

PHILOSOPHY 2010 D
FUNDAMENTALS OF PHILOSOPHY

Valdosta State University

Spring 2010

MWF 1:00-1:50 a.m., West Hall 104

INSTRUCTOR: Cristóbal Serrán-Pagán y Fuentes, Ph.D.

OFFICE: Ashley Hall 111

OFFICE HOURS: MTWTHF 10-10:50 a.m., or by appointment

PHONE: (229) 333-5975

E-mail: cserranpagan@valdosta.edu

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This survey course is an introduction to the main problems with which philosophy is concerned: methods of inquiry; principles of critical reasoning; analysis of values and value systems; appraisals and analyses of basic beliefs and attitudes. Emphasis is on the contribution of important movements and major philosophers and on the relevance of philosophy to religious, political, social, ethical, and/or scientific issues. Our inquiry will focus on reading selected philosophical writings, following a thematic (epistemology, logic, metaphysics, ontology, philosophy of mind, theodicy, philosophy of religion and of science, morality, ethics, politics, and aesthetics) and a chronological order. The course will highlight the writings of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Anselm, Aquinas, Hobbes, Descartes, Pascal, Spinoza, Locke, Leibniz, Berkeley, Hume, Rousseau, Kant, Wollstonecraft, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Mill, Kierkegaard, Marx, Tolstoy, James, Nietzsche, Freud, Wittgenstein, Sartre, Bentham, Leopold, Thomson, Singer, and Kuhn. In our academic inquiry we will examine important issues such as gender, sex, race, ecology, and the existence of God.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES: Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Demonstrate first-hand knowledge of a rich variety of great figures and classical texts in the on-going history of Western philosophy. **VSU Gen. Ed. Outcomes (1, 2, 6, 8); Department Educational Outcomes (Philosophy Track 1, 3; See pp. 155-156 in the Catalog)**
2. Explain and discuss major themes and motifs in the history of Western philosophy. **VSU Gen. Ed. Outcomes (2, 6); Department Educational Outcomes (Philosophy Track 1, 3)**
3. Critically address the major philosophical problems encountered in the academic study of philosophy, especially by taking greater responsibility for own learning through the demonstration of curiosity, motivation, and risk-taking characteristics. **VSU Gen. Ed. Outcomes (1, 2, 6, 7, 8); Department Educational Outcomes (Philosophy Track 2, 3)**
4. Analyze and synthesize a broad range of material (including ability to make meaningful connections between various academic disciplines) and examine the impact of the life and writings of Western philosophers in the areas of religion, politics, sociology, ethics, arts and

science. **VSU Gen. Ed. Outcomes (2, 7, 8); Department Educational Outcomes (Philosophy Track 1, 4)**

5. Utilize information technology to do research, specifically the Internet, and express themselves clearly, logically, and precisely in writing and in speaking. **VSU Gen. Ed. Outcomes (3, 4, 7; Department Educational Outcomes (Philosophy Track 2, 4)**

6. Produce an original work based on their ability to formulate a problem, develop a plan of action, and prove or disprove a hypothesis. **VSU Gen. Ed. Outcomes (1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8); Department Educational Outcomes (Philosophy Track 1, 2, 3, 4)**

III. REQUIRED TEXT

Cottingham, John, ed. *Western Philosophy: An Anthology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000. Print.

IV. RECOMMENDED READINGS

Bellinger, Charles K. "Internet Guide." 2 Jan. 2008. Web. 12 Jan. 2010.

[Http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/front.htm](http://www.wabashcenter.wabash.edu/Internet/front.htm).

Copleston, Frederick. *A History of Philosophy*. Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1962. Print.

Haglof, Anthony. "Buddhism and the *Nada* of St. John of the Cross." *Carmelite Studies* 1 (1980):183-203. Print.

Popkin, Richard H., ed. *History of Western Philosophy*. New York: MJF Books, 1999. Print.

Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli. *Eastern Religions and Western Thought*. Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1939. Print.

Russell, Bertrand. *A History of Western Philosophy: And Its Connection with Political and Social Circumstances from the Earliest Times to the Present Day*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1945. Print.

Sahakian, William S. *History of Philosophy*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books, 1972. Print.

V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Active class participation (10%) and attendance (10%) are mandatory (1)	20%
Quizzes and/or short essays (2)	20%
One oral presentation (3)	20%
Final reflection paper (20%)*See <u>Proposal Guidelines</u> (20%) (4)	40%

(1) **Total attendance** grade will automatically drop **twenty** points if you miss more than one week of classes. Afterwards the grade will drop **ten** points for each additional absence. VSU policy of attendance states, “**A student who misses more than 20% of the scheduled classes of a course will be subject to receiving a failing grade in the course**” (See in the Undergraduate Catalog pp. 84-85). I will admit excused absences only when athletes bring ahead of time a written notice from their coach; when a student is ill he or she will have to provide doctor’s name, phone number, and a signed receipt from the doctor; or when a student brings a justification note from a supervisor explaining why he or she was absent from my class. **You will lose 1 point for each tardiness.** You are responsible for all the material covered in class during your absence. **You will get an “F” grade (0) on any course material not submitted in time.** I highly recommend you complete and turn any academic task before the deadline if you are planning to miss a class. **I will not accept late papers under any circumstances.** You will submit your paper at the beginning of class.

