Critical and Historical Introduction to Philosophy (PHL 107 E)
Fall Semester 2007
Instructor: Dr. Eugene E. Selk
Office: Humanities Center, rm. 107
Office hours: TuTh 1:30-2:45 p.m & before or after class, feel free to make an appointment for other times
Communication: eeselk@creighton.edu
people.creighton.edu/~ees33175
280-2229 (if I am not in, leave a message on voice mail),
or 280-2834 (departmental secretary)
Department of Philosophy facsimile 280-3359

Required texts

Texts available in the bookstore


Packet of reprints


A note on using the web outlines. I highly recommend printing the web outlines for the day and bringing them to class. Then use them to fill in your notes. Remember that, for the most part, the outlines are only skeletons. They will not suffice by themselves to prepare for exams.

Outline of the course
This calender is a guide, not an unchangeable schedule. I may adjust it occasionally. Our goal is learning, not strict adherence to a schedule. The dates of exams and papers are, however, fixed.

1. General introduction: The structure of the course and the nature of philosophy

8/24

2. Two classics from ancient Greek philosophy

8/27, 8/29 & 8/31
Read: Plato's *Apology*, *Crito*, in *The Last Days of Socrates*

9/10
Discussion session on the video, *What Justifies the State?*

Monday, Sept. 3 - Labor Day - no classes

Paper #1 - due Friday, Sept. 7

3. Some logic: identifying and analyzing arguments & theories of truth

9/12 & 9/14
Read: Selk, *Logic: A Brief Course*, Chapter 1 & Chapter 2 up to the categorical syllogism (2.12)

9/17
Discussion session on the video, *Does Science Give Us Truth?*

4. Another classic from ancient Greek philosophy: Plato's *Republic*

9/19 & 9/21
Read: Plato's *Republic*. (References are to the Griffith translation & the Stephanus margin numbers)

- pp. 50-59 (368d-375d)
- pp. 104-139 (412b-442b)
- pp. 146-166 (451c-467d)
- Julia Annas, “Plato’s *Republic* and Feminism.”
- pp. 173-179 (471e-476d)
- pp. 220-223 (514a-517e)
- pp. 252-284 (543a-569c)
- pp. 313-330 (595a-608b)

10/3 & catchup
C. Taylor, “Plato’s Totalitarianism,” handout.
Exam # 1 - Friday, September 28

5. Justice: a contemporary view

10/5 Read: John Rawls, From *A Theory of Justice*
10/8 Discussion session on the film: *What is Justice?*

Paper # 2 - due Monday, October 8

6. More logic: evaluating deductive arguments & inductive logic

10/10, 10/12, 10/22 Read: *Logic: A Brief Course*, Chapter 2, the categorical syllogism & Chapter 3
& catchup

Fall break - October 13-21

7. A classic from the high Middle Ages: questions of religious faith and God

10/24 & 10/26 Read: St. Thomas Aquinas, selections from the *Summa Contra Gentiles* & the *Summa Theologiae*
10/29 Discussion session on film: *Does God Exist?*

8. A classic from early modern philosophy

10/31, 11/2, 11/5 Read: Hobbes, selections from *Leviathan*

Exam # 2 - Wednesday, November 7

9. More logic: informal fallacies

11/9, 11/12, & 11/14 Read: *Logic: A Brief Course*, chapter 4 & catchup

10. A classic from 19th century philosophy

Thanksgiving break - Nov. 21-25

11. A contemporary perspective on Mill’s harm principle


13. A final problem: epistemological, moral, and aesthetic relativism


12/7 Beardsley, “Taste can be Disputed.” *handout* Beardsley, “Reasons in Aesthetic Judgements.” *handout*

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Exam # 3 - Wednesday, Dec. 12, 11:30

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Course requirements

1. **Attendance & participation.** I will take attendance regularly, and attendance together with the quality of your participation will count for 7% of your total grade. For each unexcused absence, 6 points will be subtracted from your attendance and participation grade (on a 100 point scale).

   Participation includes coming to class on time, being prepared for class, being attentive to and respectful of others, not dominating the discussion, and volunteering to ask and respond to questions.

2. **Quizzes.** Four quizzes will be given. They will be objective and will be about ten minutes in length. They will be of two types: on a required reading not yet covered in class, or on a reading or topic already covered in class. The purpose of the first type of quiz is to prod your careful reading of the assigned material and to begin organizing your thinking about the topic of the reading before we cover it in class. The purpose of the second type is to prod you to review and to prepare for exams. Both types of quizzes will be announced in advance, but not necessarily more than one or two classes before they are given. **Three of the four quizzes will be used for your final grade.** You may elect to take only three of the quizzes, or you may take all four and I will drop the lowest. Each quiz counts for 6% of your final grade.

