

**PHIL 2010: Introduction to Philosophy**  
University of West Georgia, Fall 2010

Common Syllabus for:  
Section 03 (81820): M/W 2:00 – 3:15 PM, Biology 114  
Section 04 (81821): M/W 3:30 – 4:45 PM, Biology 114

Dr. Thomas J. Brommage  
Email: brommage@westga.edu  
Website: <http://brommage.freeshell.org>

Office: TLC 2238  
Office Phone: (678) 839-5487  
Office Hours: M 11 AM – 1:30 PM;  
T/Th 12:30- 1:30 PM; W 11-12 & by appt.

**Course Description:** This course will survey some of the most important figures in Western philosophy, from the ancient Greeks all the way through the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Emphasis will be placed on understanding each thinker within historical context. The student will develop an understanding of the historical tradition of Western philosophy, as well as a grasp of the basics of each figured covered. The course will trace the dialogue concerning epistemological and metaphysical problems through the ancient, medieval and modern periods, theories of ethics (including virtue ethics, deontology and utilitarianism), and end by surveying recent trends such as pragmatism, continental philosophy and analytic thought.

**Learning Objectives:** Throughout this course, the student will learn to:

- define and distinguish among the philosophical terms and concepts used in the course.
- describe the views of at least three major philosophers from the Western tradition.
- contrast the competing views of major philosophers on some of the philosophical issues explored in the course.
- explain and critically assess the philosophical issues and theories explored in the course.
- discuss in both oral and written discourse the philosophical theories and issues explored in the course.

These course-specific learning outcomes contribute to the departmental learning outcomes of the Philosophy Program by enabling students to better:

- discuss the general historical development of the discipline of philosophy;
- discuss three major historical figures of philosophy;
- ask philosophical questions and differentiate their types;
- incorporate a philosophical position in oral and written communications;
- critically outline and analyze philosophical issues;
- exhibit critical thinking skills.

**Required Text:** Steven Cahn, *Classics of Western Philosophy* 7<sup>h</sup> ed, (Hackett, 2006).  
ISBN: 0-87220-859-1; \$38

\*This will be our primary textbook for this course. Unless otherwise noted, all page numbers refer to the Cahn reader. Other readings may be assigned, available for download on my website. They are denoted on the schedule below with an '[E]'

**Course Schedule:** All dates and content scheduled is tentative, and subject to change by the Instructor!

DATE	ASSIGNMENT	TOPIC
16 Aug:	Introduction to Course	What is Philosophy?
18 Aug:	Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> (pp. 20-29)	Definitions & Examples
23 Aug:	Plato, <i>Meno</i> (pp. 3-19)	The Paradox of

		Knowledge
25 Aug:	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> 57a-84b (pp. 49-64)	Forms and the Soul I
30 Aug:	Plato, <i>Phaedo</i> 84b-end (pp. 64-81)	Forms and the Soul II
1 Sept:	Plato, Republic VI-VII (pp. 154-163)	Allegory of the Cave and The Divided Line
6 Sept:	Labor Day: No Class!!	
8 Sept:	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> I & II (pp. 260-275)	Virtues, Vices and the Golden Mean
13 Sept:	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> VI & X (285-291, 303-312)	Intellectual Virtues and Happiness
15 Sept:	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> Book XI (pp. 373-385)	The Nature of Time
20 Sept:	Anselm, <i>Proslogion</i> and Guanilo's reply (pp. 413-433)	The Ontological Argument
22 Sept:	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> I – III (pp. 484-503)	Hyperbolic Doubt and the <i>cogito</i>
27 Sept:	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> IV – VI (pp. 503-516)	Proof of the External World
29 Sept:	Review for Midterm	
4 Oct:	Midterm Exam	
6 Oct:	Leibniz, “Discourse on Metaphysics” (pp. 598-618)	The Problem of Evil
11 Oct:	Leibniz, “Monadology” (pp. 619-626)	Monads are cool
13 Oct:	Locke, <i>Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> , Book I.i and II.i-iii,viii, xi-xii, xxiii-xxiv (pp. 629-633, 637-640, 642-645, 653-662)	Empiricism 101
18 Oct:	Hume, <i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> , 1-5 (pp. 763-783)	The Problem of Induction
20 Oct:	Hume, <i>Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion</i> I – V (pp. 856-875)	The Argument from Design
25 Oct:	Hume, <i>Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion</i> VI - XI (pp. 875-902)	Order and Chaos
27 Oct:	Kant, B Introduction and selections from the Transcendental Analytic, <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (pp. 918-927)	Kant's Model of the Mind
1 Nov:	Locke, <i>Essay</i> Book I.i and II.i-iii,viii, xi-xii, xxiii-xxiv (pp. 629-633, 637-640, 642-645, 653-662)	Against Innate Ideas
3 Nov:	Kant, <i>Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (pp. 981-991)	“ . . . The Moral Law Within”
8 Nov:	Kant, <i>Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (pp. 991-1011)	The Categorical Imperative
10 Nov:	Kant, <i>Grounding of the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (pp. 1011-1020)	Freedom

