

I. Course Description

This course covers 'landmarks' philosophical texts and theories from the Western tradition - from the ancients to the modern and contemporary period. We will pursue a close reading and detailed discussion of selections from texts that no philosophy student can ignore - among them Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Descartes' *Meditations*, Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Students will learn how to read and analyze philosophical texts, how to reconstruct and compare philosophical arguments, how to recognize the historical development of philosophical ideas, and how to relate such ideas and arguments to the discussion of contemporary issues.

II. Required Texts * course pack to be purchased at Far Better Copies, Campus Rd.

Books: Plato, *Euthyphro* in: *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, Hackett, 2001

-Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*, Hackett, 1980.

-Descartes, *Meditations*, I-II, Hackett, 1993

Course Pack*: Aristotle, *Metaphysics* Book I, IV;

-Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (selections)

Nicomachean Ethics, Book VIII

-Heidegger, *The Question Concerning Technology*

Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*

-Sartre, *Existentialism is Humanism*

Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason* (selections)

-W. Benjamin, *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*

III. Assignments

1. *Midterm exam and Final paper* (30% of final grade each). Final paper: 7-10pp., **due M May 20**. No late papers accepted.

2. *Protocol* (10% of final grade). You are responsible for 2-3 *protocols* (depending on class size) in which you will present briefly what we discussed in the previous class (1 page typewritten summary in a coherent narrative, not an outline). At the beginning of each class you should give a copy of the protocol to all participants. The protocol is to be read by the student at the beginning of class.

3. *Oral Presentation* (20% of final grade). You are responsible for an oral presentation on an assigned portion of the readings. In your presentation you should offer a critical exposition of the material to be discussed and formulate **at least three major questions** for discussion. A copy of the presentation is to be turned in to me **before** class (3-4 pages). When you are in charge of a presentation you are expected to make yourself understandable to the whole class (not read mechanically from a manuscript) and to stimulate discussion. The presentation is evaluated according to (a) the student's capacity of presenting the material to the class and (b) his/her capacity of raising critical questions.

4. *Attendance and participation* (10% of final grade). Attendance is required with two exceptions. Coming to class late or leaving early will count as absence. In exceptional cases, if you need to come late or leave early you should previously talk to me. Active and informed participation to class discussion is counted as an essential element toward the final grade.

5. *Plagiarism* and any form of cheating will not be tolerated. Anyone caught plagiarizing will fail the course.

- All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Once you sign up for a protocol/presentation for a given date you commit yourself for that date. **Failure to present on that date results in an F grade for that assignment.** You are responsible for keeping copies of your assignments and for checking your progress with me. All the above items are subject to change for educational reasons.

IV. Schedule

Week 1 MW Jan. 28, 30: Organization of course. W Plato, *Euthyphro*

Week 2 MW Feb. 4, 6: M Plato, *Euthyphro*; W Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 1-3

Week 3 MW Feb. 11, 13: Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 1-3; IV, 1-4

Week 4 W Feb. 20: Aristotle, *Nic. Ethics*, VIII, 1-14 (friendship); **Presentation 1:** *Nic. Ethics*, VIII, 10-14.

Week 5 MW Feb 25, 27: Descartes, *Meditations* I-III (13-35). **W Pres. 2:** *Med.* III.

Week 6 MW March 4, 6: Leibniz, *Discourse on Metaphysics*, I-XV (pp. 3-27). **M Pres. 3:** *Discourse*, I-VI (pp. 3-11)

Week 7 MW March 11, 13: M lecture on K; W Review

Week 8 MW March 18, 20: M Review; W **Midterm.**

Week 9 W April 3: Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Preface 1, pp. 7-15

Week 10 MW April 8, 10: Kant, *CPR*, Preface 2, pp. 17-37. **M Pres. 4:** *CPR* Preface 2, pp. 17-21

Week 11 MW April 15, 17: M *CPR*, Preface 2; W Hegel, *Phenomenology*, Preface §§1-39 (pp. 1-34)

Week 12 MW April 22, 24: Hegel, *Phenomenology*, Preface §§1-39 (pp. 1-34). **W Pres. 5:** *Phen.* §§27-35 (pp. 23-31)

Week 13 MW April 29, May 1: Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*, **W Pres. 6:** Sartre, pp. 5-9.

Week 14 MW May 6, 8: Benjamin, *The Work of Art*, I-XI (pp. 1-8), **W Pres. 7:** Benjamin VII-XI (pp. 5-8)

Week 15 MW May 13,15: Review

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