

Philosophy 111
Basic Problems of Philosophy
Spring 2019
Tribble Hall
TTH 12:30-1:45

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Texts

- Plato: Five Dialogues (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo)*, translated G. M. A. Grube, Hackett Publishing, 2002.
- René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy: With Selections from the Objections and Replies*, translated John Cottingham, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*, translated by Howard and Edna Hong, Princeton University Press, 1983.
- Søren Kierkegaard, *Philosophical Fragments/Johannes Climacus, or De omnibus dubitandum est*, translated by Howard and Edna Hong, Princeton University Press, 1985.

Course Objectives

This course introduces some classical philosophical texts, focusing on their enduring arguments and ideas. In approaching them, one aim is to appreciate the importance and relevance of philosophical reflection upon them to our ordinary lives. Themes we'll encounter include mind and body, knowledge and skepticism, reason and faith, God and evil, personal identity, and free will. A related aim in wrestling with these texts is to learn how to evaluate philosophical ideas critically, while articulating and defending your own.

Course Requirements

There will be three in-class exams. The format is short essay. Each exam will be divided into two parts, each part offering three questions from which to choose. You'll choose which one to answer for a total of two essays. The essays will test your ability to recall and reconstruct the central arguments at stake in the texts, and to have you assess them for yourself. The questions will call on the readings themselves as well as our class discussion, so attendance is important.

If discussion is slumping because everyone's not keeping up with the reading, I occasionally may resort to quizzes. Those quizzes would be factored into the final grade.

Class attendance and participation are important. That's the time for us to dig into the material. If we do it right, it will be rewarding! If you know you are going to be absent from a given class for a university excused reason (sports competition, death in the family, interview, illness, etc.) let me know by e-mail so I can make sure you're not going to fall behind. Excessive unexcused absences (more than three) may result in a decrease in the final grade. Good attendance with little participation will leave the final grade unchanged. Good attendance with thoughtful participation will only help your final grade.

Grading

First Exam	30%
Second Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Attendance and Participation:	10%

The dates and times for final exams have not been announced yet by the university. The last exam will be in our classroom.

Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:15am to 10am or by appointment. Please e-mail me or catch me in person to arrange an appointment for another time. I am very happy to help however I can, so please don't hesitate to reach out.

Please Note: If you have a disability that may require an accommodation for taking this course, please contact the Learning Assistance Center (758-5929, <http://lac.wfu.edu/>) within the first two weeks of the semester and let me know as well.

Date	Topic	Reading
W, August 31	First Day	No Reading
F, September 2	Plato	<i>Euthyphro</i>
M, September 5		“
W, September 7		“
F, September 9		“
M, September 12		<i>Apology</i>
W, September 14		“
F, September 16		“
M, September 19		<i>Meno</i>
W, September 21		“
F, September 23		“
M, September 26		<i>Symposium</i>
W, September 28		“
F, September 30		“
M, October 3		“
W, October 5	First Exam	No Reading
F, October 7	Descartes	<i>Meditations</i>
M, October 10		<i>Meditations</i> /G.E. Moore “The Proof of an External World”
W, October 12		<i>Meditations</i>
F, October 14		“
M, October 17		“
W, October 19		“
F, October 21	Fall Break	No Reading
M, October 24		“
W, October 26		“
F, October 28	Kierkegaard	PF/JC
M, October 31		“
W, November 2		“
F, November 4		“
M, November 7		“
W, November 9		Jean-Yves Lacoste “The Knowledge and Love of God: Beyond 'Faith and Reason'”
F, November 11	Second Exam	No Reading
M, November 14		SLW
W, November 16		“
F, November 18		“
M, November 21		“
W, November 23	Thanksgiving Break	No Reading
F, November 25	Thanksgiving Break	No Reading
M, November 28		“
W, November 30		“
F, December 2		“
M, December 5		“
W, December 7		“

F, December 9	Last Class	“
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