

Phil 20101: Introduction to Philosophy

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Purpose of Course	Texts	Requirements
Reading Assignments	Lecture Outlines	Class Handouts
First Paper Assignment	Second Paper Assignment	Study questions for midterm exam
Study questions for final exam	Key to Paper Comments	Comment Assignments

Purpose of Course:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to philosophy and to the importance of philosophical inquiry for their own lives.

To this end we will examine a sampling of philosophical classics. Some recurrent themes: the nature of philosophy and of philosophical wisdom; the distinctiveness of the philosophical life; the relation between intellection and affection in the pursuit of wisdom; the existence and nature of God; the relation between intellectual virtue and truth; the relation between faith and reason; the nature of human flourishing; the role of individuality in the pursuit of human flourishing; the relation between moral virtue and happiness. The philosophers to be discussed include Plato, St. Thomas Aquinas (and through him Aristotle), St. Augustine, Descartes, Hume, Mill, and Nietzsche.

Texts (other editions and/or translations are acceptable):

- Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872206335)
- St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles, Book One: God* (Notre Dame) (ISBN: 978-0268016784)
- St. Thomas Aquinas, [Treatise on Beatitude -- my translation, on line](#)
- Rene Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872204225)
- David Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872204027)
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0915144433)
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (Penguin) (ISBN: 978-0140449235)
- St. Augustine, *Confessions* (Hackett) (ISBN: 978-0872208162)

Requirements:

- Careful reading and re-reading of all assignments and scrupulous class attendance.
- Submission of a comment or question on the reading every third day -- [see assignments](#) -- comments due by midnight the day before (10% of grade).
- Two 5-page papers on assigned topics, due on 2/10 and 4/9, each worth 20% of grade).
- Two exams, the first on 3/5 and the second on 5/5 (each worth 25% of grade).

Tentative outline with reading assignments:

I. [Plato](#) (428 BC-348 BC)

- 1/15: *Apology*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 23-44 (17A-42A)
- 1/20: *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 93-106 (57A-69E)
- 1/22: *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 106-135 (69E-95E)
- 1/27: *Phaedo*, in *Five Dialogues*, pp. 135-155 (95E-end)

II. [St. Thomas Aquinas](#) (1225-1274)

- 1/29: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 59-68 (chaps. 1-4)
- 2/3: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 69-78 (chaps. 5-9)
- 2/5: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 85-99 (chaps. 13-15) (**paper due**)
- 2/10: *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book One: God, pp. 135-149 (chaps. 28-35)
- 2/12: *Treatise on Beatitude*, ques. 1-3, [pp. 1-30 in my translation](#)
- 2/17: *Treatise on Beatitude*, ques. 4-5, [pp. 31-50 in my translation](#)

III. [Rene Descartes](#) (1596-1650)

- 2/19: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 1-6 (Pt. 1)
- 2/24: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 6-12 (Pt. 2)
- 2/26: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 12-17 (Pt. 3)

- 3/3: *Discourse on Method*, pp. 17-21 (Pt. 4)

3/5 Exam at regularly scheduled time -- followed by Fall Break

IV. [David Hume](#) (1711-1776)

- 3/17: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 3-12 (Part I)
- 3/19: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 13-38 (Parts II-V)
- 3/24: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 54-76 (Parts IX-XI)
- 3/26: *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, pp. 77-89 (Parts XII)

V. [John Stuart Mill](#) (1806-1873)

- 3/31: *On Liberty*, pp. 1-33 (chaps. 1 and first part of chap. 2)
- 4/2: *On Liberty*, pp. 33-52 (last part of chap. 2)
- 4/7: *On Liberty*, pp. 53-71 (chap. 3)

VI. [Friedrich Nietzsche](#) (1844-1900)

- 4/7: *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 13-14 and pp. 37-55 (Preface & Part Two) (**paper due**)
- 4/9: *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 56-71 (Part Three)
- 4/14: *Beyond Good and Evil*, pp. 90-109 (Part Five)

VI. [St. Augustine](#) (354-430)

- 4/16: *Confessions*, pp. 3-47 (Bks. 1-3)
- 4/23: *Confessions*, pp. 51-83 (Bks. 4-5)
- 4/28: *Confessions*, pp. 87-125 (Bks. 6-7)
- 4/30: *Confessions*, pp. 129-170 (Bks. 8-9)

5/5 (Monday) FINAL EXAM 4:15-6:15