

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.

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.

7) The student will be able to develop a philosophical position on a given theme.

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..

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

1. Aug. 26-Sept. 12: Unit I
2. Sept 14- 24: Unit II
3. Sept. 26 : EXAM 1
4. Sept 28 -October 15: Unit IIIA
4. October 17-24: Unit IIIC (material on Aristotle)
5. October 26: EXAM 2
6. October 29- Nov 9: Unit IIIC (con't)
7. Nov. 12-19: Unit IV
8. Nov. 26-Dec. 7: Unit V

The assignment for the paper will be given out after Nov. 9 and the paper will be due on Nov. 28.

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

Freedom and Determinism

Notes for Unit 2 (Jones Website), Jacques Therox, "Freedom versus Determinism" from *Ethics Theory and Practice* (C, 14-25); Aquinas (Text on the Freedom of the Will).

UNIT 3: RATIONALITY

A. Classical Distinction Between Mind and Body

Notes for Unit 3A (Jones Website). Readings: Plato, selections from *Phaedo* (*Five Dialogues*), *Meno*; Aristotle; and Aquinas (Handouts); Paul Churchland, "Dualism and Materialism" from *Matter and Consciousness*

B. Rationalism and Empiricism [omit for Fall 2007]

Notes for Unit 3B (Jones Website). Allston and Brandt, "Problems About Truths of Reason and Principles of Deductive Inference"

C. The Role of Reason in Human Life

Notes for Unit 3 C (Jones Website). 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"; Geoffrey Shugen Arnold, "The Freedom of No Escape" (on web), and Kallistos Ware, "How Do We Enter the Heart, and What Do We Find When We Enter?"

UNIT 4: SOCIALITY

Notes for Unit 4 with selected texts from various authors.

UNIT 5: AFFECTIVITY AND INTERSUBJECTIVITY

Notes for Unit 5 for entire unit (Jones Website).

A. The Nature of Love

Class lecture notes with brief selections from various authors.

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/jones/>. Office hours will be MWF 9-10.. 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. If the position paper is submitted late, it will incur a 5 point penalty.

(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) If your exam falls on a day when you already have two other exams scheduled, please see me to reschedule your exam if you so wish. 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. ***NO portable electronic communication devices are permitted in class during examinations.*** I follow the College and Dept procedures on Academic Dishonesty. For department procedures see: <http://www.marquette.edu/phil/pdfs/academicdishonesty.pdf>

(F) Attendance is required.

(G) University Outcomes for Human Nature and Ethics (2 courses)

At the completion of core studies the student will be able to:

1. Assess views of human nature in various philosophical traditions, including classic Greek and Catholic philosophical traditions. [Phil 050]
2. Argue for one of the major ethical theories over another in terms of philosophical cogency and practical outcome. [Phil 104]
3. Use philosophical reasoning to develop the student's own position on central issues in human nature and ethics, for example, the relation between mind and body, the problem of freedom and determinism, the spiritual and affective dimensions of human life, the extent of human knowledge, the justification of moral judgments, and the elucidation of moral norms. [Phil 050 and 104]