

**PHIL 1000: Introduction to Philosophy**      **Fall 2007**  
**MWF 1:25-2:15 pm, Peabody Hall rm. 105**  
**Instructor: Brian Howell**  
**Office: Peabody 24**  
**Office Hours: Wednesday 10:30-12:30**  
**E-mail: brhowell@uga.edu**  
**phone: 706-583-0666**

*“Americans are a free people, who know that freedom is the right of every person and the future of every nation. The liberty we prize is not America’s gift to the world; it is God’s gift to humanity.”*

*“You know, [‘liberal’] is a word that originally meant that you were for freedom, that you were for the freedom to achieve, that you were willing to stand against big power and on behalf of the individual.”*

*“Freedom’s just another word for nothing left to lose.”*

This course will be an examination of human liberty. Though we all have some idea of how to use the word it’s not often that we take the time and effort to try to understand it. The purpose of this course will be to do just that. This undertaking will require that we ask certain questions along the way. These may include the following: How much freedom is available to us, if any at all? What is it good for and do we even want it? Can we choose to be free or is it bestowed on us? Can we choose *not* to be free? Do I have to do anything to become free? What is the relationship between a free person and a free society, nation or world? or perhaps, Does your freedom interfere with my freedom and mine with yours? In other words, *What is it?* If we can answer this last question we should hopefully be able to answer those that come before it.

Each of the philosophers we will be reading over the next fifteen weeks will be attempting to answer some or all of these questions as well as many others. Their texts approach the subject of liberty in divergent (yet often similar) ways and I hope that this diversity will provide us with adequate material to begin dealing with these issues, not only in the abstract but also in our everyday lives. In addition to struggling with these issues the range of history covered by the readings will hopefully allow us to see how the methods of dealing with this problem have developed over the course of the philosophical enterprise.

This course is designed to provide an introduction to philosophical thinking through a careful reading of some philosophical classics. As an introductory philosophy course, there is no expectation that you have any previous acquaintance with philosophy. However, you will be expected to do quite a bit of work, both in and out of class. You should come to class prepared, having

done all of the assigned reading and given the material some considerable thought. A large part of our classes will be discussion and you will be expected to participate. Though short, these readings will be difficult and will require slow and often multiple readings.

#### **Required Texts:**

Plato, *Trial and Death of Socrates* (book)  
Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (book)  
Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* (book)  
John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (book)  
Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844 and the Communist Manifesto* (book)  
Jean Paul Sartre, *Existentialism as a Humanism* (electronic reserve)  
Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (electronic reserve)  
Judith Butler, “Variations on Sex and Gender” (electronic reserve)  
Fyodor Dostoyevsky, *Notes from Underground* (book)

#### **Attendance:**

Attendance is mandatory. This means that you must come to every class. If you cannot come for some reason please take note. Students who miss the equivalent of six classes, for whatever reason, will be subject to administrative withdrawal. In such cases withdrawal will be at the discretion of the instructor. Please do not use these absences unless absolutely necessary. You will only be permitted to make-up missed work if you have a written excuse from the Health Center or Dean’s Office.

#### **Grading:**

Your final grade will be composed in the following way.

Quizzes	5%	
Short Paper I	20%	(the papers will be 3-5 double-spaced, typewritten pages)
Midterm Exam	20%	
Short Paper II	25%	
Final Exam	30%	

\* Attendance, class participation and improvement will be taken into account to resolve borderline cases regarding the final grade for the course.

\*\* The honor code is in effect in this class and will be enforced.

\*\*\* This syllabus is a plan for the course and is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class.