3. **Writing.** Two papers of from 2-3 pages (no longer) will be assigned. The type of paper may vary. One may be an “overview and reflection” paper and the other a “contemporary application” papers. For each paper, you will receive a handout stating the project of the paper.

   Overview and reflection papers should cover the following. (1) Give a brief overview (summary, synthesis) of the topic assigned. Highlight what the issues are, some of the proposed solutions, and some criticisms of the proposed solutions. (2) Then state your position on the issue and what is your defense of your position? This latter should make up about one-third of the paper.
Contemporary application papers should cover the following. Take a position defended by a philosopher and apply it to contemporary life. This type of paper will allow you to use your imagination to a greater degree than the first type of paper.

You must cite sources using the proper form, even if the sources are from the course textbooks. Use the MLA parenthetical style for sources. The form of the references and bibliography is to follow the MLA parenthetical style. See any of the following: Laurie Kirszner and Stephen Mandell, The Brief Holt Handbook, 3rd ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace College, 2000), Part 9, chapter 34, and Joseph Gibaldi, MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, 6th ed. (NY: MLA, 2003). For a brief overview of the MLA parenthetical style, see the page on the course web site or the following web sites:

University of Wisconsin-Madison Writing Center

Purdue University - the Owl
http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/

Late papers will be penalized one-half of a letter grade; papers over one week late will be penalized a full letter grade.

4. Exams. There will be three exams. They will be non-cumulative, and the last of the three exams will be the final. The exams will be approximately one-third objective (true and false, multiple choice) and two-thirds essay.

Exams and quizzes must be taken on their assigned dates, and short papers must be handed in on the assigned dates. In case of an emergency, you must contact me for permission to delay taking the exam or quiz or handing in the paper before the exam or quiz is given or the paper is due. Claims that I could not be reached will rarely be taken seriously. There are two easy ways to reach me -- email and telephone. If I do not answer the phone, you can leave a message.

Each exam counts toward 17% of your final grade.

5. Important paper & exam dates
paper # 1 - September 7
exam # 1 - September 28
paper # 2 - October 8
exam # 2 - November 7
exam # 3 - December 12

6. Grading. There is no extra credit in this course. Each exam and quiz will be graded on a 100 point scale with the following breakdown for each letter grade:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>92-86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85-79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78-72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>71-62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>61-54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>53-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following is the weighting of each of the course requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>three exams at 17% each</td>
<td>51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three quizzes at 6% each</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two short papers at 9% each</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>discussion group leader</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attendance and participation</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>51%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**BEST WISHES FOR A GOOD SEMESTER!**

**Classroom etiquette.** A good learning environment requires showing respect for each other. This includes, raising your hand to speak, not wearing a hat in class, not putting your feet on the desk in front of you, and not gathering papers and bags before the class has ended.

**STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

In keeping with the mission of Creighton University, academic honesty is expected of students in this course. "Academic or academic-related misconduct' includes . . . unauthorized collaboration or use of external information during examinations; plagiarizing [see the following statement] or representing another's ideas as one's own; furnishing false academic information to the University; falsely obtaining, distributing, using or receiving test materials; falsifying academic records; . . . misusing academic resources; defacing or tampering with library materials; obtaining or gaining unauthorized access to examinations or academic research material; soliciting or offering unauthorized academic information or materials. . . ." (Creighton University Bulletin: 2002-2003 Undergraduate Issue, 87-88)

The most common violation of academic honesty is plagiarism on papers (see following discussion). Plagiarism is relatively easy for the experienced instructor to spot, so aside from the moral principles involved, it is stupid to engage in it. The best way to avoid plagiarism is to be as thorough as possible in documenting the sources you use in your papers. There is no penalty for over-documenting!

A violation of academic honesty requires a report to the Dean of your College (which usually results in a notation in your file), and may result in a dramatic lowering of your course grade or failure.

