

Introduction to Philosophy

Kent State University Course Syllabus:

PHIL 11001/20263/009 Spring 2015
M/W: 11:00-12:15 pm Location: McGilvrey Hall 310
Instructor: Matthew Coate
Office: Bowman Hall 320
Office hours: Mon 12:30-2:00 (or by appointment)

Contact: mcoate@kent.edu

Course Description:

An introduction to the diverse methods and subject matters of philosophy. Primary philosophic sources from varied philosophical traditions focus on at least three philosophic areas. There are no prerequisites for this course, and it may be used to satisfy a Kent Core or University Diversity Requirement.

Course objectives:

- To learn about the texts that we'll be reading over the course of this semester;
- To develop the ability to provide accurate explication of these texts, and hopefully, to say or write (at least relatively) interesting things about them; and
- To increase our own capacities for questioning the way we understand the world, and if at all possible, to further our own sense of the intrinsic importance of this questioning.

Course requirements:

Recommended text:

- Classics of Western Philosophy*, 8th Ed. edited by Steven M. Cahn (Hackett Publishing, ISBN-13: 978-1-60384-743-8).

Grading:

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Two midterm exams @ 20% each | 40% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Final exam | 20% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10 mini-quizzes @ 2% each | 20% |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participation and Attendance | 20% |

Exams:

Two exams and a non-comprehensive final will be given. Each will be worth 20% of the final grade.

Quizzes:

Over the course of the semester, ten very short quizzes will be given; each will be worth 2% of your grade, for a total of 20%. Missed quizzes *cannot* be made up, except under exceptional circumstances. However, each student's lowest *two* quiz scores (whether it is a zero or otherwise) will be replaced by a perfect score for that quiz.

Participation and attendance:

Every week, you will be expected to write and post a blog on the assigned readings to our Blackboard page. Your post will generally be due by 6:00 pm on Sunday; the full list of assignments is listed on the course schedule, below. Posts should be at least one full paragraph, and should respond in some way to the guiding question that I will have posted on our blog page for every upcoming week.

In addition to this, at least one response to a classmate's blog post will usually be expected, usually due by 6:00 pm on Tuesday (exceptions are listed in the course schedule, again). Responses should actually engage with the post to which you are responding, and respectfully so—healthy debate is encouraged, but don't make it personal!

Accomplishing both of these tasks adequately will earn you full participation credit for the week: posts and responses must indicate that real thought was put into the work. Unsatisfactory posts will receive only half credit (or no credit, if wholly unsatisfactory), while very strong posts can be awarded a small amount of extra credit. Each week's participation will count for 1.25% of your final grade.

Extra credit:

Extra credit opportunities will be made available to students over the course of the semester. Each student may complete and turn in a maximum of two. A successful extra credit assignment that a student turns in replaces that student's lowest quiz score with a perfect grade. Unsatisfactory extra credit assignments will not earn the student the full award, and may be returned to student with a request to revise it before credit can be earned.

University services and policies:**Kent Core course:**

This course may be used to satisfy a Kent Core requirement. The Kent Core as a whole is intended to broaden intellectual perspectives, foster ethical and humanitarian values, and prepare students for responsible citizenship and productive careers.

Diversity course:

This course may be used to satisfy the University Diversity requirement. Diversity courses provide opportunities for students to learn about such matters as the history, culture, values and notable achievements of people other than those of their own national origin, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, age, gender, physical and mental ability, and social class. Diversity courses also provide opportunities to examine problems and issues that may arise from differences, and opportunities to learn how to deal constructively with them.

Enrollment and registration statement:

The official registration deadline for this course is 1/25/15. University policy requires all students to be officially registered in each class they are attending. Students who are not officially registered for a course by published deadlines should not be attending classes

and will not receive credit or a grade for the course. Each student must confirm enrollment by checking his/her class schedule (using Student Tools in FlashLine) prior to the deadline indicated. Registration errors must be corrected prior to the deadline.

The course withdrawal deadline will be 3/22/15.

Student Disability Services statement:

University policy 3-01.3 requires that students with disabilities be provided reasonable accommodations to ensure their equal access to course content. If you have a documented disability and require accommodations, please contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to make arrangements for necessary classroom adjustments. Please note, you must first verify your eligibility for these through Student Accessibility Services (contact 330-672-3391 or visit www.kent.edu/sas for more information on registration procedures).

Personal responsibility and academic integrity statement:

University policy 3-01.8 deals with the problem of academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism. None of these will be tolerated in this class. The sanctions provided in this policy will be used to deal with any violations. If you have any questions, please read the policy at <http://www2.kent.edu/policyreg/chap3/index.cfm> and/or ask.

Make-up exam policy:

Exams can be made up only in the case of an excused absence with proper documentation. Students must contact the instructor and arrange to make up any missed exams. Except in the most extreme circumstances, missed exams which have not been made up before the first class following the exam become a 0%.

Electronic device policy:

Cel phones and smart phone devices may not be used in class at any time. Laptops or tablets are also prohibited, except if a student has received prior permission from me for their use in class (for note-taking or other academic purposes only, of course).

