

FUNDAMENTALS OF PHILOSOPHY
PHI 2010 D, E SYLLABUS
Valdosta State University, Fall 2009

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Important Dates to Remember during the Semester:

August 17, 2009 First Day of Class

Late Registration August 18th – 21st, 13:30

September 7th, Labor Day Holiday, College Closed

October 1st, In Progress Grades

October 8th Mid-Term and Last Day to Withdraw without Grade Penalty

October 19th, and 20th, Fall Break, No Classes

November 2nd, Early Spring Registration Begins

November 25th – 29th, Thanksgiving Holiday

December 7th, Last Class Day

December 8th, Examination Preparation Day

December 9th – 11th, Final Examinations

VSU GENERAL EDUCATION OUTCOMES (AND THIS COURSE):

The general education outcomes as stated by VSU include the following.

1. Students will demonstrate understanding of the society of the United States and its ideals. They will possess the requisite knowledge of the society of the United States, its ideals, and its functions to enable them to become informed and responsible citizens. They will understand the connections between the individual and society and the roles of social institutions. They will understand the structure and operational principles of the United States government and economic system. They will understand United States history and both the historical and present role of the United States in the world.
2. Students will demonstrate cross-cultural perspectives and knowledge of other societies. They will possess sufficient knowledge of various aspects of another culture, including the language, social and religious customs, aesthetic expression, geography, and intellectual and political history, to enable them to interact with individuals within that society from an informed perspective. They will possess an international viewpoint that will allow them to examine critically the culture of their own nation and to participate in global society.
3. Students will use computer and information technology when appropriate. They will demonstrate knowledge of computer concepts and terminology. They will possess basic working knowledge of a computer operating system. They will be able to use at least two software tools, such as word processors, spreadsheets, database management systems, or statistical packages. They will be able to find information using computer searching tools.
4. Students will express themselves clearly, logically, and precisely in writing and in speaking, and they will demonstrate competence in reading and listening. They will display the ability to write coherently in standard English; to speak well; to read, to understand, and to interpret the content of written materials in various disciplines; and to listen effectively and to understand different modes of communication.

5. Students will demonstrate knowledge of scientific and mathematical principles and proficiency in laboratory practices. They will understand the basic concepts and principles underlying scientific methodology and be able to collect, analyze, and interpret data. They will learn a body of scientific knowledge and be able to judge the merits of arguments about scientific issues. They will be able to perform basic algebraic manipulations and to use fundamental algebraic concepts to solve word problems and equations. They will be able to use basic knowledge of statistics to interpret and to analyze data. They will be able to evaluate arguments based on quantitative data.
6. Students will demonstrate knowledge of diverse cultural heritages in the arts, the humanities, and the social sciences. They will develop understanding of the relationships among the visual and performing arts, literature and languages, and history and the social sciences. Students will be versed in approaches appropriate to the study of those disciplines; they will identify and respond to a variety of aesthetic experiences and engage in critical thinking about diverse issues. They will be able to identify the components of and respond to aesthetic experiences in the visual and performing arts. They will develop knowledge of world literature within its historical and cultural frameworks. They will understand modern issues within a historical context and the role of the individual in various forms of societies and governments.
7. Students will demonstrate the ability to analyze, to evaluate, and to make inferences from oral, written, and visual materials. They will be skilled in inquiry, logical reasoning, and critical analysis. They will be able to acquire and evaluate relevant information, analyze arguments, synthesize facts and information, and offer logical arguments leading to creative solutions to problems.
8. Students will demonstrate knowledge of principles of ethics and their employment in the analysis and resolution of moral problems. They will recognize and understand issues in applied ethics. They will understand their own value systems in relation to other value systems. They will judge values and practices in a variety of disciplines.

Philosophy courses at Valdosta State University contribute to the VSU General Education Outcomes listed on page 1 and 2 of the syllabus, with special emphasis on numbers 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, and 8.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed to familiarize the student with, 1) important philosophical thinkers with some historical context, ideas and philosophical perspectives, 2) a prologue to more formal studies of philosophy, and 3) application of philosophical ideas to readings.

