

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

PHIL 1, section 5072, Summer 1, 2009

College of the Siskiyous

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Required Text:

Title: THE PHILOSOPHICAL QUEST. A CROSS-CULTURAL READER.

Author: Gail M. Presbey et al.

Edition: Second

ISBN: 0-07-289867-4

The COS [Bookstore](#) has new and used copies of the text. You MUST have the book by the first day of class. The text book is also available through online used book stores and textbook sellers. This is a compressed, accelerated course. The first test is in 5 days from the beginning of the course.

Course Syllabus

Unit 1: Life and Death (5/26/09 - 5/31/09)

Unit 2: Philosophy of Religion (6/1/09 - 6/9/09)

Unit 3: Metaphysics (6/10/09 - 6/14/09)

Unit 4: Human Nature (6/15/09 - 6/23/09)

Unit 5: Ethics (6/24/09 - 7/2/09)

Text Reading Assignments

(additional web readings may be posted in each Unit Lecture)

Read all assignments at the *beginning* of each Unit

UNIT 1

(Tuesday, May 26 – Sunday, May 31)

Required Reading: Plato, p. 345-352; Russell, p. 356-358; Radhakrishnan, p. 364-365.

Further Readings on the Internet:

[Evidence for Life after Death](#) (read any 3 chapters)

[Children's Memories of Past Lives Studies](#) (Read [this](#) and [that](#) articles, plus any [other](#))

[Atheistic Arguments Against Immortality](#)

<http://www.friesian.com/existent.htm>

UNIT 2

(Monday, June 1 – Tuesday, June 9)

(Part A. 6/1/ - 6/5/09) Required Reading: Proof of God's Existence, p. 128-133; Critique of Religion, p. 158-164; Liberation Theology, p. 164-175.

Further Reading:

[Being Accountable for One's Beliefs: Arguments for God's Existence](#)

[Theodicy](#)

[Process Theology Solution to the Problem of Evil](#)

(Part B. 6/5 - 6/9/09) Required Reading: Personal Experience of God, p. 141-147; Women Need the Goddess, p. 194-202.

Further Reading: Our readings this week begin with an essay on mysticism from a Hindu point of view. There is a long [mystical tradition within Christianity](#), mostly segregated within monasteries, but spreading into the laity under [Protestantism](#). Recently unearthed early Christian manuscripts reveal that Jesus taught mystical teachings to at least some of his disciples, including Mary Magdalene. The mystical wing of the apostles were called [Gnostics](#). Gnostics taught that the mystical experience, described by Radhakrishnan, was the means of salvation. [The Goddess](#) was a major deity before the onset of patriarchy, but continued to exert influence in Jewish and Christian cultures.

UNIT 3

(Wednesday, June 10 – Sunday, June 14)

Required Reading: Appearance & Reality, p. 3-18; p.41-45 (Idealism); p. 61-66 (Materialism)

Further Reading:

Plato is considered by many to be the greatest philosopher of the West. He was a disciple of Socrates, but Socrates didn't write books. Plato did and generally put his own thoughts through the mouth of a fictional Socrates in written philosophical dialogues that imitate the way Socrates taught. Here is an [illustration of Plato's Cave](#). The stages through which a seeker evolves is depicted one way in the Allegory of the Cave and in yet another way in The Symposium. Similar conceptions were held by the Hindus of India. Our readings come from the [Vedanta school of Indian Philosophy](#). It is a form of [non-dualistic philosophy](#). Materialism rules in scientific thinking today. Neuroscience, for example, attempts to explain all [spiritual experiences as products of brain chemistry](#).

UNIT 4

(Monday, June 15 – Wednesday, June 23)

(Part A. 6/15 - 6/19/09) Required Reading: Chinese Debate, p. 210-217; Hobbes, p. 217-221; Mutual Aid, p. 222-226; No Human Nature, p. 234-241;

Internet Reading :

Survival of the Moralest: <http://www.deepleafproductions.com/utopialibrary/text/loye-darwin.html>

Sartre: <http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/sart.htm>

(Part B. 6/19/ - 6/23/09) Required Reading: Sexual Nature, p. 282-288; Descartes & Hume, p. 291-300; Hinduism & Buddhism, p. 301-309.

Recommended Reading: Feminist Perspectives on the Self:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-self>

Queer theory: <http://www.colorado.edu/English/courses/ENGL2012Klages/queertheory.html>

Descartes: <http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/desc.htm>

Hume: <http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/hume.htm>

Vedanta & Buddhism on the Self: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/bps/wheels/wheel002.html>

UNIT 5

(Wednesday, June 24 – Thursday, July 2)

Required Reading: Ethical Theory, p. 415-419; Kant, p. 427-432; Mill, p. 432-437; Feminist Ethics, p. 437-442; Buddhist Ethics, p. 453-456; Korn p. 466-470; Aristotle, p. 489-498; Taoism, p. 525-530.

