



Shanghai Jiao Tong University

PI900 Introduction to Western Philosophy

Instructor:	Juan De Pascuale	Email:	depascualej@kenyon.edu
Home Institution:	Kenyon College	Office:	505 Main Bldg
Office Hours:	TBD		
Term:	28 May -28 June, 2018	Credits:	4
Classroom:	TBD	Teaching Assistant(s):	TBD
Class Hours:	Monday through Thursday, 8.30-10.30 am		
Discussion Session:	2 hours each week, conducted by teaching assistant(s)		
Total Contact Hours:	66 contact hours (1 contact hour = 45 mins, 3000 mins in total)		
Required Texts (w/ ISBN):	<p><u>Main Text:</u> Louis Pojman & <i>Philosophy: The Quest for Truth</i>, 9th edition. Lewis Vaughn Oxford University Press, 2014</p> <p><u>Required Reading on Electronic Reserve (Readings ER):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Descartes, Rene <i>Discourse on Method</i> (Selections) • Heidegger, Martin <i>What is Philosophy?</i> • Tillich, Paul <i>Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality</i> (Selections) • Freud, Sigmund <i>The Future of an Illusion</i> (Selections) • Tolstoy, Leo <i>Confessions</i> (Selections) • Ventura, John “Adrift in the Sea of Life” • Peirce, Charles “The Fixation of Belief” • Nietzsche, “The Fable of the True World” • Nietzsche, “The Madman” 		
Prerequisite:	N/A		



Course Overview

This course attempts to encourage the student to philosophize, not just to study philosophical texts. It is then more of an invitation to philosophize than an introduction to the discipline of philosophy. Introductions seek merely to lay out the structure of a particular discipline. We *will* do that here but more importantly, the course is an invitation to *become philosophical*, not just become a student of the subject.

Rather than begin, then, by swimming in the open sea of the inherited concepts, problems, and theories developed in the course of the history of philosophy, we will try to uncover and recall those experiences, which issued the concepts, provoked the questions, and demanded the theories. In this way, the student will hopefully come to see that philosophical problems, like all problems, arise from our conflict with experience; that theories are our attempts to clarify experience, and that each of us participates in the qualities of the human condition that gave birth to philosophy as a discipline.

The questions we will raise in this course have primarily to do with metaphysics, epistemology and ethics. They include questions of mind and matter, being and becoming, reality and appearance, and the value and meaning of life.

The readings are selected from classical and contemporary authors. We will read and discuss the theories of Plato, Epictetus, Descartes, Heidegger, Peirce, Sartre, Camus, Tolstoy and several contemporary authors.

Course Goals

The course has an academic and an existential goal. These goals are related but distinct.

Academic goal: The course aims to introduce you to the discipline of philosophy and its major branches: metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics; to provide you with a general introduction to and understanding of philosophical views, issues, and arguments of some of the most important philosophers in the history of Western philosophy; to introduce you to some of the central problems of philosophy such as the existence of God, the mind-body problem, the question of what we can know, the problem of freedom and determinism, and the question of the meaning of life..

Existential Goal: Philosophy, the great philosophers from Plato to Heidegger have said, begins in wonder. My principal goal is to provoke you to wonder about the mystery of life through the reading and discussion of some of the greatest works in the history of Western Philosophy.

Additional learning materials

Lecture Outlines and Handouts on Electronic Reserve (Handouts ER):

- The Academic Division of the Discipline of Philosophy
- Plato, Drawing of “The Allegory of the Cave”
- Outline of Lecture on Plato’s *Apology*
- Plato: Quotations from Plato’s *Apology*
- Heidegger, Lecture outline of *What is Philosophy?*
- “Tillich, *Biblical religion & Search for Ultimate Reality*”
- “The Concept of God”
- “Anselm’s Ontological Argument”



- “Aristotle Primer”
- “Aquinas’ Cosmological Arguments”
- “The Argument from Design Handout”
- “Cultural Critics of Religion”
- “Epistemology Handout”
- “Rorty’s Solidarity or Objectivity Chart”
- “The Concept of the Soul”
- “Solutions to the Mind-Body Problem Chart”
- “Freedom and Determinism Handout”
- “Theories of the Good Life Chart”
- “Outline of Lecture Ethics: How should we live?”
- “The Meaning of Life Handout”
- “Sartre’s Existentialism is a Humanism”

Grading Policy

There will be a midterm, final exam, and a group project. Each will be worth 30% of your final grade. Oral participation and/ office hours discussion will be worth 10%.