TELOS (PURPOSE/LEARNING OUTCOMES)

The purpose of this course includes the goals stated in the course description and also entails the gained ability by the student to: 1) demonstrate an understanding of primary emphases of philosophical thinkers and avenues of philosophical discourse through your identification of said concepts with evidence from the writings; 2) understand the basic ideas and principles of philosophical thinking; and 3) thorough discussions of assigned readings.

The Learning Outcomes for PHIL 2010 include but are not limited to:

1. To understand the distinctions among the various sub-fields of philosophy, including epistemology, metaphysics, and ethics as comprising basic branches of the discipline.
2. To recognize how philosophical inquiry applies to 'real-world' circumstances and to individual reflection on the meaning of life.
3. To become conversant with the history of philosophy. The course emphasizes Western philosophy in particular, including such significant developments as empiricism, materialism, idealism, rationalism, pragmatism, and existentialism.
4. To recognize and define different world views, adopting a reasonably viable one and justifying it in a philosophically informed way that emphasizes critical reasoning and argument.
5. To demonstrate the ability to discuss, in both oral and written discourse, the philosophical issues explored in the course.
6. To be familiar with what academic philosophy is, and to understand how it can be applied to daily life as well as specific careers.

Members of the faculty in Philosophy and Religious Studies have verified that these outcomes are in line with the outcomes of the course as it is taught at peer institutions in the State System of Georgia.

These course-specific learning outcomes contribute to the departmental learning outcomes of the Philosophy and Religious Studies Major by enabling students better to

1. To encourage an understanding of central issues, topics and philosophers in the history of philosophy, from the ancient to the modern periods.
2. To develop students' abilities to think, write, and speak critically and logically.
3. To enable students to challenge their own ideas and to develop self-understanding in the context of a diverse range of ideas which inform contemporary controversies and social conflict.
4. To enable students to engage in independent philosophical research, and to be responsible for communicating their understanding of the issues researched and developed, including a working familiarity with current research methods.
5. To incorporate philosophical positions in oral and written communications.
6. To critically outline and analyze a philosophical question.

Special Needs:

Students requesting classroom accommodations or modifications due to a documented disability must contact the Access Office for Students with Disabilities located in the Farber Hall. The phone numbers are 245-2498 (V/VP) and 219-1348 (TTY).

BOOKS

- Boff, Leonardo, Essential Care: An Ethics of Human Nature, Baylor University Press, 9781602581425
- Descartes, Meditations and other Philosophical Writings, Penguin, 9780140447019
- Earle, William James, Introduction To Philosophy, McGraw-Hill, 9780070187832
- Huxley, Aldous, Brave New World, Plume Publications,
- Rand, Ayn, Anthem, Plume Publications, 9780452281257
- Rouse, W.D., The Great Dialogues of Plato, Signet Classics, Plume Publications, 9780451527455

COMMUNICATION:

All E-Mails Must Contain the Subject Heading "PHIL 2010-D" for 6:30 or "PHIL 2010-E" for 8:00. E-Mails without this subject heading for course questions or communication of any kind will not be opened, read and will not receive a response.

All communication with me MUST employ your Valdosta E-mail (BlazeNet account) or in person discussion before or after class.

Email Assignment, Due August 29th

(All E-mails must be formal -- salutation and signature -- with no text messaging abbreviations, use of appropriate grammar, and complete expression of thoughts). This is a requirement throughout the semester.

A. Name;

B. Valdosta E-mail address only;

(If you do not know your Blaze Net account access, contact the Help Desk at (229) 245-4357. I will not open E-mails from any other E-mail source);

C. Field of study or possible field of study;

D. Outside pursuits/interests;

E. Other humanities classes you have taken (Art, Foreign languages, Western Civilization, Music, Philosophy, Religion, Photography, Theater, History, Literature, Psychology);

F. How you learn best (visually, orally, working with people, a combination of visually and orally, through the writing process);

G. Your academic self-expectations. Do NOT discuss grades. If you state something like, "I expect to make at least a B in this class because..." you will lose all possible points for this assignment. Grade expectations and academic expectations are distinct. What do you expect to learn or how do you expect to change, et cetera. What do you expect from yourself?

