

Philosophy 1000: Introduction to Philosophy

University of Georgia

Spring 2008

Class Meets

First Section TR 9:30am-10:45am Leconte 321

Second Section TR 11am-12:15pm Peabody 220

Instructor: Luke Johnson (me)

Office: Peabody Room 120

Phone: 542-2823 (Philosophy Department office; leave message with secretary)

Email: ljo@uga.edu (I check this religiously)

Office Hours: Thursday 1:15pm-3:15pm or by appointment

Website:

www.luke-johnson.com

Those interested in indie/art rock might want to check this out too

www.myspace.com/animalspirits

Note: The Grading Criteria and the Disclaimer in this syllabus were reproduced from Dr. Forbes' Fall 2006 Ethics Course.

Course Description and Objectives

This course should be a reflection of my interest in all the fundamental questions of philosophy. For those craving specifics, I will say this. Together we will cultivate an understanding of the major themes and concepts in the following areas of philosophy: **Philosophy of Religion, Knowledge, Mind, Ethics, Political Philosophy, and Philosophy in action.** I assign more reading than most professors, but fewer comprehensive exams. I want you to think deeply about the readings and to write about what resonates with you. To make sure you stay on top of the readings, I will administer one reading exam and ten pop quizzes. With the proper preparation, you should excel in this course, sharpen your critical thinking skills, and experience fulfillment as you wrestle with questions existential in scope.

Required Text

Louis P. Pojman's "Philosophy: The Quest for Truth" sixth edition: Oxford University Press

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance/participation: I do not take attendance and your presence is not mandatory; however it would be imprudent to skip a class. Not only will you be denying yourself the opportunity to take advantage of the opportunities in your opportune life, but you will also risk missing a homework assignment/reading quiz. There will be ten of these assigned/proffered during the course of the semester. Excellent work will receive a 2, mediocre work will receive a 1, and failure to complete the assignment/quiz earns you no credit. So if you read every night and pass every reading quiz, you should get 20/20 or a hundred for participation. Participation is a big part of this course because I believe that philosophy is more than a stuffy academic pursuit, but a healthy and rigorous intellectual activity carried out in a community of inquisitive minds. Now to show you that I am not a totally heartless man heckbent on destroying your college experience, I will be flexible with the homeworks/quizzes because stuff happens. Should you miss a quiz (without a legitimate excuse) or not turn something in on time, you can do an alternative assignment. Find a piece of art (music, film, paintings, etc...) and show me how it illustrates a particular philosophical idea. These papers should be 2 pgs long and each critique/paper will count as one point towards your participation grade. No extra-credit. And you can do no more than 3 of these throughout the term. So if you missed one quiz, you would have to do two papers to neutralize the downside of skipping. Understood? Awesomeness!

Reading Test

This test won't require rote memorization of everything the philosophers ever said. The purpose of this test is to make sure you are keeping up with the reading. I expect you to be familiar with the big ideas of each of the philosophers. If you read for every class and review your notes, you should be in pretty good shape.

Papers

A lot of professors in intro courses assign you tons of tests. I don't do that. My goal is to make you really see the joy in philosophy by encouraging you to seek out your own research interests. During the term, you will have to write two 5-7 pg papers, each constituting a 1/3rd of your grade. I will try to get you topics pretty far in advance, but I will also allow for you to write on a topic of your choosing. Just clear it with me first. For every day your paper is late, I knock off a third of a letter grade. For instance, if you hand in an A- paper two days late, you will receive a B. One more thing. Make sure your paper is properly cited. I do not grade papers without citations and bibliographies. I'm not concerned with how you cite your paper. Just be consistent in the way that you cite.

UGA Academic Honesty Policy. The University of Georgia's academic honesty policy will be enforced in order to protect all students' legal rights. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty" (found at <http://www.uga.edu/honesty/>). **Students are responsible for informing themselves about these standards before performing any academic work.**

GRADING BREAKDOWN:

Reading Test 16.65%

Reading Quizzes/Homework 16.65%

1st Paper 33.3%

2nd paper 33.4%

GRADING CRITERIA:

Exam essays will be graded on a scale. A basic outline of the scale is as follows:

A: Your work demonstrates a superb understanding of the material and presents the argumentation in a clear, precise, and concise manner; **and** you have engaged in proper philosophical analysis and/or critique of the material.

B: Your work demonstrates a good understanding of the material and presents the argumentation accurately and intelligibly; **and** your work exhibits signs of real progress in learning how to grapple with the material by means of philosophical analysis and/or critique.

C: Your work exhibits an average understanding of the material but indicates you are struggling to fully grasp it, and shows some problems presenting the argumentation fully and accurately; **and** you show some sign of real effort to engage with the material.

D: You exhibit significant difficulties understanding the material, but you are able to present some portions of the argumentation and show some evidence of struggling to understand it; **and** you fail to engage with the material in philosophical critique but show some attempt to evaluate it in some way.

F: You exhibit little understanding of the material and cannot present the argumentation accurately; **and** you fail to engage with the material in any critically meaningful way.

FINAL GRADE SCALE:

LETTER GRADE PERCENTAGE GPA POINTS

A 100-93 4.0

A- 92-90 3.7

B+ 89-87 3.3

B 86-83 3.0

B- 82-80 2.7

C+ 79-77 2.3

C 76-73 2.0

C- 72-70 1.7

D 69-60 1.0

F <60 0.0

DISCLAIMER:

It is the student's responsibility to read this syllabus carefully and learn and understand the policies, requirements, and due dates. This syllabus indicates a general plan for the course; some changes may be necessary. It is the student's responsibility to keep informed of any changes that are made over the course of the academic term.

Course Outline (subject to amendment)

1/8 Introduction to the Course

Philosophy of Religion

1/10 Pojman p.47-72

1/15 Pojman p.72-93

1/17 Pojman p.94-109

1/22 Pojman p.111-134

1/24 Pojman p.134-149

1/29 Pojman p.149-171

Knowledge

1/31 Pojman p.171-192

2/5 Reading Test

2/7 Pojman p.192-209

2/12 Pojman p.209-225

2/14 Pojman p.225-240

Mind

2/19 Pojman p.241-269

2/21 Pojman p.269-284

2/26 Pojman p.285-309

2/28 Pojman p.309-324

3/4 Pojman p.324-340

Free Will

3/6 **First Paper Due**, Pojman p.343-365

3/11 Spring Break

3/13 Spring Break

3/18 Pojman p.365-384

3/20 Pojman p.384-394

Ethics

3/25 Pojman p.396-420

3/27 Pojman p.420-439

4/1 Pojman p.439-462

4/3 Pojman p.462-475

Political Philosophy

4/8 Pojman p.479-502

4/10 Pojman p.502-518

Meaning of Life

4/15 Pojman p.518-536

4/17 Pojman p.537-551

Philosophy in Action

4/22 Pojman p.551-574

4/24 **Last Day of Class**, Pojman p.574-588

4/29 Reading Day

5/6 **Final Papers Due at High noon**