Grade scale:

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| A = | 92-100% | 4.0 per credit hour |
| A- = | 90-92% | 3.7 per credit hour |
| B+= | 88-90% | 3.3 per credit hour |
| B = | 82-88% | 3.0 per credit hour |
| B- = | 80-82% | 2.7 per credit hour |
| C+= | 78-80% | 2.3 per credit hour |
| C = | 72-78% | 2.0 per credit hour |
| C- = | 70-72% | 1.7 per credit hour |
| D = | 68-70% | 1.3 per credit hour |
| D+= | 60-68% | 1.0 per credit hour |
| F = | 0 - 60% | 0.0 per credit hour |

Course schedule:

Schedule is subject to change!!! Readings are due on the day listed!

(Please note: all readings are from the required text, unless otherwise noted)

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| <input type="checkbox"/> week 1: | | | |
| Monday 1/12 | Introduction | | |
| Wednesday 1/14 | Plato: <i>The Euthyphro</i> | read: p. 1-2 and 18-22, up to "10" in the margin | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 2: | | | |
| Monday 1/19 | No Class: MLK Day! | | Blog #1 due: (Sun. 1/18, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 1/21 | | read: p. 22-26 | Blog #1 response due: (Tue. 1/20, 6 pm) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 3: | | | |
| Monday 1/26 | <i>The Republic</i> | read: p. 145 (Book II) - 158 (start of Book IV) | Blog #2 due: (Sun. 1/25 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 1/28 | | read: p. 158-169 (to Book V) | Blog #2 response due: (Tue. 1/27, 6 pm) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 4: | | | |
| Monday 2/2 | | read: p. 169-179 (to Book IX) | Blog #3 due: (Sun. 2.1, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 2/4 | | read: p. 179-192 | Blog #3 response due: (Tue. 2/3, 6 pm) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 5: | | | |
| Monday 2/9 | Aristotle: <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> | read: p. 193-194 and 275-281 (to chapter 9) | Blog #4 due: (Sun. 2/8, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 2/11 | | read: p. 281-290 (to III) and 312-315 (to IX) | Blog #4 response due: (Tue. 2/10, 6 pm) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 6: | | | |
| Monday 2/16 | Augustine: <i>Free Choice of the Will</i> | read: p. 372-377 (to Book Two) | Blog #5 due: (Tue. 2/15, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 2/18 | | read: "Augustine: Books 2&3" (on Blackboard) | Blog #5 response due: (Tue. 2/17, 6 pm) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 7: | | | |
| Monday 2/23 | Midterm Exam #1 | | |
| Wednesday 2/25 | Descartes: <i>Meditations</i> | read: p. 499-500 and 533-539 (to 3 rd Med.) | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> week 8: | | | |
| Monday 3/2 | | read: p. 539-549 (to 5 th Meditation) | Blog #6 due: (Sun. 3/1, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 3/4 | | read: p. 549-559 | Blog #6 response due: (Tue. 3/3, 6 pm) |

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| ☐ week 9: | | | |
| Monday 3/9 | Hume <i>Enquiry</i> | read: p. 832-847 | Blog #7 due: (Sun. 3/8, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 3/11 | | read: p. 847-862 and 873- 875 (Section IX) | Blog #7 response due: (Tue. 3/10, 6 pm) |
| ☐ week 10: | | | |
| Monday 3/16 | Kant: <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> | read: "Critique" (file on Blackboard) | Blog #8 due: (Sun. 3/15, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 3/18 | | read: "Deleuze's Kant" (file on Blackboard) | Blog #8 response due: (Tue. 3/17, 6 pm) |
| ☐ week 11: | | | |
| Monday 3/23 | No Class: Spring Break! | | |
| Wednesday 3/25 | No Class: Spring Break! | | |
| ☐ week 12: | | | |
| Monday 3/30 | <i>Groundwork</i> | read: p. 1110-1127 (to footnote 33) | |
| Wednesday 4/1 | Midterm Exam #2 | | |
| ☐ week 13: | | | |
| Monday 4/6 | Nietzsche: <i>Human, All Too Human</i> | read: 1227-1228 & "Hu- man" (on Blackboard) | Blog #9 due: (Sun. 4/5, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 4/8 | Peirce: "Fixation of Belief" | read: p. 1244-1254 | Blog #9 response due: (Tue. 4/7, 6 pm) |
| ☐ week 14: | | | |
| Monday 4/13 | Husserl: "Paris Lectures" | read: p. 1310-1318 | Blog #10 due: (Sun. 4/12, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 4/15 | <i>Analyses of Passive Synthesis</i> | read: "Husserl" (file on Blackboard) | Blog #10 response due: (Tue. 4/14, 6 pm) |
| ☐ week 15: | | | |
| Monday 4/20 | Kierkegaard: <i>The Concept of Angst</i> | read: "Angst" (file on Blackboard) | Blog #11 due: (Sun. 4/19, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 4/22 | | continue "Angst" | Blog #11 response due: (Tue. 4/21, 6 pm) |
| ☐ week 16: | | | |
| Monday 4/27 | De Beauvoir: <i>The Ethics of Ambiguity</i> | read: "Ethics" (file on Blackboard) | Blog #12 due: (Sun. 4/26, 6 pm) |
| Wednesday 4/29 | | continue "Ethics" | Blog #12 response due: (Tue. 4/28, 6 pm) |
| ☐ Finals week: | | | |
| Tuesday 5/4 | Final Exam 10:15-12:30 pm | | |