

Great Philosophers

Philosophy 302, Fall 2021

Instructor: Jeffrey A. Bell, Ph.D.

Time: 11-12:15 MW, in Fayard 239

Office Hours: 9:30-11:00am, 12:30-2:00pm MW, or by appointment.

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Required Reading:

Plato, *The Republic*, translated by Allan Bloom

Plato, *Philebus* (online)

Spinoza, *Ethics*

Hume, *Enquiries Concerning Human Understanding and Concerning the Principles of Morals*

Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*

Foucault, *The Order of Things*

Course Objectives

This course will examine five of the most important philosophers in the Western tradition. The purpose of this course is to examine in detail the arguments of particular philosophers rather than to examine the philosophies in the context of a more general introduction to philosophy (as is done in Philosophy 301).

Course Requirements

There will be one midterm exam (20%), a final (30%), and two written assignments (25% each). The first written assignment is to be 4 pages long (1000 words, no less) on a topic that I will hand out in class. Topics will be handed out one or two weeks before they are due. The second written assignment (1500 words) is to be on a topic or your choosing that is relevant to the course. You may also elect to write one 2500-word essay on a topic of your choice. This paper will be worth 50% of your grade. These topics must be pre-approved. Regardless of whether you choose the one-paper or two-paper option, you must make notable use of course readings in your papers. "Notable" means that you must refer to at least one of the philosophers we have covered and do so in a manner that meaningfully incorporates some of their points and arguments. **Papers that do not make reference to, and cite from, course readings will not receive a passing grade.** Research papers must also make significant use of a text not required for this course. For more details on requirements for philosophy paper requirements, see the philosophy paper link at the course's website. If you use a computer word processing program, keep a copy of your work on a backup disk and back up your files regularly. Loss of a computer file will not be accepted as an excuse for not turning in work on time. The two exams will have a section of short answers and essay questions. I will hand out a study sheet one or two weeks prior to each exam. Exams will be closely

monitored, and written assignments will be checked for plagiarism. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is and to avoid it. Anyone caught cheating or turning in plagiarized work will fail the course and will be reported to appropriate university officials.

Attendance Requirements

Class participation is an integral part of the course. Failure to attend class regularly will harm your final grade. **Note: the readings will be supplemented with lectures, and material from these lectures will appear on the exams.** If you miss class, therefore, you'll also miss important information that will be on the tests, and thus you'll not do as well; and the more classes one misses the worse one tends to do. Students who are not listed on the official class roll are not properly registered for the course and will not be allowed to attend class, and will not receive a grade for the course under any circumstances. Students bear the responsibility for ensuring that they are listed on the official class roll. Students with disabilities: If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Student Life, Room 203, Student Union.

Student behavior/classroom decorum: Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable.

Students may not bring to class any children, family members, friends, or others not registered for the course except for sign-language interpreters, note-takers, or other helpers allowed by the ADA and approved by the Office of Student Affairs. No animals are allowed in the classroom except for approved seeing-eye dogs. Eating in class is prohibited. Students may consume non-alcoholic beverages in class but must properly dispose of bottles/cans/cups.

In the event of an emergency that causes power outages and/or interferes with Internet service, recordings of the lectures will be made available via links on Moodle when power and/or Internet service is restored. In the meantime, you should continue to do assigned readings.

Grading:

At the end of the semester, all students who have completed all the requirements listed above will have a certain number of points out of a hundred (e.g., possible of 20 on midterm, 30 on final, etc.). Students with a grade between 90-100 will receive an A, 80-90 a B, 70-80 a C, 60-70 a D, and below 60 an F. Incomplete (I)

grades: University policy states that the grade of “I” (incomplete) will be given only for work which is of passing quality at examination time but which, because of circumstances beyond the student’s control, is not complete. This means, first of all, that students may receive an “I” grade only in the case of sudden dire emergencies, for example, severe and prolonged illness or injury requiring lengthy hospitalization. Students may not receive an “I” grade for prolonged absences over which they do have some control, for example, incarceration or court-ordered rehabilitation for chemical dependency. Secondly, instructors may give a student an “I” grade only if the student has completed all required assignments with due dates prior to the date of the emergency, with a passing grade. In those rare and extraordinary cases in which an “I” grade is given, the instructor and student must complete an “I” Contract form in the department office and obtain the department head’s approval. No “I” grades can be given after the end of the final exam period. Students who receive “I” grades must follow the procedure for removing the “I” described in the current *Southeastern General Catalogue*, or the grade will become an “F”.

Posting Grades:

During the semester grades will not be posted for this class. All graded assignments will be returned in class as soon as they are graded. The instructor is required to keep final exams on file for a year following completion of the course. Final course grades will be posted on the Peoplesoft system. Do not call the department office or the instructor’s office to ask about grades—it is illegal to give such information over the phone.

Reading Assignments

Aug 18 Introduction

Aug 23 Plato, *The Republic*, Book I-II

Aug 25 *The Republic*, Book III-V

Aug 30 *The Republic*, Books VI-VII

Sep 1 *The Republic*, Books VIII-X

Sep 6 Labor day.

Sep 8 *Philebus*, 11a-39a.

Sep 13 *Philebus*, finish.

Paper topics posted

Sep 15 Spinoza, *Ethics*, Part 1

Sep 20 *Ethics*, Part 2

Sep 22 *Ethics*, part 3

Sep 27 *Ethics*, Part 4

1000 word papers due

Sep 29 *Ethics*, Part 5
Take-home midterms posted.

Oct 4 Hume, *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (EHU)*, sections 1-3
Take-home midterms due by 11:59pm

Oct 6 *EHU*, sections 4-6

Oct 11 *EHU*, sections 7-9.

Oct 13 *EHU*, sections 10-12.

Oct 18 Hume, *Enquiry Concerning the Principle of Morals (EPM)*, sections 1-4.

Oct 20 *EPM*, sections 5-9

Oct 25 Heidegger, “What is Metaphysics?”

Oct 27 “On the Essence of Truth”

Friday, October 29, **Last Day to Drop**

Nov 1 “Modern Science, Metaphysics, and Mathematics”

Nov 3 “What Calls for Thinking?”

Nov 8 “The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking”

Nov 10 Foucault, *The Order of Things*, chapters. 1-3.

Nov 15 Chapters 4-5.

Nov 17 Chapters 6-7.

Nov 22 Chapters 8-9.

Take-home final study guides posted.

Nov 24 Thanksgiving break.

Nov 29 Chapter 10

Dec 1 Review

Research papers due.

Dec 7 (Tuesday) **Final Exam, 10:15am-12:15pm**