Philosophy 100 (WI) Introduction to Philosophy: Survey of Problems

INSTRUCTOR: Ron Loo
OFFICE: Palanakila 144
OFFICE HOURS: Mon: 1:30 - 3:30
Tues: 9:10 - 9:40, 2:45 - 4:15
Wed: 8:55 - 9:25, 3:45 - 4:45
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EFFECTIVE DATE: Spring 2010

Windward Community College Mission Statement
Windward Community College is committed to excellence in the liberal arts and career development; we support and challenge individuals to develop skills, fulfill their potential, enrich their lives, and become contributing, culturally aware members of our community.

CATALOGUE DESCRIPTION:
This course will consist of an examination of some of the major controversies/issues/theories in philosophy.

ACTIVITIES REQUIRED AT OTHER THAN REGULARLY SCHEDULED CLASS TIMES:
Field Trip(s): Optional.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:
At the completion of this course, you should be able to:

1. Analyze contemporary issues and events using philosophical concepts/theories.

2. Defend a position on a philosophical problem in philosophy. (This activity will require the student to take a stand, be clear about his/her values, identify assumptions he/she made regarding the problem, provide reasons for his/her viewpoint.)

3. Identify important individuals, events, theories, and concepts in Western philosophy.

4. Apply critical thinking skills (i.e., clarify concepts, raise normative questions, evaluate ideas presented in the text/handouts, identify philosophical issues/concerns) in various sources.
COURSE CONTENT:

Concepts or Topics

- **PHILOSOPHY, PHILOSOPHERS, and ARGUMENTS**
  Aims of Philosophy
  Philosophy and Religion
  Fields of Philosophy
  Deductive Argumentation
  Inductive Argumentation
  Readings:
  - **Plato** - The Apology
  - **Bertrand Russell** - The Value of Philosophy
  - **Klemke, Kline, and Hollinger** - "Introduction: Philosophy and the Study of Philosophy"
  - **Tibor Machan** - "Philosophy and Its Purpose"
  - **EPISTEMOLOGY AND SKEPTICISM**
  A Definition of Knowledge, Justification, Perception, and the Problem of Knowledge
  The Importance of Studying Epistemology
  Theories of Truth
  Readings and Movies:
  - **Plato** - Theaetetus
  - **Rene Descartes** - Meditations, I, II
  - **John Hospers** - An Argument Against Skepticism
  - **John Locke** - Empiricism
  - 12 Angry Men (1957)

Skills

1. Apply philosophical concepts.
2. Recognize the 5 aims of philosophy.
3. Compare and contrast religion with philosophy.
4. Recognize fields of philosophy.
5. Recognize valid and invalid deductive arguments.
6. Recognize strong and weak inductive arguments.
7. Recognize assumptions and the effects of assumptions held.
8. Recognize and apply philosophical theories.
10. Defend a position on a philosophical problem in philosophy.
11. Explain the influence of selected Western philosophers.
12. Compare and contrast philosophical theories.
13. Apply critical thinking skills to course materials.
COURSE CONTENT:

Concepts or Topics

- **ETHICS AND MORAL THEORY**
  Ethics and “Oughts”
  Moral Reasoning
  The Basics of Moral Theory
  Readings and Movies:
  - Groundhog Day (1993)
  - **Aristotle** - Virtue Ethics
  - Extreme Measures (1996)
  - **John Stuart Mill** - Utilitarianism
  - **Immanuel Kant** - Respect for Persons Ethic
  - **Nel Noddings** - The Ethics of Caring
  - **Simon Wiesenthal** - The Sunflower

- **HUMAN NATURE, SOCIETY, AND JUSTICE**
  Hobbes, Locke, and Social Contract Theory
  King, Socrates, and Civil Disobedience
  Readings and Movies:
  - **Thomas Hobbes** - Tyranny Before Anarchy and War
  - **John Locke** - A Democratic View of Government
  - **Martin Luther King, Jr.** - Letter From the Birmingham City Jail
  - Malcolm X (1992)
  - Miss Evers’ Boys (2002)
  - **George Orwell** - 1984
COURSE TASKS:

1. **In-class Exams:** Complete four (4) in-class exams. Each exam will consist of matching questions, essay questions, comparison/contrast questions, evaluation questions, analysis questions, justification questions that require you to defend a point of view, short answer questions, and fill in the blank questions. Questions for the exams will be drawn from unit study guides (based on reading assignments, lectures, movies, paperbacks, text.) Make-up exams will only be given in cases of illness (with a doctor’s note) or valid emergency. There is no comprehensive final exam for this course.

2. **Critical Thinking Exercises:** Complete four (4) critical thinking exercises which will require you to summarize, compare/contrast, analyze, synthesize, apply, evaluate course materials. Each of these assignments will consist of two (2) double-spaced, typewritten pages (with 1 inch margins) of philosophical reflection. These exercises are based on readings from handouts. **Late work will be penalized** three (3) points per week for each week that the assignment is late.

   While students are required to complete both a rough and a final draft for each critical thinking exercise, only the final draft is graded.

3. **Class Participation:** Participate regularly in a variety of in-class activities. They include: focused free writes, group assignments, video worksheets, class participation exercises, class discussion. Attendance will be taken at each class and will be used in assigning class activity points. Since these are class activities they cannot be made up if missed.

4. **Movie Report:** Complete a movie report on a movie approved by the instructor. This assignment will require you to summarize, analyze, and philosophize on the theme(s) in the movie. See the instructor for the format of this report. **Late reports will be accepted but will be penalized** five (5) points per week for each week that the assignment is late.
MODE OF INSTRUCTION:

Instruction will consist of lectures, focused free-writing, large and small group discussions, and videos.

