

## Introduction to Philosophy

### Phil 2010 A, Spring Semester, 2018 (CRN 16843)

Department of Literature and Philosophy  
College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences  
Georgia Southern University

Location: Carroll Building 1023

Credit Hours: 3

Last Day to Add/Drop: January 11

Last Day to Withdraw without Academic Penalty: March 5

### Professor: Dr. Guy Schuh

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Office Phone: 478-8537

Office Location: Newton Building, 3308E

Class Meets: MWF, 10:10-11:00

Office Hours: T/TH, 3:30-5:30; F, 2:30-3:30

**Note:** I will have to miss one Friday office hours per a month for faculty meetings. I will notify you in advance and will be free to meet later that afternoon by appointment.

### Course Description

(Catalogue)

This is an introductory course which surveys the ideas of some of the great philosophers of the Western world, focusing on issues about religion, ethics, reality, and ways of knowing.

(Instructor)

We will examine three issues through the reading of classic philosophical texts. We will first examine the nature of philosophy itself. Does it have a unique task or goal? If so, what is it? Is it distinguishable from science? If so, how? Second, we will examine the relationship between philosophy and religion. Is it philosophy's job to assess religious belief? Or do philosophy and religion constitute mutually distinct spheres? Third, we will see what philosophy has to say about why we should be moral.

### Required Texts

*Fear and Trembling* by Soren Kirkegaard. Translated by Alastair Hannay. Penguin. ISBN: 0140444491.

*Gorgias* by Plato. Translated by Donald J. Zeyl. Hackett. ISBN: 0872200167.

*Plato: Five Dialogues: Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo*. Hackett. ISBN: 0872206335.

\*All other readings are available through folio. Electronic readings should be printed out and brought to class.

## Assignments

- **3 Review Exams (26 and 2/3 % each)**. There are three units for the class. Each exam covers one unit. A list of study-questions will be passed out at the beginning of each unit. These are not necessarily the questions that will appear on the exam, but they will give you an indication of what you should know for the each exam and how you should study for it.
- As part of the participation grade (**10%**), students must complete **3 critical assignments**. Students will write out an objection to a position taken by one of the authors in a given section. These assignments must be at least 1/2 of a page, double-spaced, 12 point times. They are due in hard-copy at the class they are marked due. Critical assignments are graded for completion. That being said, I will have these at my side when I do final grades. If your grade is near a cutoff, doing a great job on these could boost you into the next grade bracket.
- Final paper (**10%**). Students will write out an objection to a position taken by one of the authors in a given section **as well as** a response to that objection on behalf of the author. Note that you don't have to agree with this response. Give me what you judge to be the author's best available response—even if you think it ultimately falls short. The final paper should be one double-spaced page with 12 point times font. If students need more space, they can use 11 point font, 1.5 spacing, and wide margins. The final reflection paper must **both** be turned in, in hard copy, on the day it is marked due **and** submitted online to Turn It In.

## Reading

Students are expected to do the readings assigned for each class.

## Attendance

Attendance and punctuality are required and will be reflected in your final grade. Class begins promptly at the scheduled time. If you are not present when the roll is called, you will be counted as late. Two late arrivals will be counted as one absence. After 3 unexcused absences, every additional absence will result in a 5% deduction in your final course grade.

## Academic Integrity

Students are expect to uphold the Academic Honest Honor Code as published in the *Georgia Southern University Student Conduct Code*. **If you do not know the school definitions of cheating and plagiarism, familiarize yourself:** <http://academics.georgiasouthern.edu/fye/students/first-year/academic-honesty/> **All outside sources must be cited, including on-line sources. To fail to do this is to commit academic plagiarism.**

All instances of plagiarism and/or cheating will be reported to the appropriate university officials. At a bare minimum, the assignment in question will receive a failing grade. Additional penalties will vary with the circumstances.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Present and explain the thought of a philosopher—or a philosophical position—accurately and clearly.
- Compare alternative philosophical positions, identifying their strengths and weakness as well as the central arguments for them and their support. Demonstrate an ability to think through complex issues with Clarity.

## Disability Accommodation Statement

This class complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities needing academic accommodations must:

- (1) Register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center (SDRC), and,
- (2) Provide a letter to the instructor from the SDRC indicating what you need may be for academic accommodation.

