

UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
PHIL 1000: Introductory Philosophy

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Fall 2014
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An introduction to philosophical questions and ways of dealing with them, mainly through readings in Plato's *Republic* (Griffith translation, Cambridge ISBN 0-521-48443-X). We will also look at the alternative approaches of David Hume's *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (Hackett 0-87220-229-1), and Sartre's *Existentialism is a Humanism* (CourseLink).

ASSIGNMENTS: Three 1250 word essays (20% each) and a final exam (40%). **Footnote all information and ideas taken from someone else, even if they aren't direct quotations.** Otherwise it may be plagiarism (when in doubt ask). Listing your sources in a bibliography isn't enough since it doesn't show where you make use of them or which page the reference comes from. Also see "Standard Statements".

READINGS: Readings in Plato are below. Readings in Hume: 1. Sections II-IV (pp. 9-25). 2. Sections V & VII (25-37 & 39-53), 3. Sections VI & VIII (37-9 & 53-69), 4. Section XII (102-114).

FINAL EXAM: 12/1/2014 from 14:30 to 16:30. The exam will consist of essay questions about the material covered in the lectures, drawn from study questions given out at the last class. Attendance at lectures is not mandatory, but since the final exam will test your knowledge of the material discussed in class, obviously attendance will be an advantage.

TUTORIALS: To supplement and help assimilate the lectures on Plato's *Republic*, each week two students chosen in consultation with their tutorial leader will give seminars exploring material from the *Republic*, one defending the "a" side of that week's topic, the other defending the "b" side (see next page). A 1250 word seminar takes about eight minutes to read, so there should be about half an hour afterward for discussion. Depending on the tutorial enrollment, some of you may have to write essays that don't get presented as seminars, but are handed in to your tutorial leader. The essays are due at the **beginning** of the class in which the topic is discussed so that no one has an unfair advantage, and also because they're meant to prepare you to contribute to the class discussion. For those reasons **late essays can't be accepted**, so if you don't finish yours in time for the beginning of the class you'll have to switch to a later topic. **Attendance at tutorials is essential** because the later material often presupposes familiarity with the earlier material. So if you miss more than one tutorial (other than the ones assigned to you) you'll have to write an additional 1250 word essay explaining *both* sides of the issue. The grade will be averaged with your three normal tutorial assignments. This doesn't apply to absences that are excused on medical or compassionate grounds on the basis of a note from your doctor or academic counselor.

1. Week of	Sept 8	Organization	Explain Plato's position and the reasons he gives (if any), then defend or criticize it in accordance with "a" or "b", as assigned in consultation with your tutorial leader (both sides should be represented). Don't assume that what you say is obvious and doesn't need to be argued. If it <i>is</i> obvious it will be trivial and not worth much. Show that you're aware of the possible objections to your claims (including the other side of the question itself, "a" or "b") and formulate arguments to meet them. Imagine how an unsympathetic but reasonable critic might respond. The essay should show an understanding of Plato, as well as arguments for or against. A sample essay will be available on CourseLink.
2.	Sept 15	topic 1	
3.	Sept 22	topic 2	
4.	Sept 29	topic 3	
5.	Oct 6	topic 4	
6.	Oct 13	topic 5	
7.	Oct 20	topic 6	
8.	Oct 27	topic 7	
9.	Nov 3	topic 8	
10.	Nov 10	topic 9	
11.	Nov 17	topic 10	
12.	Nov 24	topic 11	

OFFICE HOURS: I'll be available in my office (MacKinnon 353) Wednesdays from 9:30 to 10:30 and 12:30 to 1:30 or by appointment, but you can talk to me any time I'm in my office except for the hour before class when I'm preparing (see the schedule on CourseLink or next to my door). The tutorial leaders will give you their own office hours.

PHILOSOPHY 1000 TUTORIAL TOPICS

PLATO'S *REPUBLIC* BOOKS 2-3

- 1a. It's important to protect people from destructive influences, so there should be censorship.
- 1b. It's important to let all ideas be heard, so there should be no censorship.
- 2a. Beauty affects us so deeply because it signifies sensory perfection, and thereby resonates with moral goodness (behavioral perfection) and truth (cognitive perfection).
- 2b. Beauty has no deeper meaning than any other kind of pleasure. It's just a matter of taste.

BOOK 4

- 3a. We're conflicted between appetite, spiritedness, and reason, and must control ourselves by reason.
- 3b. Sometimes intuitions are more insightful than reason, so we should be guided by our feelings.

BOOKS 5-7

- 4a. There's a rational structure to the world. Reality is more than individual things that are governed by matter and chance (476a-480a, 505a-509c).
- 4b. Reality is only matter and chance, particles of matter interacting randomly.
- 5a. The basis of reality is "the good": our world exists because it's the best one possible (505a-509c).
- 5b. The basis of reality can't be good because reality is full of evil (crime, natural disasters, disease).
- NOTE: It may help to think of it in terms of the theological version of the problem, "God and Evil": If the world was created by God, who is good and all powerful, how can we explain the things that seem evil?*
- 6a. The highest kind of knowledge is ineffable, it can't be put into words (532e-533a).
- 6b. If something can't be put into words it's not sufficiently thought out and isn't knowledge at all (534b).

BOOK 8

- 7a. Democracy is the best form of government because it has the most liberty and equality.
- 7b. Democracy is a poor form of government because it gives more power to uninformed easily manipulated people (since there are more of them) than to well informed people who examine issues carefully.

BOOK 9

- 8a. The happiest life is the life of reason.
- 8b. There's no such thing as the happiest life. Everyone is happy as long as they get what they want.
- 9a. If we could get away with it, an unjust (selfish) life would give us the most happiness.
- 9b. Even if we could get away with being unjust, the key to happiness is to be just (unselfish).

BOOK 10

- 10a. The arts are dangerous because they glamorize outward appearance and irresponsible behavior (597b-607a).
- 10b. "Art is for art's sake". It has nothing to do with morality and isn't responsible for its moral consequences.
- 11. Preface: *According to the myth of Er at the end of book 10, we choose our life in all its detail before birth. This can be interpreted to mean that once we're born (or even conceived) everything that will ever happen to us is already destined by the initial conditions and the laws of causality.*
- 11a. If free will means our choices are not completely determined by cause and effect, then free will is impossible because everything has a cause, even our choices.
- 11b. We do have free will because we can feel our freedom, and we feel responsible for what we do, but if everything were predetermined how can we be responsible for our actions?

STANDARD STATEMENTS FOR FALL 2014

The following statements are incorporated into all Course Outlines for Fall 2014 courses in the Department of Philosophy.

Email communication: As per university regulations, all students are required to check their uoguelph.ca email account regularly: email is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement: When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and email contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar's information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date: The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, October 31, 2014. See the Undergraduate Calendar's regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses.

Copies of out-of-class assignments: Keep paper and/or other reliable backup copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Accessibility: The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (soon to be re-named Student Accessibility Services) as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website.

Academic Misconduct: The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community—faculty, staff, and students—to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Recording of Materials: Presentations which are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources: The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars>