PHILOSOPHY 6
Introduction to Philosophy

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CSUS
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T & TH 12:00 – 1:15 ARC 1007
Office Hours: T & TH 2:45 – 3:30

Description

If you are tempted to divide your college courses into those that are ‘useful’ and those that are ‘useless,’ beware! If you believe that the useful courses are only those that describe how the world works (including how you work)—economics, chemistry, marketing, biology, business, engineering—consider this: Thinking about why the world is the way it is could be a big advantage in understanding how the world works the way it does. Some might even say that describing how without exploring why is no real knowledge at all—or even more severely, in the words of Socrates, that “…an unexamined life is not worth living.”

In this course, we will examine some of the why questions that lie at the very heart of all the useful courses: What does it all matter? Is it all matter? Is mind matter? If it’s all matter, including me, why am I free and conscious and a computer isn’t? Could one ever be? What kind of being am I? Am I a body, or do I have a body? What does it mean to know something correctly? How do we know a ‘fact of knowledge’ is really knowledge of a fact? Does reason have rules? What is the good life? Can there be good without evil? Would the useful courses even exist today without the useless ones taught ages and ages ago? The course website can be found at: www.csus.edu/cpns/epperson.

Requirements

Our work will primarily be lecture and discussion, so both careful attention to the readings and class participation will be crucial for a lively course. Please bring your text to class.

There will be two examinations--one take-home mid-term paper and one in-class final--as well as several unannounced short answer quizzes on the readings. All written work must comply with Philosophy Department guidelines, which can be found here: www.csus.edu/phil/req/writing.htm. The departmental grading policy for written work can be found here: www.csus.edu/phil/req/grading.htm.

CPS RF Response Pads

These will be available at the bookstore after 2nd week. They are also available at highly discounted prices ($15-20) at Amazon.com and elsewhere on the web. After the 2nd week of classes you will be given a 5 question multiple-choice quiz on almost a daily basis. The quizzes pertain to the reading and lecture material. Quiz questions are administered throughout the class period and you will answer them using CPS response pads.

For more information and instructions on registering your CPS pad, see the ‘Resources’ page of the course website (www.csus.edu/cpns/epperson)

Course Texts

These are available at the university bookstore. Other readings will be made available for viewing or download on the course web page here: [www.csus.edu/indiv/e/eppersonm](http://www.csus.edu/indiv/e/eppersonm)

**Grading**

- Class participation: 15%  
  (2 unexcused absences results in 0%)
- Quizzes: 25%
- Mid-term exam: 25%
- Final exam: 35%

**Academic Standards:** All sources in papers must be cited and given appropriate credit. The author of any information from the Internet must be given credit; using such information without indicating the source constitutes plagiarism, as it would with print publications. Students are allowed to discuss lectures and even assignments with each other, but they must do their own work. Students are required to read the University policy on academic honesty, which can be found [here](http://www.csus.edu/umanual/AcademicHonestyPolicyandProcedures.htm).

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability and require accommodation or assistance with assignments, tests, attendance, note taking, etc., please see the instructor during the first week of the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made to ensure your full participation in class. Also, you are encouraged to contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (Lassen Hall) for additional information regarding services that might be available to you.

**Lecture Schedule**

| Week 1  | 9/01  | General introduction and background  
Plato’s "Simile of the Line" and "Allegory of the Cave," **EP, 208-211** |
|---------|-------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 3  | 9/15  | Scientific vs. ‘Philosophical’ knowledge: Hume, on Empiricism and Skepticism,  
**EP, 356-360;** Kant on Knowledge from Reason and Experience, **EP, 422-433.** |
| Week 4  | 9/22  | “Natural philosophy” and philosophy as “natural”  
| Week 5  | 10/01 | NO CLASS ON TUESDAY 9/29 (FURLOUGH DAY)  
Deduction of nature and induction from nature: Plato, Aristotle, and Hellenic Philosophy  
Week 6
10/06
First principles and other necessary presuppositions: Matters of Belief ('faith') in philosophy and science

Week 7
10/13
Fides et Ratio (faith and reason)--Philosophy, Theology, and Science (continued):

Week 8
10/20
NO CLASS THURSDAY 10/22 (FURLOUGH DAY)
The Metaphysical Implications of Good and Evil:
MIDTERM EXAM DISTRIBUTED TUESDAY 10/20

Week 9
10/27
The Fact of Experience and The Experience of Fact: How do we know what’s real, including us?: Hobbes on sense and imagination, EP, 406-409; Locke on experience and understanding, EP, 409-419; Hume on the senses, EP, 419-422; Sophie’s World, 257-286
MIDTERM EXAM COLLECTED TUESDAY 10/27

Week 10
11/03
Sophie’s World, 287-321

Week 11
11/10
Sophie’s World, 322-341

Week 12
11/17
Sophie’s World, 342-403

Week 13
11/24
NO CLASS TUESDAY 11/24 (FURLOUGH DAY)
NO CLASS THURSDAY 11/26 (THANKSGIVING DAY)

Week 14
12/01
The Question of Free Will and Determinism:

Week 15
12/08
Then what is it all and what are we all? What is the point of it and of us? Perhaps one clue is that we can even ask these questions… Sophie’s World, 447-513 (the end.)

FINAL EXAM DISTRIBUTED

12/15
FINAL EXAM DUE IN MENDOCINO HALL 3000 BY 3 PM
Satisfies Area C1: World Civilizations

Learning Objectives:

- Investigate major philosophical problems by a careful study of some good, representative philosophical texts.
- Encourage you to question and examine your own presuppositions and deep-rooted prejudices.
- To defend your own position on a philosophical issue by careful argument.

Satisfies Area C3: Intro to the Humanities

Learning Objectives:

- Develops a comprehensive understanding and appreciation of the cultural heritage in the humanities.
- Focuses on ideas and values of various cultures and traditions as expressed in their philosophies.