

Introduction to Philosophy—Syllabus

Collin College

(Fall 2009: PHIL 1301.C01, C02, C03—Classroom Lecture)

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Classroom Location: C01- B317; C02, C03 - B322
www.turnitin.com
C01 - Class# 2798325, Password: Socrates
C02 - Class# 2798326, Password: Socrates
C03 - Class# 2798327, Password: Socrates

Course Description

Critical and reflective thinking as applied to basic problems of existence and to the meaning of human life. Selective philosophical problems are examined through the views of major philosophers. Includes ancient, medieval, and modern thought. (3 credit hours)

Assessment

Students must be able to demonstrate college-level reading ability (via a reading assessment) and college-level writing equivalent to ENGL 1301.

Required Texts

Plato, *Apology* (available as a free download from the instructor's website)
Handbook of Epictetus (Hackett, 1983). ISBN-10: 0915145693
Baruch Spinoza, *Ethics* (Hackett, 1992). ISBN: 0-87220-130-9
Daniel Dennett, *Darwin's Dangerous Idea* (Simon and Schuster, 1995). ISBN 0-684-82471-X

Learning Objectives & Course Requirements

(1) Demonstrate, through written analysis, the ability to recognize the principal problems of philosophy in a variety of historical philosophical works. (2) Demonstrate an ability to employ the vocabulary of philosophical discourse to ask key philosophical questions. (3) Demonstrate, through writing assignments and class discussions, the ability to think critically and analytically about philosophical issues and problems as presented in primary source material. (4) Demonstrate an understanding of various philosophies from a variety of different cultures and perspectives. Thus, the following elements will be required of all students:

- (1) Daily Writing Assignments (85-100% completed = 100 pts., 75-85% = 85 pts, 50-75% = 75 pts, 25-50% = 50 pts., 0-25% = 25 pts.) In order to count as "completed," a daily writing assignment must be: (a) original, (b) clear and detailed, (c) typed, (d) printed on paper, and (e) ready at the beginning of class.
- (2) Approximately 14 Weekly In-Class Quizzes (10 pts. each)
- (3) Three 5-page Papers (100 pts. each)
- (4) A Final Exam – comprehensive, essay questions (200 pts.)

These elements add up to a total of approximately 740 possible points for the semester. Grades will be determined simply by calculating the percentage of possible points earned. A=90-100%, B=80-89%, C=70-79%, D=60-69%, F=0-59%. No extra credit will be offered.

Policies

- **Attendance:** Attendance is required. A student with more than six unexcused absences may have 10 percent deducted from semester's total possible points. Being tardy when attendance is taken constitutes an absence for that day. See the current Collin Registration Guide for the last date to withdraw.
- **Electronic Equipment:** Laptops may be used for class notes - if permission is requested and if the user sits, wherever possible, in the front row. All other devices (cell phones, MP3 players, etc.) must be turned off during class. Text messaging during class is absolutely prohibited. After one warning, each violation of this policy may result in up to a 1% deduction from the student's final grade.
- **Religious Holy Days:** please refer to the current *Collin Student Handbook* (6.24).
- **Food & Drink:** Both food and drink are *strongly* discouraged during class. Please contact me if exceptions are needed.
- **Assignments:** Excluding daily writing assignments, all assignments *must* be turned in using **www.turnitin.com**. No daily writing assignments will be accepted late. *Twenty percent* will be deducted from all other late assignments. No late assignments will be accepted after the final exam.
- **ADA Statement:** It is the policy of Collin County Community College to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state and local laws, regulations and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational

opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the ACCESS office, SCC-G200 or 972.881.5898 (V/TTD: 972.881.5950) in a timely manner to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

-Scholastic Dishonesty: The College District may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to statements, acts, or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work material that is not one's own. Scholastic dishonesty may involve, but is not limited to, one (1) or more of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher's editions, and/or falsifying academic records. **Plagiarism** is the use of an author's words or ideas as if they were one's own without giving credit to the source, including, but not limited to, failure to acknowledge a direct quotation. **Cheating** is the willful giving or receiving of information in an unauthorized manner during an examination, illicitly obtaining examination questions in advance, copying computer or Internet files, using someone else's work for assignments as if it were one's own, or any other dishonest means of attempting to fulfill the requirements of a course. **Collusion** is intentionally or unintentionally aiding or attempting to aid another in an act of scholastic dishonesty, including but not limited to, failing to secure academic work; providing a paper or project to another student; providing an inappropriate level of assistance; communicating answers to a classmate about an examination or any other course assignment; removing tests or answer sheets from a test site; and allowing a classmate to copy answers. Students found guilty of scholastic dishonesty will receive an authorized disciplinary penalty from the Dean of Students Office, and they may also receive an academic penalty in the course where the scholastic dishonesty took place. The professor will determine the appropriate academic penalty.

- Grading: Additional clarification about any grade may be requested. However, grades will be reevaluated *only* within a week of when the assignment is returned and only with a *written* explanation of why, in the student's view, the assignment received the grade in question and why that grade merits reevaluation.

- Privacy: Federal privacy laws (FERPA) exclude my discussing your participation in this course with anyone other than yourself (even a parent or guardian) without written permission. Information about grades cannot be given over the phone or by email (except through your official cougarmail account).

- Withdrawals: Students are free to withdraw from this course as their circumstances may demand. However, as a matter of courtesy, students should first consult the professor before doing so. Additionally, students who enroll as an entering freshman or a first-time college student in undergraduate courses at any Texas public community college, technical institute, health sciences institution, or any public university offering undergraduate courses must comply with the legislation of TEC51.907. TEC51.907 states that students who enroll for the first time during the fall 2007 semester or any subsequent semester are subject to the course drop limit of six course drops. This includes any course a transfer student has dropped at another institution. Collin College will not begin to count dropped courses until the fall 2008 semester. NOTE: You will not be allowed to withdraw from classes at Collin if your official transcripts (required for admission) are not on file. Drops after the term census date are considered withdrawals and appear as a "W" on the transcript. Students cannot withdraw on CougarWeb. Courses taken Fall 2002 and later can be repeated only once to replace the grade. As stated in the Collin catalog (p.26) "a course in which a grade (including W) has been received can be repeated only one time to replace the grade."

- Response Time: Excluding weekends, students can expect to typically receive replies to emails within 24-48 hours. If a reply has not been received within this time-frame, please re-send the original message.

- Recordings: No video or audio recordings of lectures or conversations are permitted without prior approval.

- Repeat Policy: A student may repeat this course only once after receiving a grade, including "W".

- Emergency Contact: The Office of Academic Affairs, Room B-203, 214.491.6270

- Syllabus Changes: All elements of this course and syllabus are subject to change (made available in writing) at any time as needed.

Course Outline (Note: this is a rough, provisional outline only.)

Week of August 24—Plato's *Apology*

Week of August 31— Plato's *Apology*

Week of September 7—*Handbook of Epictetus*

Week of September 14—*Handbook of Epictetus*, **First Paper Due (9/21)**

Week of September 21—Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part I

Week of September 28—Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part I

Week of October 5—Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part II

Week of October 12—Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part III

Week of October 19—Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part IV

Week of October 26—Spinoza's *Ethics*, Part V, **Second Paper Due (11/2)**

Week of November 2—*Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, Chapters 1-3

Week of November 9—*Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, Chapters 4, 5

Week of November 16—*Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, Chapters 7, 12

Week of November 23—*Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, Chapter 13, **Third Paper Due (11/30)**

Week of November 30—*Darwin's Dangerous Idea*, Chapters 16-18

Final Exams— C01 (12/7), C02 (12/10), C03 (12/8)