

## **INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY (SPRING 2008)**

**PHIL-110-06 – Class Number 5136 ♦ 217 Stein Hall ♦ MWF 11:00-11:50am**

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### **Course Description**

Plato says that philosophy starts in wonder. In this course we will wonder about a few central philosophical questions raised by four classical philosophical texts. This is an introductory course, and no previous knowledge of philosophical texts and issues is required to enroll. The course is structured as a series of lectures during which students' participation is highly encouraged. New readings are assigned for each class.

### **Structure and Course Requirements:**

Readings and Participation: You will be expected to complete the assigned readings before the class for which they are assigned, to bring the texts under discussion with you to class, and to come to class prepared to discuss them.

Attendance: You are expected to attend each class. If you will be absent, please e-mail me in advance ([aborghin@holycross.edu](mailto:aborghin@holycross.edu)). The only grounds for which absences will be excused are religious holidays, family crises, illness, or athletic competitions (which does not include athletic training); absences due to the last three reasons must be explained by a note from a dean or a doctor. For each class, I keep track of students who are late. Accumulating several late arrivals will incur in a grade reduction of one third of a grade. If you have scheduling conflicts, please come see me.

Weekly Assignments: Each week, I will post an assignment on Blackboard. Typically, I will post the assignment on Monday, and you are expected to reply by the following Friday by 11:00am, class time. Anytime an assignment is posted, I will send you a notification message through Blackboard. Please bring your reply to class. There will be eleven assignments. You may skip four during the semester. (I will count only the seven best assignments towards your final grade.) Missing more than four will result in a substantial grade reduction (see below). I keep track of late postings. Accumulating several late postings will incur in a grade reduction of one third of a grade.

In class examination: Midterm; Final (date, time and location TBA)

Papers: 1200 to 1600 words each. The first paper is due in class on Wednesday, February 13; the second paper is due in class on Friday, April 11. Papers should be typed in Times New Roman, size 12 font, double-spaced, and all the page margins should measure one inch. Paper topics will be distributed one week to ten days in advance.

**Required Texts:**

The following books are required (the last one is optional):

Plato: *Republic* (Hackett), ISBN: 978-0872201361

Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* (Hackett), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ISBN: 978-0-87220-464-5

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Hackett),

Kant: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* (Cambridge), ISBN: 978-0521626958

**Grade Breakdown:**

Weekly Assignments: 21% (3% each)

Midterm: 12%

Paper I: 20%

Paper II: 25%

Final: 16%

Participation: 6%

*Please be advised:* In order to pass the class you are required to do *all* the coursework (e.g. completing one out of two papers will result in failing the class). Late papers incur in a penalty of one third of a letter grade per day (e.g. from A to A-). As for weekly assignments, if you miss more than four, a penalty of one third of a letter grade will be applied to your overall final grade. Finally, plagiarism, cheating, and collusion, in any form, will not be tolerated, in accordance with the *Student Handbook*, p. 35.

**Office Hours:**

My office hours are Monday and Wednesday: 1-3pm in 519 Smith Hall. I am also on campus at other times, and you can make an appointment to see me by e-mail ([aborghin@holycross.edu](mailto:aborghin@holycross.edu)). Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me about any aspect of the course.

## Tentative Schedule:

### Week 1

- 1.16 (W) 'Know Thyself'
- 1.18 (F) Selections from the *Crito* (E-res)

### Week 2

- 1.21 (M) **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY**
- 1.23 (W) *Republic*, Book I
- 1.25 (F) *Republic*, Book I (**Assignment #1 due**)

### Week 3

- 1.28 (M) Charles King: "A Rationale For Punishment":  
[www.mises.org/journals/jls/4\\_2/4\\_2\\_3.pdf](http://www.mises.org/journals/jls/4_2/4_2_3.pdf)
- 1.30 (W) *Republic*, II
- 2.1 (F) *Republic*, II (**Assignment #2 due**)

### **PAPER #1 TOPICS DISTRIBUTED**

### Week 4

- 2.4 (M) *Republic*, IV, §434-445 (pp. 109-121)
- 2.6 (W) Plato on justice: recap
- 2.8 (F) *Republic*, Book VII, §514-520 (pp. 186-192) (**Assignment #3 due**)

### Week 5

- 2.11 (M) Montaigne (E-res)
- 2.13** (W) *Nicomachean Ethics*, I  
**PAPER #1 DUE**
- 2.15 (F) *Nicomachean Ethics*, I (**Assignment #4 due**)

### Week 6

- 2.18 (M) *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII
- 2.20 (W) *Nicomachean Ethics*, VIII
- 2.22 (F) *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VII: 99-114 (**Assignment #5 due**)

**Week 7**

2.25 (M) *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book VII: 99-114

**2.27 (W) Midterm (materials up to week 6 included)**

2.29 (F) Machiavelli, *Prince*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/1232> (**Assignment #6 due**)

**Week 8**

3.3 (M) **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY**

3.5 (W) **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY**

3.7 (F) **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY**

**Week 9**

3.10 (M) Machiavelli, *Prince*, <http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/1232>

3.12 (W) *Meditations*: Meditation I

3.14 (F) *Meditations*: Meditation II (**Assignment #7 due**)

**Week 10**

3.17 (M) Screening of: *Waking Life* [class held on an evening of Week 9]

3.19 (W) Husserl: "Phenomenology (esp. sections: 1-3; 6-8; 11)"  
<http://www.hfu.edu.tw/~huangkm/phenom/husserl-britanica.htm>

3.21 (F) **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY**

**Week 11**

3.24 (M) **ACADEMIC HOLIDAY**

3.26 (W) ---

3.28 (F) Sartre: "Existentialism Is A Humanism":  
<http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>  
(**Assignment #8 due**)

**Week 12**

3.31 (M) *Meditations*: Meditation III  
**#2 PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED**

4.2 (W) *Meditations*: Meditation IV

4.4 (F) *Meditations*: Meditations V and VI  
(**Assignment #9 due**)

**Week 13**

4.7 (M) Spinoza: Appendix to *Ethics*, Part II (E-res)

4.9 (W) Leibniz: from *Theodicy* (E-res)

4.11 (F) Leibniz: from *Theodicy* (E-res)  
**DUE PAPER #2**

**Week 14**

4.14 (M) Kant, *Groundwork*, Preface

4.16 (W) Kant, *Groundwork*, Section I

4.18 (F) Kant, *Groundwork*, Section II  
**(Assignment #10 due)**

**Week 14**

4.21 (M) Singer, “The Good Life” (E-res)

4.23 (W) Singer, “Famine, Affluence and Morality”  
<http://www.utilitarian.net/singer/by/1972----.htm>

4.25 (F) Singer, “What Should a Billionaire Give – And What Should You?”  
<http://www.utilitarian.net/singer/by/20061217.htm>  
**(Assignment #11 due)**

**Week 15**

4.28 (M) Conclusions

5.3-10 **FINAL** Date, time, and location TBA