Introduction to Philosophy
PHI 2010, Section 2964, Fall 2006

Instructor: Dr Stewart Duncan Email: sduncan@phil.ufl.edu
Office: 307 Griffin-Floyd Hall Phone: (352) 392-2084 x307
Office hours: Friday, 9:30am-12:30pm, and by appointment

Usual class schedule: MWF 8:30-9:20am in Turlington 2350 from 23 August to 6 December

Description

This course will be an introduction to philosophy, structured around some traditional questions such as ‘What is philosophy?’, ‘How much can we really know about the world?’, ‘Does God exist?’, and ‘What makes things right and wrong?’. We will examine these questions by reading and discussing some classic texts. The aim is not just, however, to learn what some famous philosophers have thought. Critical thinking and writing about those views will be at least as important.

Texts

We will use the following texts, which will be available at the University Bookstore.


Assessment

Assessed work. Your grade for the class will be mainly based on four papers of 1500 words each. Each will count equally towards your grade for the course. More details about the paper assignments will be provided on a handout distributed with the topics for the first paper.

Extensions. Late papers will be penalized unless you have a good, documented excuse. If at all possible, you should ask for an extension in advance, not after the fact. Unexcused late papers will lose three points from their grade for every day (every day, not every class meeting) they’re late.

Attendance. Attendance is required. You are allowed three unexcused absences during the semester without penalty. Any additional absences will be penalized. One point will be deducted from your overall numerical grade for the class for each unexcused absence after the first three.
**Overall grades.** Grades for individual assignments will be given on a 100-point scale. At the end of the semester, your grade will be determined by the mean of those four grades, adjusted by any penalty you have incurred for absences (see attendance policy above).

Overall numerical grade = 0.25 (paper 1 + paper 2 + paper 3 + paper 4) – (number of unexcused absences – 3)

That numerical grade will be rounded to the nearest whole number, and then converted to a letter grade using the following table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Numerical grade</th>
<th>Letter grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80-84</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>75-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>70-74</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>65-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-64</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-59</td>
<td>E</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic integrity.** You should read the University’s Guide to academic honesty, which is available online at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/academicguide.php. Plagiarism and other violations of academic honesty are unacceptable. If you are found to have cheated, you will be penalized by the reduction of your course grade, and may be subject to further penalties. You should expect the minimum penalty to be a grade of F for the course.

**Other policies and information**

**Days with no class meeting.** Monday 4 September (Labor Day); Friday 6 October (Homecoming); Friday 10 November (Veterans Day); Friday 24 November (Thanksgiving).

**Accommodations for students with disabilities.** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

**Behaviour in class.** My aim is to have a classroom atmosphere that is both serious and relaxed. Discussion is encouraged, but talking to your neighbour about what you did last might is not. Things will go well if you (i) come to class prepared and (ii) avoid behaviour that is rude and distracts others (conversing during class; reading novels, the newspaper, and other irrelevant things; doing the crossword; letting your cellphone ring; falling asleep; etc).