

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

PI 225 MC: 12:00 - 12:50 MWF, Plumb Hall 409

PI 225 MD: 1:00 - 1:50 MWF, Plumb Hall 409

Instructor: Dr. Ted Toadvine
Office Hours: 2:00-3:20 MWF (or by appointment) in Plumb Hall 411P
Phone: 341-5566 (office); 341-5462 (Social Sciences Secretary)
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REQUIRED TEXT

Traversing Philosophical Boundaries, ed. by Max Hallman (Wadsworth, 1998).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To come to an understanding of relevant issues and arguments surrounding some of the deepest and most enduring problems of human existence, e.g., Is there an eternal self? How can I distinguish right from wrong? What are my obligations to other people and the world around me? What role should religion play in my life and in society?
- To explore the diverse perspectives and positions on these issues across a wide range of cultures and time periods.
- To introduce you to the specific ways of thinking appropriate for philosophical questions and train you to think and write critically about philosophical issues.
- To encourage your reflection on these and other significant issues which confront us all today.

This course fulfills the "Multicultural Intensive" course requirement and the General Education requirement in Literature and Ideas (Basic Skills VI) for certain majors.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

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| • 4 reading questionnaires @ 2.5% each | = | 10% |
| • 2 600-word take-home essays @ 15% each | = | 30% |
| • 4 tests @ 15% each | = | 60% |

◦ **ATTENDANCE:** Since participation in class discussions is an integral component of this course, attendance at every class is expected as a minimum requirement for this course. Lectures and discussions will include material not contained in the reading assignments. It is your responsibility to document your attendance on a sheet which will be circulated in class. Missing SIX classes FOR ANY REASON will result in a full grade reduction. In the event that ALL SIX absences are the result of an extreme medical condition, documented by a statement from your physician or Health Services, or due to participation in University-sanctioned activities, notify me as soon as possible to discuss required makeup work. After the sixth, each further absence will result in an additional full grade reduction. Three late arrivals for class will count as one unexcused absence. There is no need to document illness for fewer than six absences, except in the case of having missed a test or reading day. NO MAKEUP TESTS will be given for those who are absent or late for class without documentation of an emergency. All makeup work is at my discretion. I do not accept last-minute "extra-credit" work from those whose failure to attend has resulted in a poor grade at the end of the semester.

◦ **READING ASSIGNMENTS & QUESTIONNAIRES:** Please do not take this class unless you are committed to completing the reading as assigned. You are expected to be in command of the assigned readings PRIOR to the class period in which we will discuss them, since you cannot intelligently discuss what you have not read. Some of the readings will be quite dense and require effort on your part to understand them. Give yourself time to read difficult passages more than once. I reserve the right to dismiss unprepared students from class and to count such dismissals as unexcused absences. Four reading questionnaires will be distributed with questions for you to answer while reading the assignments. These questionnaires are due on the dates of your exams (indicated on your course schedule), and each is worth 2.5% of your final grade. No late reading questionnaires will be accepted.

◦ **ESSAYS:** You will write two take-home essays, each worth 15% of the final course grade, in response to questions distributed in class. Essays must be brought to class on the due date, since students will be selected at random to read essays to the class. Essays must be at least 600 words (about 2 pages), and a **WORD COUNT** must appear on the first page of your essay. Papers less than the minimum number of words will receive an “F.” Essays will only be accepted if **TYPEWRITTEN, DOUBLE-SPACED, STAPLED, AND PROOF-READ**. For help constructing your essays, please visit my “essay writing pointers” at <http://www.emporia.edu/socsci/philos/pointers.htm>. Further assistance is available from the Writing Center, 345 Southeast Morse Hall (341-5380).

◦ **READING DAYS:** On the days that essays are due, we will have a “reading day” devoted to discussion of student papers. **PARTICIPATION AT ESSAY READING DAYS IS MANDATORY. PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED FROM STUDENTS WHO DO NOT ATTEND UNLESS ACCOMPANIED BY WRITTEN DOCUMENTATION OF AN EMERGENCY.** On these days, students will be selected at random to present their essays to the class and answer questions from classmates about their essays. You will not be graded on your reading or comments. If you have a legitimate reason for not wishing to read in front of the class (e.g., a medical reason), you must discuss this with me prior to the first essay assignment.

◦ **TESTS:** On the days indicated on the course schedule, you will have a short test covering material from the preceding segment of the course. Each test will be worth 15% of the final grade, and may include true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, or similar components. The final examination will cover only material from the final course segment, and will be weighted equally with the previous three tests. Review sheets will be distributed one week prior to tests, and ample class time will be provided to ask questions about the material to be covered on tests.