Here is what I have in mind with respect to the team project. I will divide the class into 2 teams of roughly 7 people each. Your team is your discussion group, but it is also your working group for a debate you will present to the class. Each team will be assigned to defend different positions on one of the following issues: The existence of God (God exists / God does not exist); The Mind-Body Problem (Human beings are just physical bodies / Human beings are bodies with souls); Freedom and Determinism (Human beings are just physical bodies wholly determined by the laws of nature / Human being possess free will); The Meaning of Life (Life has meaning / Life is absurd). This will be an opportunity for the class to become a community of thinkers, and to also to have some fun. Let yourselves go—but remember to convey the content of the issues *accurately*.

Grading Scale

Number grade	Letter grade	GPA
90-100	A	4.0
85-89	A-	3.7
80-84	B+	3.3
75-79	B	3.0
70-74	B-	2.7
67-69	C+	2.3
65-66	C	2.0
62-64	C-	1.7
60-61	D	1.0
≤59	F (Failure)	0



Class Schedule

Date	Content	Readings
WEEK 1		
28-May	<p><u>1-Introduction:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Reading of Class Roster · Professor's Introduction <p><u>Lecture:</u> "What is philosophy, and why should it be studied?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Go over syllabus <p><u>What is Philosophy?</u></p> <p>"The source of philosophy is to be sought in wonder, in doubt, in a sense of forsakenness. In any case, it begins with an inner upheaval."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">--Karl Jaspers</p>	
29-May	<p><u>2-What is Philosophy?</u></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> "Philosophy begins in Wonder"</p> <p>1- Christian Wolf's Academic Division of the Discipline of Philosophy</p> <p>2- Plato's Allegory of the Cave</p> <p>3- History of Western Philosophy</p>	<p>Pojman,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p. 2-5 · "Plato's Allegory of the Cave," p. 18-21 · Russell, "The Value of Philosophy," p. 21-32 <p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ventura, "Adrift in the Sea of Life" <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Academic Division of Philosophy · Plato's Allegory of the Cave
30-May	<p><u>3-What is Philosophy?</u></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> "Philosophy begins in Wonder"</p>	<p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Ventura "Adrift in the Sea of Life" (Continued) · Heidegger, What is Philosophy? <p>Handout ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Heidegger's <i>What is Philosophy?</i>



<p>31-May</p>	<p>4-What is Philosophy? Lecture: “Self-knowledge and philosophy as a way of life”</p> <p><u>The Enigma of Being</u></p> <p>"The question of being is the darkest in all philosophy. All of us are beggars here..."</p> <p style="text-align: right;">--William James</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Plato’s <i>Apology</i>, p.6-18 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Lecture on Plato’s <i>Apology</i> · Quotations from Plato’s <i>Apology</i>
<p>WEEK 2</p>		
<p>4-Jun</p>	<p>5- <u>The Question of Being</u> Lecture: “Philosophy and Religion: Two Sides of the Same Coin”</p>	<p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Tillich’s, <i>Biblical Religion and the Search for Ultimate Reality</i> <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Lecture on Tillich
<p>5-Jun</p>	<p>6- <u>God and the Meaning of Being</u> The confrontation with such questions as, "Why does the universe exist? Why does something exist rather than nothing? Why do I exist? Do I exist for some purpose, and, if so, how am I to discover it?" Does God exist? Can religious claims be rationally supported?</p> <p>Lecture: “The Concept of God and Attempted Proofs for God’s Existence”</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p.53-58 · St. Anselm and Gaunilo: The Ontological Argument, p. 100-103 · William Rowe, “An Analysis of the Ontological Argument,” p. 103-114 <p>· Thomas Aquinas, “The Five Ways,” p. 58-62</p> <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Lecture: “The Concept of God” · Anselm’s Ontological Argument
<p>6-Jun</p>	<p>7-<u>Arguments for the Existence of God</u> Questions we will consider: Does the God of the Judeo-Christian-Islamic tradition exist? Are there arguments that prove God’s existence?</p> <p>Lecture: “Aquinas’ Cosmological Arguments”</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Thomas Aquinas, “The Five Ways,” p. 58-62 · Paul Edwards, “A Critique Of the Cosmological Argument,” p. 80-89 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · An Aristotle Primer



