

PHILOSOPHY 110: Introduction to Philosophy

Grossmont College
Spring 2008
Wednesdays, 7-8:40
Location: 523
Section 6854: Hybrid Course

INSTRUCTOR: June Yang, PhD, Instructor of Philosophy

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-3:30, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2-3, and by appointment.

TEXTBOOKS:

#1: *The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy, 5th Edition.*

Norman Melchert. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

#2: *The Consolations of Philosophy.* Alain de Botton. New York: Vintage Books, 2000.

BLACKBOARD: All students are required to check Blackboard regularly. Blackboard is a web site affiliated with our course. Go to <http://bb.gcccd.net/> and sign in. Your user name is firstnamelastname and your password is your birthday (MMDDYY). You will find critical information there that will aid in your success in this course. You must log in and change your email address as soon as possible.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: “All human beings ask philosophical questions: Is there any purpose to my existence? Is it possible to have knowledge about the world which is certain? How do I know if my actions are right or wrong? Does God exist? This course explains the fundamental philosophical issues and examines the answers provided by philosophers, past and present” (*Grossmont College Catalogue 2007-2008* 245).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES:

The learner will engage with a body of philosophic literature and be able to identify the basic terminology, divisions, and concepts of the discipline by demonstrating in college-level writing and/or other evaluative processes the following skills:

- The ability to analyze, critique, and reconstruct arguments and positions embedded in the philosophical literature,
- The ability to compare and contrast theories and methods used in the handling of fundamental philosophical problems,
- The integration of philosophical techniques into the students’ formulations and justifications of their own arguments and beliefs.

The satisfactory fulfillment of the above student learning objectives/outcomes is sufficient for success in Philosophy 110.

COURSE CALENDAR (topics and important dates included):

(Do not be concerned if we fall forward or behind on this schedule. What is important is that everyone understand the concepts involved.)

Week 1: **January 30 IN CLASS:** We begin with the Ancients.

Syllabus, Policies, Introductions. What is Philosophy? Where does it begin?

The notion of myth and foundational terms.

Socrates – Plato’s Teacher. Required: 59-70, Melchert. 1-20, de Botton.

To better understand the background in which Socrates conducted his method of dialectic, you can read about the Pre-Socratics and Sophists. Melchert discusses these groups on pp. 1- 58.

For a general overview of philosophy, you can read xv-xvii, Melchert.

On your Own: Conclude Socrates. Required: 85-103, 113-116, Melchert, 20-26, 27-42, de Botton.

Week 2: ONLINE February 6: Plato: The Student becomes Master
Knowledge, Opinion, and Forms. Required: 117-133, Melchert.

Week 3: February 13 IN CLASS: Conclude Plato
The Human as Immortal, The State as Justice.
Required: 133-155, Melchert.

Week 4: ONLINE February 20: Aristotle: The Student Rebels.
Aristotle: The Student and Philosophical Opponent of Plato.
Required: 157-159, 168-173, 177-179, 180-185, Melchert.

Week 5: February 27 IN CLASS: Conclude Aristotle.
The Golden Mean, The Good Life.
Required: 185-197, Melchert.

Week 6: ONLINE March 5: **Midterm #1**

Week 7: ONLINE March 12: Pleasure and the Augustinian Christian Tradition
Essay Topics Distributed Electronically.
Epicureanism, Stoicism and Christianity. (3 ways to live.)
Epicureanism. Required: 198-204, Melchert, 45-72, de Botton.
Stoicism and Christianity. Required: 204-215, 216-225, Melchert.
Required: 75-112, de Botton.

Augustine: St. Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo. (5th Century)
God and the World. Required: 226-242, 259-263, Melchert.
The Salvation of Humanity. Recommended: 243-258, Melchert.

Spring Break: March 17-21.

Week 8: March 26 IN CLASS: Descartes: the Father of Modern Philosophy.

Recommended: The Medieval World View, and a comparison to Our View.
297-318, Melchert.

The Modern Era Begins. (16th Century – 18th Century)
The Cartesian Methodology. Required: 322-327, Melchert.

The *Meditations* continued. Required: 339-344, Melchert. Recommended: 344-360, Melchert. (No pop quiz on Meditations 3, 4, 5, or 6.)

Week 9: ONLINE April 02: Conclusion of Descartes, begin John Locke.
Locke: An Enlightenment Thinker and Reactionary to Descartes.
Conclude Descartes. Begin John Locke's Political Philosophy as a reaction to
Descartes. Required: pp. 382-385, Melchert.

Week 10: ONLINE April 09: Locke's Epistemology, the Unity of Locke's Thought.
Required: 372-376, 378-381, Melchert.
Comparisons of all Philosophers to this Point.

Week 11: April 16 IN CLASS: Kant's Copernican Revolution
Kant's as a Reaction to Hume the Skeptic.
Recommended: 423-425, Melchert. Required: 426-431, 434-442, Melchert.

Week 12: ONLINE April 23: Kant's Handling of metaphysical problems. Recommended: 442-450 Melchert.
Kant's Categorical Imperative. Recommended: 450-460, Melchert.
Midterm #2.