Attendance Policy:

You have the possibility of earning points through regular attendance. If you attend all classes, note this means beginning on the first day of class not the first day after you registered, you can earn 100 points. I will allow 3 absences gratis – without penalty. After the 4th absence the point value for attendance drops to 90 points, 5th absence 80 points, 6th absence 70 points, 7th absence 00 points.

Some General Class Room Rules of Order

1. **No late assignments will be accepted** (Mitigating circumstances are determined at my discretion and proof for such potential circumstances that occurred is necessary).
2. Keep copies of your work, hard copies and disc back-ups; lost data or lack of back-up data is not an acceptable excuse for not submitting work.
4. Buy the book(s). If you cannot buy the book(s), do not take the class.
5. After the end of the semester, there is no way to improve your grade.
6. You are responsible for all materials assigned.
7. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will constitute an immediate failure of the course without exception. The college may pursue other actions against you.**

8. Tobacco products of any kind, donned hats, and any electronic devices that are on (other than a laptop computer), are not allowed in class.

GRADING

		<u>Possible Points</u>
Attendance		100
Email Assignment		50
Reading Quizzes	10 X 25	250
Class Participation	100	100
Topical Paper	100	200
Examination 1	100	100
Examination 2	100	100
Examination 3	100	<u>100</u>
Total		1000

Examinations include some or all of the following: questions from the multiple choice and T/F quizzes, identifications, definitions, short answer questions and essays.

A= 895-1000, B=795-894, C=695-794, D=595-694, F=0-594

PAPER ASSIGNMENT FORMAT

1. Your assignment must be typed and double-spaced. 2. No cover pages are acceptable. 3. Your name(s) must be on the paper in the upper right-hand corner of the first page then begin your writing. 4. **All pages** are subject to one-inch margins on the top, bottom and sides. 5. All pages must be numbered except the first page. 6. All material must be ***documented***. (Footnotes are preferred in the Chicago style but I will also accept APA and MLA.) 7. A general rule of thumb: Each paragraph must have one (or more) documented notes whether direct quotes or paraphrased material, and approximately three paragraphs per page. 8. **If any of the requirements are missing from any of the assignments your grade is 00 and no comments will be made on assignments that do not follow ALL of these directions.** 9. Late papers will not be accepted and will result in a score of 00. 10. You must use “New Courier” or “Times New Roman” font size 12 for all your papers. 11. You may not use Wikipedia, Encyclopedias or dictionaries of any kind for your sources. Sources must include published books and juried journal articles or publications. 12. A bibliography of at least six sources is required. 13. Options for papers will be discussed in class and a number of options are available for which you will need to make an informed choice.

Quiz material is taken from the reading material and not Spark’s or Cliff’s noted renditions. I intentionally review those sophomoric condensations so as not to use that material. They are unreliable sources.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE: IN PROCESS

Week 1	
August 17	Introduction
August 19	Read and discuss Earle, pgs. 1-20
Week 2	
August 24	Discussion, What is Philosophy and making an argument: Abbreviated Logic Premises, support, (antecedents, conditions), conclusions
August 26	Reading Quiz 1 Epistemology: Earle, pgs. 21-46
Week 3	
August 31	Reading Quiz 1,
September 2	
Week 4	
September 7	NO CLASS LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
September 9	Reading Quiz 2
Week 5	
September 14	Reading Quiz 3
September 16	
Week 6	
September 21	Reading Quiz 4
September 23	
Week 7	
September 28	Reading Quiz 5
September 30	
Week 8	
October 5	Reading Quiz 6
October 7	Mid-Term Examination

Week 9
October 12
October 14

Reading Quiz 7

Week 10
October 19
October 21

FALL BREAK NO CLASS
Reading Quiz 8

Week 11
October 26
October 28

Reading Quiz 9

Week 12
November 2
November 4

Reading Quiz 10

Week 13
November 9
November 11

Reading Quiz 11

Week 14
November 16
November 18

Reading Quiz 12

Week 15
November 23
November 25

Reading Quiz 13
NO CLASS THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 16
November 30
December 2

Reading Quiz 14

December 7
December 9

LAST CLASS DAY
Final Examination