?” p. 329-335.

Thurs. Nov. 2 - Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Computers,” p. 349-355.

Fri., Nov. 3 - **Essay Due.**

#### WEEK 10 (Nov. 6 & 9)

Mon. Nov. 6 - Searle, “Minds, Brains, and Computers,” p. 349-355.

Thurs. Nov. 9 - Plato, “Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul,” pp. 373-376.

**Part Three: The Reality and Identity of the Self (Weeks 11 - 13):**

**WEEK 11 (Nov. 13 & 16)**

- Mon. Nov. 13 - **Reading Break: no classes.**  
Thurs. Nov. 16 - Descartes (again), *Meditations* (1-2), pp. 49-56.  
- Locke, "Self as Psychological Properties," pp. 361-363.

**WEEK 12 (Nov. 20 & 23)**

- Mon. Nov. 20 - Hume, "Self as a Bundle of Perceptions," pp. 364-366.  
Thurs. Nov. 23 - Russell, "The Illusion of Immortality," p. 377-379.

**WEEK 13 (Nov. 27 & 30)**

- Mon. Nov. 27 - Hick, "In Defense of Life After Death," pp. 380-386.  
Thurs. Nov. 30 - Hick, "In Defense of Life After Death," pp. 380-386.  
- Last class of term. Review.

Exams for this term begin on Dec. 4 and end on Dec. 18.

**\* This schedule is subject to revision, as sometimes discussion and the flow of ideas in class require us to spend more time on certain subjects, less time on others, than originally planned. Schedule for second semester of this course will be announced before classes resume in Jan. 2015.**