◦ **CLASS DISCUSSION:** Discussion is crucial to this class, and I will do my best to make you feel at ease and welcome to contribute to the class conversation. The best way to understand these sometimes difficult and controversial topics is to talk about them with each other, so please feel free to contribute any question, objection, or other thought about the topic at hand when such occurs to you. **NO RELEVANT REMARK IS OUT OF BOUNDS IN THIS CLASS.** As an added incentive for your participation, I will take into account your regular contributions to the ongoing discussion in borderline grade cases. For example, regular thoughtful participation in discussion (not just quantity, of course, but also quality) may raise a high “B” grade (an 89, for example) up to an “A.”

◦ **GRADING SCALE:** This course is **NOT** graded according to the plus/minus system. Grades will be determined as follows, out of 100 possible points: (A) = 100-90; (B) = 89-80; (C) = 79-70; (D) = 69-60; (F) = 59-0.

◦ **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes plagiarism, the paraphrase or quotation of any published or unpublished source—including the textbook—without full and clear acknowledgment. If you are uncertain about what documentation is appropriate, please consult the Writing Center or myself before submitting your written work. Plagiarized work will receive a “0” and may also result in failure of the course and other administrative action. The university policy regarding academic dishonesty, as explained in the Student Handbook, will be strictly enforced.

◦ **DISABILITIES:** If you have a documented disability, please let me know as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

◦ **OFFICE HOURS:** As listed above, my office hours are Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 2:00 to 3:20. I will be spending these hours in my office for the sole purpose of being available for your questions. If these times are not convenient for you, and there is something you need to discuss with me, please ask to make an appointment. Messages can be left with the Social Sciences secretary (PH 411) at 341-5462. You are also welcome to address inquiries to me via email at toadvint@emporia.edu.

PROVISIONAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Specific reading assignments and any schedule changes will be announced in class.

<i>Week/Dates</i>	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Assigned Readings</i>
Week 1: 1/16, 1/18	INTRODUCTION TO COURSE I. WHO AM I? SELF-IDENTITY & THE SOUL	Introduction (xvii–xxiii); Self, Mind, and Body; The Upanishads (1–8)
Week 2: 1/23, 1/25 {1/21: HOLIDAY}	<i>Rejections of an eternal soul</i>	Buddhist Scriptures, Hume (8–18)
Week 3: 1/28, 1/30, 2/1	<i>The Will to Live, the Platonic soul, and misogyny</i>	Schopenhauer (8–22); Plato (24–38); Spelman (44–57)
Week 4: 2/4, 2/6, 2/8	MOVIE: My Feminism REVIEW & TEST I (2/6) ESSAY I DUE (2/8)	
Week 5: 2/11, 2/13, 2/15	<i>Existentialism, gender, and race</i>	Sartre (85–95); Beauvoir, Zack (101–15)
Week 6: 2/18, 2/20, 2/22	II. ETHICS: TELLING RIGHT FROM WRONG <i>Natural goodness and duty</i>	Introduction to Ethics (293–297); Mencius, Kant (304–17)
Week 7: 2/25, 2/27, 3/1	<i>Happiness, respect for life, and kinship</i>	Bentham (325–9); Schweitzer (336–41); McGaa (351–5)
Week 8: 3/4, 3/6, 3/8	<i>Moral insight</i> REVIEW & TEST II (3/8) III. IS THE GOVERNMENT LEGITIMATE?	Royce (341–8); Introduction to Politics (393–96)
Week 9: 3/11, 3/13, 3/15	<i>Social Contract Theory and class struggle</i> MOVIE: The Shadow of Hate	Plato (397–405); Jefferson (414–18); Marx & Engels (405–34)
Week 10: 3/18 – 3/22	SPRING BREAK	
Week 11: 3/25, 3/27, 3/29	<i>Class struggle, theo-democracy, and soul force</i>	Maududi (441–51); Gandhi (489–93)
Week 12: 4/1, 4/3, 4/5	<i>Black power, civil disobedience, and anarchism</i>	Carmichael (489–500); Thoreau, Goldman (517–38)
Week 13: 4/8, 4/10, 4/12	REVIEW & TEST III (4/8) ESSAY II DUE (4/10) IV. WHAT IS RELIGIOUS BELIEF?	Introduction to Religion (539–542)
Week 14: 4/15, 4/17, 4/19	<i>Creation, evolution, and early Christianity</i>	Creation story of the Boshongo People (119–120); Jewish and Cherokee creation stories, Darwin (123–143); Saint Augustine (543–551)
Week 15: 4/22, 4/24, 4/26	<i>Religious experience and social responsibility</i>	Black Elk (551–555); Buber, King (562–579)
Week 16: 4/29, 5/1, 5/3	<i>Witchcraft, paganism, and critiques of religion</i>	Starhawk (589–595); Lin, Russell (644–664)
Week 17: 5/6, 5/8, 5/10	MOVIE: The Historical Jesus REVIEW FOR FINAL EXAM	
DATE??	FINAL EXAM	