Lectures will focus on concepts/theories of major Western thinkers and on the major concerns of Western philosophy, the rudiments of critical thinking (clarify concepts, raise normative questions, evaluate ideas presented in the text/handouts, identify philosophical issues/concerns, recognition of assumptions that support theories/beliefs, identification of logical inconsistencies), the importance of the Humanities in enriching our lives. Discussions, on the other hand, will provide students with an opportunity to critically analyze, apply, and/or evaluate course materials.

Guest speakers will be invited when appropriate.

METHOD OF GRADING:

1. Criteria for evaluating course work:
   a. Grasp of the problem/concept/topic.
   b. Logic and persuasiveness of the presentation.
   c. Perceptiveness in seeing and in weighing various alternative interpretations.
   d. Demonstration of critical analysis.
   e. Clarity with which the topic/concept was discussed.

2. Weight of tasks:

   Unit Exams 150 = (3 x 50)
   Critical Thinking Exercises 200 = (4 x 50)
   Movie Report 50 = (1 x 50)
   Conferencing 18 = (3 x 06)
   Class Participation 32 450
METHOD OF GRADING:

3. Letter grades will be assigned based on the number of points accumulated for the course.

A: 396 - 450
B: 341 - 395
C: 286 - 340
D: 231 - 285
F: 176 - 230
W: Formal withdrawal from the course. (The student must withdraw from the course by the appropriate deadline to avoid receiving a failing grade for the course.)

LEARNING RESOURCES AND MATERIALS:

1. Required texts

Kowalski, D. Classic Questions and Contemporary Film
Orwell, G. 1984
Wiesenthal, S. The Sunflower

2. Supplementary reprints will be assigned as appropriate. Recommended reading materials should be read for perspective.

3. Study guides for each unit will be disseminated in class 2 weeks prior to each exam. Unit exam questions will be drawn from these unit study guides.

4. Students will earn a total of 18 points for conferencing (3 conferences regarding writing skills, critical thinking skills) with the instructor during the semester.

5. The writing resource instructor can help edit drafts of your critical thinking exercises.
OTHER INFORMATION:

1. Reading Assignments:
   "Moderate" in that the reading assignments require thoughtful reflection. It is strongly recommended that selected reading assignment questions be answered in writing and kept in a notebook to serve as review for exams and preparation for class discussions.

2. Class Participation:
   Regular class participation will be taken into consideration in “borderline” cases.

3. How To Succeed In This Course:
   a. Keep up with reading and writing assignments.
   b. Attend class regularly and take “good notes”.
   c. Participate in class discussions.

4. Extra Credit:
   Students can earn a total of five (5) points. See the instructor for this option.

5. Cell Phones:
   Set your cell phones and/or pagers to “silent” so the class can focus on the lesson for the day.

6. Readability of Written Assignments:
   Students are responsible for the readability of handwritten assignments. Type your assignments if your handwriting is hard to read.

7. Last Day Course Work Can Be Submitted for Credit:
   May 06 (TH), 12:30 p.m.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT
If you have a physical, sensory, health, cognitive, or mental health disability that could limit your ability to fully participate in this class, you are encouraged to contact the Disability Specialist Counselor to discuss reasonable accommodations that will help you succeed in this class. Ann Lemke can be reached at 235-7448, HYPERLINK "mailto:lemke@hawaii.edu" lemke@hawaii.edu, or you may stop by Hale ‘Akoakoa 213 for more information. Revised May 10, 2007
UNIT 1: PHILOSOPHY, PHILOSOPHERS, AND ARGUMENTS
What Is Philosophy?
Aims of Philosophy
Fields of Philosophy
Deductive Argumentation
Inductive Argumentation
Philosophical Analysis and Objectivity
Readings and Movies
- Plato – The Apology
- Bertrand Russell – The Value of Philosophy
- Klemke, Kline, Hollinger – “Introduction: Philosophy and the Study of Philosophy”
- Tibor Machan – “Philosophy and Its Purpose”
Exam #1: Feb. 04 (TH)

UNIT 2: EPISTEMOLOGY AND SKEPTICISM
What Can We Know?
A Definition of Knowledge
Justification, Perception, and the Problem of Knowledge
The Importance of Studying Epistemology
Theories of Truth
Readings and Movies
- Plato – Theaetetus
- Rene Descartes – Meditations I, II, VI
- 12 Angry Men (1957)
- John Hospers – An Argument Against Skepticism
- John Locke – Empiricism
- Immanuel Kant – Critique of Pure Reason
Exam #2: Mar. 09 (T)
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Overview

UNIT 3: ETHICS AND MORAL THEORY
What Ought I Do?
Ethics and “Oughts”
Moral Reasoning
The Basics of Moral Theory
Readings and Movies
Plato - Gyges and the Ring
Groundhog Day (1993)
Aristotle – Virtue Ethics
Extreme Measures (1996)
John Stuart Mill – Utilitarianism
Immanuel Kant – Respect for Persons Ethic
Nel Noddings – The Ethics of Caring
Simon Wiesenthal – The Sunflower

Exam #3: Apr. 08 (TH)

UNIT 4: HUMAN NATURE, SOCIETY, AND JUSTICE
What Is The Nature of A Just State?
Hobbes, Locke, and Social Contract Theory
King, Socrates, and Civil Disobedience
Marginalized Voices
Readings and Movies
Thomas Hobbes – Tyranny Before Anarchy and War
John Locke – A Democratic View of Government
Martin Luther King, Jr. – Letter From the Birmingham City Jail
Malcolm X (1992)
Malcolm X – The Harvard Speeches
Miss Evers’ Boys (2002)
George Orwell – 1984

Exam #4: May 13 (TH) 9:30 - 11:20

*LAST DAY course work can be submitted for credit: May 06 (TH), 12:30 p.m.