

**Philosophy 111**  
**Basic Problems of Philosophy**  
**Spring 2019**  
**Tribble Hall A306**  
**TTH 9:30-10:45**

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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 date and time for the third exam is Monday May 6 at 2pm. The last exam will be in our classroom.

## **Office Hours**

My office is Tribble B306. Office hours are Monday through Thursday 11 to 12, Friday 1 to 2, 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.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>
T, January 15	First Day	No Reading
Th, January 17	<b>Plato</b>	<i>Euthyphro</i>
T, January 22		“
Th, January 24		“
T, January 29		<i>Apology</i>
Th, January 31		“
T, February 5		<i>Crito</i>
Th, February 7		“
T, February 12		<i>Phaedo</i>
Th, February 14		“
T, February 19		“
Th, February 21	<i>Review</i>	No reading
T, February 26	<b>First Exam</b>	No reading
Th, February 28	<b>Descartes</b>	<i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> First Meditation
T, March 5		Second and Third Meditations
Th, March 7		Fourth Meditation
March 11-15	<b>Spring Break</b>	
T, March 19		Fifth Meditation
Th, March 21		Sixth Meditation
T, March 26	<b>Second Exam</b>	
Th, March 28	<i>No class</i>	
T, April 2	<b>Kierkegaard</b>	<i>Johannes Climacus</i>
Th, April 4		“
T, April 9		“
Th, April 11		<i>Fear and Trembling</i>
T, April 16		
Th, April 18		
T, April 23		“
Th, April 25		“
T, April 30		“
M, May 6	<b>Third Exam</b>	