**Plagiarism**

(adapted from a statement by Dr. Appleby, Marian College, 1993)

**A. What is plagiarism?**

1. Definition: "Presenting someone else's ideas as your own, whether deliberately or accidently" (Fowler 501).
2. Plagiarism is derived from a Latin word meaning "kidnapper" (Fowler 70).
3. Forms of plagiarism
   i. "The use of another's writing without proper use of quotation marks. Do not under any circumstances, copy onto your paper a direct quotation without providing quotation marks and crediting the source" (Lester 47)
ii. "The borrowing of a word or phrase, the use of an idea, or the paraphrasing of material if that phrase, idea, or material is not properly introduced or documented. Also included in plagiarism is the mere rearrangement of phrases from the original into a new pattern" (Lester 47).

iii. It is also plagiarism to "take, buy, or receive a paper written by someone else and present it as you own" (Corder and Ruszkiewicz 633).

iv. Another form of academic dishonesty that is related to plagiarism is collusion which is defined as "collaboration with someone else in producing work you claim to be entirely your own" (Corder and Ruszkiewicz 633).

B. How can plagiarism be avoided?

1. Acknowledge all borrowed material by introducing or following the quotation or paraphrase with the name of the authority from whom it was taken.
2. Enclose all quoted material within quotation marks, even single words and phrases.
3. Make certain that all paraphrased material is written in your own style and language.
4. Provide bibliographic entry for every source that appears in a written work.
5. Be certain that all written work you submit is your own. You may (and in some cases should) ask others to review your work, but "any changes, deletions, rearrangements, or corrections should be your own work" (Corder and Ruszkiewicz 633).

C. Why is plagiarism wrong?

1. It is considered a criminal offense (i.e., the theft of intellectual property) and can result in fines and/or imprisonment.
2. It is academically dishonest and can lead to serious sanctions from the university.
3. It undermines the academic integrity and ethical atmosphere of the university.
4. It violates the mission of Creighton University.
5. It involves a passive learning process that obstructs the acquisition and understanding of meaningful academic material.
6. It retards intellectual, moral, and social development.
7. It is contrary to the concept of critical thinking.

References

Standards for evaluating papers

A paper
- clear statement of the project of the paper
- good personal reflections
- no sweeping, empty opening or closing statements
- no grammar or spelling mistakes
- use of solid sources
- no awkward phrases
- smooth transitions
- well-organized; good movement from introduction, through body, & to conclusion
- correct use of the MLA style with sources at the end of the paper

B paper
- adequate personal reflections
- few grammar or spelling mistakes
- relatively smooth transitions
- some sweeping, empty statements
use of questionable sources
occasional use of colloquialisms
well-organized; good movement from introduction, body, & conclusion
correct use of the MLA style with sources at the end of the paper

C paper
- ambiguity with respect to the project of the paper
- sweeping, empty statements
- few personal reflections
- grammatical and/or spelling errors
- many awkward or tangled phrases
- use of poor sources or using sources without any references
- use of colloquialisms
- excessively ambiguous or incoherent sentences
- no clear flow from introduction, through body, to conclusion
- ambiguity about who is speaking (you? the author you are discussing?)
- jumps without transitions or connections with what precedes
- incorrect use of the MLA parenthetical style

D paper
- many items from the C paper plus
- only marginally on the topic assigned

F paper
- Items under the C paper and the D paper plus
- using sources without any references (plagiarism)

Standards for evaluating participation

strengths
- attendance
- indication that you have read the material beforehand by appropriate questions and comments
- responding to the professor’s and classmates’ comments
- comments indicate background reading, reflection, and analysis

weaknesses
- failure to attend, chronically late
- inability to use material which was to be read before class
- no response to professor’s and classmates’ comments
- comments indicate little reflection and no connection to readings used in course
- dominating the discussion and being insensitive to the desires of other students to participate in the discussion
### Evaluation of papers

**strengths**
- clear statement of the project of the paper
- good personal analyses & reflections
- well-organized; good movement from introduction, through body, and to conclusion
- few grammatical and spelling mistakes
- solid sources
- few awkward phrases
- good transitions
- correct use of the MLA style with sources at the end of the paper

**weaknesses**
- no clear statement of the project of the paper
- beginning or ending the paper with sweeping, empty statements
- repeating classroom discussion and assigned reading with nothing more
- grammatical and/or spelling errors
- many awkward or tangled phrases
- weak sources or no sources at all
- use of colloquialisms
- excessively ambiguous or incoherent sentences
- no clear flow from introduction, through body, to conclusion
- ambiguity about who is speaking (you? the author you are discussing?)
- jumps without transitions or connections with what precedes
- incorrect use of the MLA parenthetical style
- few personal reflections or analyses
- only marginally on the topic assigned
- using sources without any references (plagiarism)