

Philosophy 1100H Honors Introduction to Philosophy

This course introduces students to the concerns and methods of philosophy through reading and discussion of ancient, modern, and some contemporary texts. A broad range of issues in metaphysics, epistemology, the philosophy of mind, and ethics will be considered, including consciousness and the mind-body problem, causation, skepticism and the possibility of scientific knowledge, free will and moral responsibility, personal identity, and the meaning of life. (Sorry, no definitive answers will be given!) Historical figures to be covered will include a number of Pre-Socratics, Socrates/Plato, Descartes, and Hume.

Readings (available at the university area textbook stores)

A Presocratics Reader (Hackett)

Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Hackett)

Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Hackett)

A number of pieces will also be available electronically on the Carmen course web site.

Schedule

Aug 28	Introduction
Sept 2, 4	Presocratics – Milesians, Heraclitus
Sept 9, 11	Parmenides, Xeno, Empedocles, Democritus
Sept 16, 18	Socrates: Euthyphro; Plato: Excerpt on the partition of the soul from Book IV of the <i>Republic</i>
Sept 23, 25	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> 1 – 3; selected Objections and Replies
Sept 30, Oct 2	Descartes' <i>Meditations</i> 4 – 6; correspondence with Elizabeth
Oct 7, 9	Contemporary discussion of consciousness Frank Jackson, "What Mary Didn't Know" David Lewis, "Knowing What It's Like" (Postscript to "Mad Pain, Martian Pain") Gilbert Harman, "The Intrinsic Quality of Experience" Amy Kind, "What's So Transparent about Transparency?"
Oct 14, 16	Contemporary discussion of personal identity Derek Parfit, "Personal Identity" Christine Korsgaard, "Personal Identity and the Unity of Agency"
Oct 21, 23	Hume: Elements of mind – <i>Enquiry</i> §1-3
Oct 28, 30	Hume: Skepticism about causal inference? – <i>Enquiry</i> §4-5
Nov 4, 6	Hume: Necessary connection – <i>Enquiry</i> §7
Nov 11, 13	Hume: Liberty and necessity – <i>Enquiry</i> §8 (Skepticism again? §12)

Nov 18, 20 Contemporary discussion of free will
Harry Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"
Susan Wolf, "The Importance of Free Will"
Gary Watson, "Responsibility and the Limits of Evil – Variations on a Strawsonian Theme"

Nov 25, ~~27~~ (Thanksgiving)

Dec 2, 4 The Meaning of Life: Thomas Nagel, "The Absurd"

Dec 9 Seana Shiffrin, "Wrongful Life, Procreative Responsibility, and the Significance of Harm"

Requirements

Short assignments (5%, 10%, 25%); quiz (20%); final (30%); participation (10%). Late assignments penalized. Please note that completion of *each* of these components is necessary for passing the course. Attendance matters, but people who are sick should not come to class.

Plagiarism is a serious matter, and will not be tolerated. If when completing your assignment you are unsure what the standards are, please don't hesitate to ask. Some useful information here <http://oaa.osu.edu/coam.html>.

Philosophy 1100H satisfies the Cultures & Ideas subcategory (3) of the Arts & Humanities category of the Arts & Sciences GEC requirements (2.C.3.).

Ohio State's General Education Curriculum (GEC) is an integral part of an Arts and Sciences education. General education, as embodied in Arts and Sciences, provides the development of knowledge, perception, attitudes, and skills necessary to understand society's traditions and past, its accomplishments and aspirations, its relation and responsibility to the natural world, its diversity and plurality, and its problems and needs. The goal is for you to attain a sense of self within society that invites a continuing desire and ability to learn and work with others for future realization of the human potential. Specific goals aimed toward the broader goal of the GEC are listed below under the four categories of the curriculum.

The goal of courses in the Arts & Humanities category is for you to evaluate significant writing and works of art. Such studies develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; interpretation and evaluation; critical listening, reading, seeing, thinking, and writing; and experiencing the arts and reflecting on that experience.

In Philosophy 1100H, students will read and critically evaluate some major philosophical works. Students will examine and interpret fundamental ideas embedded in our understanding of perception, thought, and action, ideas such as knowledge, justification, personhood, value, and the will. Through critical engagement with these works, they will develop their capacity for interpretation and evaluation of philosophical theories and arguments.

If you have a documented disability, please register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations, so they may be implemented in a timely fashion. If you have any questions about this process, please contact Disability Services at 614-292-3307 or orslds@osu.edu.