This should be done within the first week of class. Students with these particular needs should contact the Student Disability Resource Center, Hampton Hall, 912.871.1566.

## Technology

Unless you have received permission from me or from the Student Disability Resource Center, please do not make use of earphones, computers, tablets, cell phones, or other electronic devices during class; use of these during class time will result in an absence for that day.

**Note:** All information contained in this syllabus, including the course schedule and assignments, is subject to revision as the professor deems necessary.

## Schedule

### Section 1: What is Philosophy?

**Week 1.** Monday Jan. 8. Introduction

Wednesday Jan 10. Selections from the Pre-Socratics

Friday Jan. 12. Selections from the Pre-Socratics

**Week 2.** Monday Jan. 15. Martin Luther King Jr. Day; **No Class**

Wednesday Jan. 17. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book 1, Chapter 1

Friday Jan. 19. Aristotle, *Metaphysics*, Book 1, Chapter 2

**Week 3.** Monday Jan. 22. Plato, *Laches*, pgs. 240-259.

Wednesday Jan. 24. Plato, *Laches*, pgs. 259-268.

Friday Jan. 26. Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, Book 1, Chapter 1, paragraphs 11-16; Plato, *Apology*, pgs. 22-28.

**Week 4.** Monday Jan. 29. Plato, *Apology*, pgs. 28-41.

Wednesday Jan 31. Bertrand Russell, "The Value of Philosophy"

Friday Feb. 2. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?," pgs. 93-6, 101-3, 109-11.

**Week 5.** Monday Feb. 5. Heidegger, "What is Metaphysics?," pgs. 93-6, 101-3, 109-11.

Wednesday Feb. 7. Optional Group Review.

Friday Feb. 9. **First Exam**

**Week 6.** Monday Feb. 12. 1<sup>st</sup> Section Overview; **1<sup>st</sup> Critical Assignment Due**

### **Section 2: Is it Philosophy's Job to Examine and Potentially Criticize Religious Belief?**

Wednesday Feb. 14. Plato, *Euthyphro*, pgs. 1-11

Friday Feb. 16. Plato, *Euthyphro*, pgs. 12-15

**Week 7.** Monday Feb. 19. Plato, *Euthyphro*, rest.

Wednesday. Feb. 21. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Question 1, articles 1-2, 5-6

Friday Feb. 23. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Question 1, article 8

**Week 8.** (Feb. 26-March 2). Monday Feb. 26. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Up to pg. 80

Wednesday Feb. 28. Hume, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Rest.

Friday March 2. Genesis 17: 1-22; 21: 1-7; 22: 1-19 (Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac); Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, Preamble from the Heart, pgs. 57-67.

**Week 9.** Monday March 5. Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, Preamble from the Heart, pgs. 67-82.

Wednesday March 7. Finish Discussing Kierkegaard

Friday March 9. 2<sup>nd</sup> Section Overview; **2<sup>nd</sup> Critical Assignment Due**

**Week 10. Spring Break**

**Week 11.** Monday March 19. Optional Group Review

Wednesday March 21. **Second Exam**

### **Section 3: Why Should We be Moral?**

Friday March 23. Epicurus, *Letter to Menoecus*; *The Principle Doctrines*, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 13, 14, 15, 17, 21, 27-40

**Week 12.** Monday March 26. Finish Discussing Epicurus.

Wednesday March 28. Plato, *Gorgias*, pgs. 31-9

Friday March 30. Plato, *Gorgias*, pgs. 39-50

**Week 13.** Monday April 2. Finish Discussing Plato, *Gorgias*

Wednesday April 4. Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, pgs. 1-13

Friday April 6. Finish Discussing Kant

**Week 14** Monday April 9. Bernard Gert, "Why should I be moral?," pgs. 338-348

Wednesday April 11. Bernard Gert, "Why should I be moral?," pgs. 348-353

Friday April 13. Bernard Gert, "Why should I be moral?," Rest

**Week 15.** Monday April 16. Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints."

Wednesday April 18. Optional In-Class Review.

Friday April 20. **Third Exam**

**Week 16.** Monday April 23. **3<sup>rd</sup> Critical Assignment Due**

Wednesday April 25. **Relativism Reading? Open to suggestions.**

Friday April 27. No-Class; Make-Up Assignment.

**Week 17.** Monday April 30. **Final Paper Due**