(2) There will be random **quizzes and/or short essay questions** (20%) focusing on the assigned readings of the day. I will collect them in class.

(3) **Individual oral presentations** (20%) will be graded according to the following:

creativity (use visuals like posters and/or power-point presentations, and play different character roles);

accuracy (“be clear and concise”--state the facts and comment on them);

oral skills (keep eye contact with the whole class, avoid reading off notes, do not use verbal expressions like “um”);

well-cited sources (pass one Works Cited per person--use the new MLA Manual Handbook);

and **time limit** (5 minutes per presenter).

Once you are done with your presentations, invite the audience to ask you questions and to share their thoughts or comments with the whole class. Each student will evaluate the performance of his or her classmates. You will give presenters an overall grade and will provide a short list of comments explaining why you like or dislike their presentations and will assign a final grade (from F to A) based on the criteria listed above.

A FEW SUGGESTIONS: It is mandatory that each student meets with the professor in Ashley Hall 111 for getting the topic approved (write your topic in a paper and get a signature from me). The meeting should take place at least one week prior to their oral presentations. Be prepared. Do your research before coming to my office. Send me an electronic copy of your presentation to BlazeView and I will check it in my computer. I will not correct it but will give you suggestions on how to improve it. Make sure you rehearse before coming to

class. Gather ideas together and put them into practice before the date of your presentation. Manage time wisely. Be well prepared and dress appropriately (you can use costumes). Avoid chewing gum. Bring objects (paintings, books, articles from journals) or anything that aids you to create the right atmosphere for your overall presentation. Check the equipment in class before your presentations. Make sure your power-point presentations are compatible with the computer's program. **Remember the purpose of this oral presentation is not to give a chapter summary from the book but rather to focus on one specific topic that you are interested in doing research and go deeper into it. Be creative, informative, and entertaining. Share your passion with us. Be enthusiastic! Check with me if you need further help in finding out an interesting topic.**

(4) (*)**Reflection Paper Proposal**: 20% of the overall grade (papers due at the beginning of class--late papers will not be accepted).

Write in one page on both sides (maximum 2 pages) a suggested **title**, a **thesis statement**, and **one** selected quotation from your reflection paper using the proper citation in parenthesis. For instance, “. . . “ (Cottingham 111). Or if you have more than one book by the same author then change the format to: “. . . ” (Cottingham, *Western Philosophy* 33). You should cite at least four **sources** (three from book sources--including one from our semester readings--and one from a website) in the Works Cited. Follow the format below!

- 1) **Title**-For example, A Kantian Look on War.
- 2) **Thesis Statement**-Write in one or more paragraphs the purpose of your reflection paper. What are you trying to prove in your paper? Which is the major problem associated with your researched topic? What is the major contribution? How does the West look at it? Which is the topic that you are planning to write on? Why? Narrow down the topic. Be specific!
- 3) **Sources**-AVOID PLAGIARISM!!! Make sure that you give proper credit to all your sources if you are quoting directly or paraphrasing from any text. Open parenthesis, name the author's last name (if there is no author's name cite the website, www.hinduism.com), and write the page number. Ex. “. . . ” (Kant 130). If you are quoting more than one page, use the following format: “. . . ” (Kant 130-131). Then include all your sources in the last page of your reflection paper as Works Cited. Check the samples using the MLA Handbook Manual Style in **Section IV!**

Final Reflection Paper: 20% of the overall grade (hard copy of papers due at the beginning of class--late papers will not be accepted). Also send an electronic copy of your paper to BlazeView before our last class meeting.

There will be **one** final reflection paper (check **Course Calendar**). Students will select **one** area of philosophy (epistemology, metaphysics, mind-body, philosophy of religion, philosophy of science, morality, ethics, aesthetics) and **one** major philosopher for each reflection paper.

- A) Find out a significant weakness in his or her philosophical writings and
- B) Mention **one** major contribution to the study of philosophy.

Students need to write a creative title and explain why they have selected their topics using good

examples and rational arguments. What is the philosophical problem and/or question you are focusing on? Select at least **four** quotes (**two** for each section) and **four** sources (one from our textbook and three outside sources—scholarly books and internet). Cite your sources in parenthesis throughout your paper. For instance, “....” (Cottingham 112). Then include all your complete sources in the Works Cited (on the back of your reflection paper). Use the new MLA Manual Handbook. Your final reflection paper should be between **three** and **four** pages in length. You will lose **one** point for each mechanical error (grammar, spelling, and format). Avoid plagiarism. Document all your sources. Plagiarized assignments will receive a failing grade and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Check the link below this text for further information on academic dishonesty. (Please also see pp. 93-94 in the Undergraduate Catalog.)

