



Introduction to Philosophy

PHL 261W.06

Syllabus

Instructor: Carol Gardosik

Textbook: Palmer, Donald. Looking at Philosophy: The Unbearable Heaviness of Philosophy Made Lighter. Fourth ed. McGraw-Hill, 2001.

Further assigned readings will be available on Blackboard.

Classroom: LDB room 218,

Class Time: 2:00 to 2:50 MWF (5572)

Office: 332L in LDB

Office Hours: 11:00 to 12:00 MWF and by appointment

CATALOGUE COURSE DESCRIPTION: PHL 261 Introduction to Philosophy.

[PHIL 1301] A general examination of the fields and issues of philosophy as discussed by both classical and modern philosophers. Philosophical problems discussed include the existence of God, the nature of knowledge and truth, the issue of human free will, and theories of moral judgment. Credit 3.

OBJECTIVES: (1) To acquaint the student with several of the major philosophical issues and the various views people have had about them, (2) to foster logical and objective thinking about the issues, and (3) to enhance the student's self-awareness by encouraging the development and expression of his/her personal views on the issues.

Instructional Procedures

A variety of instructional techniques will be employed during the course, including

Traditional techniques

Lectures will be included to provide a frame of reference and clarification of ideas.

Class discussion will allow students to contribute their ideas. Contributions are expected to show respect for others' views, openness to new perspectives, and the thoughtful use of reason to support positions.

Group work and student presentations may be included in order to enhance students' understanding of philosophical issues.

Graphic representations and cognitive maps will be used to represent philosophical concepts. (Don't worry; artistic ability is not required!)

Guest speakers and field trips will be arranged, if possible.

Technological Enhancements

Our class space on Blackboard will provide access to primary readings and other materials.

Webquests, computer-based discussion groups, and PowerPoint reviews are also typical of my teaching style. If you need help, do not worry; I will work with you and help until it's fun and easy.

Course Requirements

Your semester grade will be based upon the following:

Class Assignments: a variety of activities are required in order to help you to unravel the sometimes complicated and apparently opaque ideas that we will cover. Grades on these activities will be based upon the student's success in following directions, clarity of ideas and demonstrated understanding of material. Each of the first three topics (Pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle) will have short writing assignments. Later in the semester, there will be some videos to watch and comments to write on the philosophical ideas presented.

Reading Quizzes: It is very important to ensure the quality of class discussion that we have read the material assigned. If the class calendar has Chapter 5, for example, assigned for a particular week, expect a quiz over the reading on the first or second class day that Chapter 5 is discussed. Quizzes may be moved to Blackboard. If so, you will be given the details in class.

Time Deadlines: Please see the calendar for the semester. Any necessary changes or updates will be announced in class.

Tests: There will be four tests throughout the semester. The first will cover the Pre-Socratics, Plato, and Aristotle. The Midterm will cover everything presented and assigned up to that point. The third will cover material presented and assigned after the Midterm up to the point of the third test. The Final will be comprehensive.

Paper: the student will write a paper (2-5 pages, double-spaced, with 12 point font, clear, well-argued, demonstrating understanding of the topic) evaluating one of the philosophical positions that we cover in the course. Sources must be cited and grammar must be appropriate to college-level work.

Initial Test Calendar

September 17: Exam 1

October 17: Midterm

November 19: Exam 3

December 15-21: Finals Week

Determination of Course Grade:

Class Assignments and Quizzes= 20%

Paper= 20%

Test 1= 10%

Midterm= 20%

Test 2= 10%

Final= 20%

Grade Values: 90-100= A, 80-89= B, 70-79= C, 60-69= D, below 60= F

Plagiarism and Cheating

Using others' ideas as if they are your own is a very serious offense in academia. Please see the university's standard policies. In our class, a lesson on plagiarism will be taught during the first week of the semester. If you add the class late, it is your responsibility to get notes on this lesson. Cases of plagiarism or cheating will, at the very least, result in a "0" on the project or test on which it is committed.

Class Attendance, Late Work, and Make-Ups

Class attendance is required. After the fourth absence, the course grade will be dropped a full letter for each of the following absences. In other words, if you have grades that would give you a "C" in the course and you miss five classes, your grade will be a "D." If you miss six, it will be an "F."

Make-up exams and quizzes will not be given. If you miss an exam, the grade on your Final will be assigned to the missed exam as well. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

Time limits will be strictly enforced. If you know ahead of time that you will not be able to turn in an assignment on time, that assignment should be turned in early. The lowest assignment grade will be dropped.

SHSU Standard Policies

For Students with Disabilities, Academic Dishonesty, Classroom Behavior,
Visitors in the Classroom, Absences for Religious Holidays,
and Course Evaluations

(1) NOTICE TO PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY:

It is the policy of Sam Houston State University that individuals otherwise qualified shall not be excluded, solely by reason of their disability, from participation in any academic program of the university. Further, they shall not be denied the benefits of these programs nor shall they be subjected to discrimination. Students with disabilities that might affect their academic performance are expected to visit with the Office of Services for Students with

Disabilities located in the Counseling Center. They should then make arrangements with their individual instructors so that appropriate strategies can be considered and helpful procedures can be developed to ensure that participation and achievement opportunities are not impaired.

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If the student has a disability that may affect adversely their work in this class, then he or she needs to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with the instructor about how they can best be helped. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until the student registers with the Counseling Center. There will be no retroactive accommodations.

(2) ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

In accordance with the University's Academic Policy Statement 810213, the following statement applies to all students in my classes:

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials.

(3) CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT:

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment that is conducive to learning. Students therefore must refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular phones, pagers, and music players (for example, iPod-type devices) must be turned off and earphones removed before class begins. Students are prohibited from using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, talking at inappropriate times, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

(4) VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM:

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not he/she will be allowed to remain.

(5) STUDENT ABSENCES ON RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS:

Section 51.911(b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. Section 51.911(a)(2) defines religious holy days as: "a holy day observed by a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property taxation under Section 11.20, Tax Code...."

A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence.

University policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). The instructor will notify the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

(6) COURSE EVALUATIONS:

in accordance with University policy every student will have an opportunity at a specified date and time near the end of the semester to complete a course evaluation form from the IDEA course evaluation system.

Philosophy is wonderful! I look forward to guiding you on this adventure.
Welcome to Philosophy class!