15 Nov:	Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> (pp. 1058-1075)	The Principle of Utility
17 Nov:	Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> (pp. 1075-1090)	Utility, Justice and Rights
22 Nov:	Nietzsche, <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> (pp. 1100-1115)	How To Philosophize With a Hammer
24 Nov:	Peirce, "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (pp. 1126-1136)	The Pragmatic Theory of Truth
29 Nov:	Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism" [E]	Analytic/Synthetic Distinction Revisited
1 Dec:	Review for Final	
6-10 Dec:	Final Exam (Sec. 3: Dec. 6, 2-4 PM; Sec. 4: Dec. 10, 2-4 PM)	

*Note on the Indeterminacy of Time:* Rarely is there enough time in the semester to cover everything an ideal course in philosophy should cover. Although everything on the list is important, I reserve the right to change the reading to correspond with the pace of the class.

**Evaluation:** There will be four quizzes that will be given throughout the semester on the assigned readings, some or all of which will be unannounced. The lowest one score on these quizzes will not be counted into calculating your final grade. **There will be NO "make up" opportunities on the quizzes.**

In addition, there will be an in-class midterm and cumulative final exam. The final exam will be held in accordance with the University's scheduled final exam time. Anyone who cannot take the final exam must make arrangements to make it up at least one week prior to the scheduled exam date. Failure to do so will result in a grade of "F" for that exam.

The following weighting will be used to calculate your grade:

Quizzes (10% x 3)	30%
Attendance and participation	20%
Midterm Exam (in class)	20%
Final Exam (in class)	30%

*Note on Academic Dishonesty:* Plagiarism is the ultimate mortal sin of academia. Please, cite properly and document accordingly anything that may appear in your written work for this class. If you are unclear about how to properly document a paper, simply ask me. But err on the side of caution: clear-cut cases of plagiarism (deemed so by myself) will result in the possibility of up to and including a "F" for this class, and possible disciplinary action taken. *Don't try me, I will catch you.* All submissions for this class will be cleared through electronic methods to detect plagiarism.

If you are unsure of what plagiarism constitutes, I highly recommend you view the tutorial at the following link: <http://www.cte.usf.edu/plagiarism/index.html>. Ignorance of the law, as they say, is no excuse.

*Students with Disabilities:* I will be happy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Feel free to self-disclose to me privately any disability that may present challenges for you in the course. Please contact the Office of Disability Services (678-839-6428) if you expect to need special accommodations.

### **Expectations, Suggestions and Mandates for an efficient class:**

1. Please arrive to class on time and expect to stay the entire duration of the class. If this is an impossibility, please make every attempt to notify me in advance of tardiness or absence.
2. Especially true in philosophy more than most other subjects, diligence is important. Some of the reading will be difficult, since these are some of the most profound texts in the history of the world. The difficulty of the subject is indirectly proportional to the amount of work put into the course. Expect to have up to ten hours a week of reading and thinking in order to get an "A" for the course. Additionally, for these reasons, attendance is of vital importance.
3. Please come to class prepared (i.e., any reading assigned read, any questions concerning readings or lectures prepared, etc.)
4. Please be respectful of each other in the class. There will be times when students disagree about a topic discussed in class. This is a didactic process, not a combative one.
5. Due to the great excess of material and limited time in which we must cover, please do not create a disruption for those people who are attempting to learn. Disruptions include blurting out answers, name calling, chiding each other, snoring, etc. Laughing at the Instructor's jokes is obviously exempted from this policy. In addition, personal audio devices (except those in use to record lectures) and loud crunching snack foods are prohibited from the classroom. PLEASE TURN OFF your cellphones in class.
6. Please feel free to make mistakes. We all will from time to time, even your omniscient instructor.
7. Please feel free to make use of my office hours. Waiting until the last moment in the semester to catch up is not advisable. I am excellent at fixing small problems, but horrendous at fixing large ones. The only difference between small and large problems is time.
8. Have fun! The material is only as dry as you make it out to be. Sharpening one's mind can be an exhilarating process.