<http://www.valdosta.edu/academic/AcademicHonestyPoliciesandProcedures.shtml>

All answers must be in print. Use MLA style. Use pagination numbers (ex. Serrán-Pagán 1). Use double-spacing. You are required to use the pronoun ‘I’ (such as “I think,” “I agree,” “I disagree”) in all your papers. Combine facts, personal input and scholarly sources throughout your reflection paper.

GRADING SCALE: A (100 to 90); B (89 to 80); C (79 to 70); D (69 to 60); and F (59 to 0)

VI. COURSE CALENDAR

Jan. 11--Reading the syllabus

Jan. 13--Read from p. 2 to p. 21--Epistemology in Plato and Aristotle

Jan. 15--Read from p. 22 to p. 32--Epistemology in Descartes and Locke

Jan. 20--Read from p. 32 to p. 41--Epistemology in Leibniz and Hume

Jan. 22--Read from p. 41 to p. 57--Epistemology in Kant, Hegel, and Moore

Jan. 25--Read from p. 62 to p. 74--Metaphysics in Plato and Aristotle

Jan. 27--Read from p. 74 to p. 85--Met. in Descartes and Locke

Jan. 29--Read from p. 85 to p. 102--Met. in Leibniz, Berkeley, and Hume

Feb. 1--Read from p. 103 to 122--Met. in Kant, Heidegger, and Carnap

Feb. 3--Read from p. 126 to p. 138--Phil. of Soul-Mind-Body in Plato and Aristotle

Feb. 5--Read from p. 138 to p. 151--Phil. of Mind in Aquinas and Descartes

Feb. 8--Read from p. 152 to p. 160--Phil. of Mind in Spinoza and Malebranche

Feb. 10--Read from p. 160 to p. 169-- Phil. of Mind in Schopenhauer and Mill

Feb. 12--Read from p. 170 to p. 181--Phil. of Mind in Brentano and Ryle

Feb. 15--Read from p. 186 to p. 202--Psychology in Locke, Butler, and Hume

Feb. 17--Read from p. 203 to p. 215--Psychology in Freud and Partif

Feb. 19--Read from p. 215 to p. 226--Moral. in Augustine and Hobbes

Feb. 22--Read from p. 226 to p. 240--Moral. in Laplace, Sartre, & Strawson--**Reflection Paper**

Proposal DUE

Feb. 24--Read from p. 244 to p. 250--Phil. of Rel. in Anselm and Aquinas

Feb. 26--Read from p. 251 to p. 259--Phil. of Rel. in Descartes and Pascal

Mar. 1--Read p. 260 to p. 276--Phil. of Rel. in Leibniz and Hume

Mar. 3--Read from p. 277 to p. 295--Phil. of Rel. in Kierkegaard, James, and Wisdom

Mar. 5--Read from p. 300 to p. 310--Phil. of Science in Aristotle and Bacon
Mar. 8--Read from p. 310 to p. 321--Phil. of Science in Descartes and Berkeley
Mar. 10--Read from p. 321 to p. 342--Phil. of Science in Hume, Kant, and Mill
Mar. 12--Read from p. 342 to p. 355--Phil. of Science in Popper and Kuhn
Mar. 22--Read from p. 360 to p. 370--Morality in Plato and Aristotle
Mar. 24--Read from p. 370 to p. 380--Morality in Spinoza and Hume
Mar. 26--Read from p. 381 to p. 392--Morality in Kant and Mill
Mar. 29--Read from 392 to p. 404--Morality in Sidgwick and Nietzsche
Mar. 31--Read from p. 404 to p. 416--Morality in Ross and Rawls
Apr. 2-- Read from p. 420 to p. 433--Ethics in Aristotle, Aquinas, and Hume
Apr. 5--Read from p. 433 to p. 441--Ethics in Wollstonecraft and Godwin
Apr. 7--Read from p. 441 to p. 449--Ethics in Kant and Bentham
Apr. 9--Read from p. 449 to p. 466--Ethics in Leopold, Thomson, and Singer
Apr. 12--Read from p. 472 to p. 481--Politics in Plato and Aquinas
Apr. 14--Read from p. 481 to p. 492--Politics in Hobbes and Locke
Apr. 16--Read from p. 492 to p. 510--Politics in Hume, Rousseau, and Hegel
Apr. 19--Read from p. 510 to p. 516--Politics in Marx and Engels
Apr. 21--Read from p. 516 to p. 528--Politics in Mill and Nozick
Apr. 23--Read from p. 532 to p. 544--Aesthetics in Plato and Aristotle,
Apr. 26--Read from p. 544 to p. 554--Aesthetics in Hutcheson and Hume
Apr. 28--Read from p. 555 to p. 566--Aesthetics in Kant and Schopenhauer
April 30--Read from p. 567 to 578--Aesthetics in Nietzsche and Tolstoy
May 3--Submit **Final Reflection Paper**--