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Aquinas' Cosmological Arguments
7-Jun	<p><u>8-Arguments for the Existence of God</u> Lecture: "Paley's Teleological Argument for the Existence of God"</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · William Paley, "The Watch and the Watchmaker, p. 90-92 · David Hume, "A Critique of the Teleological Argument," p. 93-100 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "The Argument from Design"
WEEK 3		
11-Jun	<p><u>9-Arguments against the Existence of God</u></p> <p>Lecture: "Cultural Critiques of Religion and the Existence of God"</p> <p>*The Existence of God Class Debate</p>	<p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Nietzsche, "The Fable of the True World" · Nietzsche, "The Madman" · Freud, The Future of an Illusion (Selections) <p>Handout ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "Cultural Critiques of Religion: Feuerbach, Marx, Freud, Nietzsche"
12-Jun	10- ****<u>Mid Term Examination</u>****	
	<u>Metaphysics</u>	
13-Jun	<p><u>11-What is a Human Being? The Mind –Body Problem</u> Are human beings bodies with minds or is the mind ultimately reducible to the body? Dualistic theories hold that human beings are bodies with minds and that the body and the mind are two distinct substances. Monistic theories deny that the body and mind are two distinct substances. Materialism (or Physicalism), for example, claims that what we call mental events, are really just physical events of the body. We are just bodies and nothing more. Which view is true?</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p.287-291 · Rene Descartes, "Substance Dualism," p. 288-291 · Paul Churchland, "On Functionalism and Materialism," p.316-330 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Lecture "The Concept of Soul Lecture" · "The Mind-Body Problem"
	Lecture: "What is Human Nature: Introduction to the Mind/Body Problem"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · "Chart of Solutions to the Mind/body Problem"



14-Jun	<p><u>12-What is a Human Being?</u></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> “The Mystery of Consciousness”</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Thomas Nagel, “What is it Like to be a Bat?” p. 341-349 · David Chalmers, “Property Dualism,” p.360-362
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WEEK 4

18-Jun	<p><u>13-What is a Human Being?</u> <u>Freedom and Determinism</u></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> The Problem of Freedom and Determinism</p> <p><u>Epistemology</u></p> <p>Questions we will consider: Is knowledge of reality possible, and, if so, what are the methods for obtaining it? Is certitude in the pursuit of knowledge possible? What is the nature of truth?</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p. 393-399 · Baron d’Holbach, “We are Completely Determined,” p. 399-405 · W. T. Stace, “Compatibilism,” p. 437-443 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Lecture “The Problem of Freedom and Determinism”
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19-Jun	<p><u>14-Epistemology:</u> What do we know?</p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> What do we know and how do we know it?</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p. 195-198 · Rene Descartes, “Cartesian Doubt and the Search for Foundational Knowledge,” p. 198-204 <p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Descartes, Discourse on Method (Selections) <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Outline of Descartes’ Discourse on Method”
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20-Jun	<p><u>15-Epistemology:</u> The Nature of Belief</p>	<p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Peirce, “The Fixation of Belief”
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21-Jun	<p><u>16-Epistemology:</u> Dismantling of Knowledge</p> <p><u>Ethics: How Should I live?</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Rorty, “Dismantling Truth: Solidarity Versus Objectivity,” p. 247-255 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Rorty’s Solidarity or Objectivity Chart”
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WEEK 5



<p>25-Jun</p>	<p>17-<u>Ethics: How Should I live?</u></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> “How Should We Live?”</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p. 458-461 · Ruth Benedict, “Morality Is Relative,” p.462-467 · Aristotle, “The Ethics of Virtue,” p. 521-531 <p>Handouts ER</p> <p>Outline of “Ethics: How Should we live?” lecture.</p>
<p>26-Jun</p>	<p>18- <u>How Should I live?</u></p> <p><u>The Meaning/ Purpose/ Value of life</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Epictetus, “Stoicism: <i>Enchiridion</i>,” p. 633-642 · Sartre, “Existentialist Ethics,” p. 560-567 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · “Sartre’s Existentialism is a Humanism” · “Theories of the Good Life”
<p>27-Jun</p>	<p>19- <u>The Meaning/ Purpose/ Value of life</u></p> <p><u>Lecture:</u> “What is the Meaning/ Purpose/ Value of life”</p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Introduction, p. 625-626 · Albert Camus, “Life is Absurd,” p. 642-647 <p>Handouts ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Outline of Lecture: What is the Meaning/Purpose/Value of Life?”
<p>28-Jun</p>	<p>20-<u>The Meaning of Life</u></p>	<p>Pojman</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Louis Pojman, “Religion Gives Meaning to Life,” p. 655-659 <p>Readings ER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Leo Tolstoy, <i>Confessions</i>
<p>**Final Examination**</p>		