Week 13: ONLINE April 30: Nietzsche's Eternal Recurrence, Secular Existentialism. (19th Century)
Required: 538-564, Melchert. Required: 205-244, de Botton.

Week 14: ONLINE May 07: Utilitarianism and how it applies to Marginalized Groups.
Required: 525-532; Required: 515-525, Melchert.
Peer editing of 2nd draft required.

Week 15: May 14 IN CLASS: Postmodernism: Richard Rorty's Reaction to the Modern Period. (20th Century) Required: 713-724, Melchert.

Week 16: May 21 IN CLASS: Physicalism in the 20th Century – a very popular view.
Daniel Dennett: What are Minds? Do we have them? Required: 736-742, Melchert.

Summation and Review.
Recommended: 745-746, Melchert.

Finals Week: **Final Examination on May 28, 8-10 PM.**

Essays will be accepted, and not penalized, until May 30th. You may submit your essays, with all supporting materials to the mailroom. Make sure you arrive before closing time.

STUDENT EVALUATION:

Grading:	10% Midterm Examination #1	
	15% Midterm Examination #2	A: 90-100 %
	20% Essay	B: 80-89 %
	15% Final Examination	C: 70-79 %
	25% Unannounced Quizzes, Classwork and Homework	D: 60-69 %
	15% Classroom Citizenship	F: <59 %

ACADEMIC POLICIES:

No late work is accepted. Students may make up exams only in cases of documentable emergencies.

Electronic Devices are not allowed in class. They must be turned off and out of sight. This includes cell phones and all text-messaging devices. You will be asked to leave if you use these in class.

Student Responsibility to Drop/Withdraw: It is the student's responsibility to officially add, drop, or withdraw from the course. Failure to do so can result in a failing grade.

Class Attendance: A student may be disenrolled from the course after three absences regardless of the reason for such absences.

Tardiness/Early Departure: If a student arrives unreasonably late or leaves early without notifying the instructor before the event, then that student will be considered absent for that class session.

Professionalism: It is assumed that students will conduct themselves in a professional manner with a positive attitude. An open mind is one of the most important tools required for success in academia.

Student Code of Ethics and Conduct: Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct published in the *Grossmont College Catalogue 2007-2008*. Students who obstruct the instructor's ability to convey knowledge, or disrupt their fellow students' ability to learn, will be dealt with under the terms delineated in the Grossmont College Student Code of Conduct. Such dealings may include, but are not limited to, verbal and written warnings, written reprimands, disciplinary probations, instructor-initiated suspensions, terminations of financial aid, short or long-term suspensions from campus, and temporary or permanent expulsions. These consequences are serious and can easily be avoided.

Examples of disruptive activities that cannot be tolerated are: repeated cell phone ringing, repeatedly falling asleep in class, excessive talking, passing of notes, entering and leaving class several times during a session, verbal rudeness directed towards the instructor and/or other students, and non-verbal rudeness directed towards the instructor and/or other students.

This instructor is charged with maintaining a positive learning experience for all students in this course, and that responsibility is a serious one. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated in this course. **To this end, citizenship points will be deducted at the discretion of the instructor.**

Plagiarism or academic dishonesty will result in the student's being dropped from the course, and the appropriate administrative authorities will be contacted. It is the student's responsibility to know what constitutes academic dishonesty and plagiarism.

TEN TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THIS COURSE:

1. Be optimistic about your ability to learn from the textbooks, the instructor, and each other.
2. Attend because this is the only way to attain the quality of work required to succeed in this course.
3. Do all assigned reading, even if you do not understand it.
4. If you find you fall behind in your understanding, contact the instructor.
5. Be prepared to spend at least two hours per hour spent in class in order to master this material. If you do not, you probably earn an average grade.
6. Have confidence in your ability to do the work.
7. Use all resources at your disposal. (Make sure and use Blackboard.)
8. Remember that you are gifted with more education than many persons on this planet. If you try, you are sure to get it, or at least most of it!
9. Remember that we are all here to learn.
10. Remember that you are being trained, or acquiring a skill. Studying, like anything else, is a craft, i.e. an activity. No one is born a good student, we must all transform ourselves into excellent students.

Tutoring Referral:

Students are referred to enroll in the following supervised tutoring courses if the service indicated will assist them in achieving or reinforcing the learning objectives of this course:

- IDS 198, Supervised Tutoring to receive tutoring in general computer applications in the Tech Mall;
- English 198W, Supervised Tutoring for assistance in the English Writing Center (Room 70-119); and /or
- IDS 198T, Supervised Tutoring to receive one-on-one tutoring in academic subjects in the Tutoring Center (Room 70-229, 644-7387).

To add any of these courses, students may obtain Add Codes at the Information/Registration Desk in the Tech Mall. All Supervised Tutoring courses are non-credit/non-fee. However, when a student registers for a supervised tutoring course, and has no other classes, the student will be charged the usual health fee.

Announcement: Students with disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact Disabled Student Services & Programs (DSP&S) early in the semester so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible. Students may contact DSP&S in person in Room 110 or by phone at (619) 644-7112 or (619) 644-7119 (TTY for Deaf).

