

COURSE INFORMATION & SYLLABUS

I. This course will offer an investigation into the structures of human existence, focusing on freedom, rationality, sociality, affectivity, embodiment and intersubjectivity. We will also examine the character of philosophical inquiry, focusing on its styles of questioning and conceptual and argumentative analysis. The course will proceed through examining various conflicting interpretations of human existence offered by philosophers and other thinkers.

11. Texts:

Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Hackett)

The majority of readings as well as class notes are contained are on electronic reserve or my academic website. You should download and print this material. The one exception is: Richard T. de George, *Social Reality and Social Relations* (Review of *Metaphysics* 37 (September 1983): 3-20. Access through Marquat.).

III. Course Learning Objectives -- By the end of the course,

- 1) The student will be able to state and provide reasons for basic positions concerning the relation between mind/soul and body, including the positions held by representative classical and Christian thinkers.
- 2) The student will be able to state and provide reasons for basic positions concerning the nature and possibility of knowledge, including positions held by representative classical and Christian thinkers.
- 3) The student will be able to state and provide reasons for basic positions concerning the nature and possibility of freedom as it relates to human choice, including positions held by representative classical and Christian thinkers.
- 4) The student will be able to state and provide reasons for basic positions concerning fundamental features of human sociality, including positions held by representative classical and Christian thinkers.
- 5) The student will be able to state and provide reasons for the position held by a significant thinker from outside the Western tradition on one (or more) of the following problems: the relation between mind/soul and body; the nature and possibility of knowledge; the nature and possibility of free human choice; fundamental features of human sociality.
- 6) The student will be able to compare and contrast the philosophers' positions studied in the course.

IV. Requirements:

There will be three non-cumulative exams and one position paper (about 1 page).. The paper will be worth 30 points. Each exam will be worth 100 points. Exams are graded on a curve in the sense that I generally set the cutoff for a BC at the median score for an exam and adjust the other grade cutoff points with respect to the BC cutoff. The position paper will be worth 30 points and will be graded on this scale: A/29, AB/27, B/25, BC/23, etc. The cutoffs for grade levels on the final grade are set as the sum of the cutoffs for the grade level on the individual assignments. So, if the cutoff points for an A on the exams are 94, 90, and 91, then the cutoff point for an A on the final grade is: $94+90+91+29= 304$ points. I will consider quality class participation as a factor in deciding whether to raise borderline final grades.

The exams will be a mixture of short answer, definitions and essay questions. The exams are designed for you to show me that you have a critical and detailed understanding of the readings and of material covered in class. Some of the short answer questions will be drawn strictly from readings. The position paper, on the other hand, will require you to take a philosophical position on a selected topic. I plan to have you submit a first draft of the position paper which I will critique. You will prepare the final draft in light of my critique.

IV. Tentative Course Schedule (See the next section, Course Units and Readings, for more detail.)

1. August 29-Sept 12: Unit I
2. Sept. 14-28: Unit II
3. Oct. 3: EXAM 1
4. Oct. 6-17: Unit IIIA
4. Oct. 24-Nov. 2: Unit IIIB
5. Nov. 7: EXAM 2
6. Nov. 9-21: Unit IIIC
7. Nov. 28-30: Unit IV
8. Dec. 5-7: Unit V

(The paper assignment topics will be given on Oct. 17. Your first draft is due to me by Nov. 2. Draft with my comments will be returned to you by Nov. 16. Final version of paper will be due on Nov. 30.)

COURSE UNITS AND READINGS (All material on electronic reserve unless otherwise noted.)
For each unit, you will find a set of notes on electronic reserve. You should download and print them.

UNIT 1: HUMAN LIFE AS A QUEST FOR MEANING

Plato's *Apology* (*Five Dialogues*); Ralph Ellison, "Preface" (from *The Invisible Man*)

UNIT 2: FREEDOM

A. Freedom and Determinism

Notes for Unit 2, Jacques Theroux, "Freedom versus Determinism" from *Ethics Theory and Practice* (C, 14-25);
Aquinas (Handout)

B. The Structure of Freedom

John Macquarie, "Freedom" from *In Search of Humanity*

UNIT 3: RATIONALITY

A. Classical Distinction Between Mind and Body

Readings: Plato, selections from *Phaedo* (*Five Dialogues*), Aristotle, and Aquinas (Handouts); Paul Churchland,
"Dualism and Materialism" from *Matter and Consciousness*

B. Rationalism and Empiricism

Allston and Brandt, "Problems About Truths of Reason and Principles of Deductive Inference"

C. The Role of Reason in Human Life

Plato, selection from *Five Dialogues* TBA ; Aristotle, "The Good Life is Rational Activity" from *Nicomachean Ethics*;
D.T. Suzuki, selections from "The Doctrine of Enlightenment" and "The Ten Cow-Herding Pictures"

UNIT 4: SOCIALITY

Richard T. de George, *Social Reality and Social Relations*

UNIT 5: AFFECTIVITY AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

A. The Nature of Love

W. Luijpen, "Love" from *Introduction to Existential Phenomenology*

B. Anxiety, Stigmatization and Marginalization

E. Jones, et. al., "The Peril of Stigma" from *Social Stigma*

VI. SOME GENERAL COMMENTS:

(A) My Office is in Coughlin Hall 137; tele. Ext is 5938. My EMAIL john.jones@marquette.edu. My academic website is at: <http://academic.mu.edu/phil/jonesj/>. Office hours will be TTH 10-10:45 AM and 1-1:50 PM. I am available at other times during the week for appointments. If my office hours are not convenient for you, please let me know in person or by E-MAIL and we can set up an appointment.

(B) You are expected to take exams and turn in assignments on the due dates. No makeup exams will be given except for serious reasons such as illness, a death in the family, etc.

(C) It will be necessary for you to complete readings in a timely manner. Remember that in philosophy, we are very concerned with defining and justifying positions through careful argumentation and precise use of language. It is not enough to know just what positions people hold; you must also know why they hold those positions and how and for what reasons one position differs from others. You cannot understand this without reading the material; you will not get it if you only read the material on time.

(D) Please, if there is some good reason why you cannot take an exam, such as illness, make certain to contact me before the exam is given. I cannot make accommodations for special situations AFTER you have taken an exam.

(E) The use of cell phones in class is prohibited.

(F) Attendance is required.