Recommended Reading:

The Following Websites are for Recommended Reading (not required)

Hindu Ethics: <http://www.indianest.com/hinduism/032.htm>

Buddhist Ethics <http://www.buddhanet.net/e-learning/budethics.htm>

Taoist Ethics: <http://www.taoism.net/articles/mason/ethics.htm>

Feminist ethics: <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-ethics/>

Virtue Ethics: <http://www.utm.edu/research/iep/v/virtue.htm>

Christian Ethics primer: <http://www.rushman.org/rcia/ethics1.html>

Catholic Ethics, history of: <http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/05556a.htm>

<http://www.cybermonk.org.nz/dignityhuman/themorallaw/>

Relativism: http://caae.phil.cmu.edu/Cavalier/80130/part2/Routledge/R_Relativism.html

Final Paper due on Sunday, June 28. Submit to the Assignments folder

Course Goals

1. Compare and contrast Eastern and Western philosophies of life and death.
2. Be able to explain and give historical examples of a metaphysical problem from the Ancient Philosophy in the West and the East.
3. Evaluate the difference between idealist and materialist philosophies of existence.
4. Be articulate about various philosophical views on religious topics.
5. Analyze historically important views on the meaning of personal identity in Western philosophy, their contemporary feminist criticism as well as alternative Eastern views on the self.
6. Articulate the problem of unity between a conscious self and embodied existence, referring to the relevant figures in the philosophical tradition.
7. Differentiate the main significant ethical theories developed within the history of philosophy and their critical revision in contemporary, e.g. feminist, theory; be able to apply ethical principles to discussions of moral problems, such as euthanasia.

Course Description

This course offers a comprehensive introduction to Philosophy by means of a historical overview of the major philosophical problems. The principal problems discussed in this course include the following: the very meaning of a 'philosophical' enterprise, the status of reality, the problematic of personal identity, the relation between mind and body, the meaning of freedom, the nature of religious experiences and their significance for the moral life, and conceptions of the good life.

These philosophical problems are situated within an appropriate philosophical discipline, such as metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. The student is, therefore, both introduced to the major philosophical disciplines, and presented with specific questions raised by these disciplines.

The problems discussed are rendered concrete and relevant to present-day reality by being directly related to the personal experience of the student. Philosophy is presented, therefore, not simply as a set of ready pre-existent doctrines professed at some more or less distant point in history, but rather as a tool for reflection on the contemporary social and political reality, on moral and immoral action, on the determinants that influence the construction of personal identity, and so determine what and/or who a given person is.

Representative philosophical figures from ancient up to contemporary philosophy are examined throughout this course. Following the prevailing tendency of the course textbook, *PHILOSOPHICAL QUEST* by Presbey et al., to give a non-biased and fully representative overview of significant philosophical currents, the course aims to provide a broad and as exhaustive as possible spectrum of philosophical achievement. This aim is attained in two ways. First, the course reflects recent efforts to retrieve women philosophers for the historical record and includes them in the canon, rather than selecting canon figures from an already established list of male philosophers. Therefore, an important selection of writings by women philosophers is included in this course. Second, the course includes a range of readings from Eastern

philosophers. Therefore, it avoids presenting the history of philosophy from an exclusively Western perspective.

Course Overview

PHL1 is being presented in a set of 5 Units. Each unit begins with a lecture, followed by a reading assignment. Introductory and supplementary materials gathered and presented on the World Wide Web complete the module. These Internet resources are an integral part of this course and the student is expected to consult them and refer to them in the course of the study. Student participation takes several forms, including presenting theoretical positions and arguments, forum dialogue, writing critical commentaries of others' work, and written application of one's own experience.

This course is an academic project intended to give the student a more-than-surface understanding of major philosophical problems. The reading is difficult and the work assigned penetrating. While the readings in the text are theoretical and complex, the student can seek clarification and understanding through asking questions and participating in the DQs and via e-mail. Also note that this course focuses on your ability to comprehend difficult essays, and respond to difficult research questions in a rigorous academic manner.

Assessments

Activity	Points
5 Unit tests	25
Paper	20
Discussion Questions (7x3 pts)	21
Participation Replies (14x2 pts)	28
Final Essay Exam	6
Total	100

Explanation

Unit tests are due by midnight of the **last** day of the unit and are worth 5 points each (Unit 1-5/31/09; Unit 2-6/9/09, Unit 3-6/14/09, Unit 4-6/23/09, Unit 5-7/2/09). You will be tested mostly on the textbook readings but there will be some questions based on the lecture and recommended readings.

Instructions for the paper can be found in Assignments. **The paper is to be submitted by using the Paper submission link in the Assignments folder. If there is a technical difficulty with the submission process, email the paper to kealey@siskiyous.edu.** Look up this paper assignment as soon as possible. The final paper might oblige you to read the last readings ahead of time so that you can incorporate the ideas from them in your paper. Resources for writing papers are available through the [Writing Lab](#), which also gives online help.

Each Unit will have 1 to 2 Discussion Questions (DQs). Units 1, 3 and 5 have 1 DQ each, Unit 2 has 2 and Unit 4 has 2. **You must post an answer to the DQ by the second day of the Unit or Unit-part.** This main reply must be at least 200 words. In addition, you must reply to at least two other student or instructor replies. The idea is to get a dialogue going, so do not postpone posting to the last day of the unit. Distribute your participation replies *throughout* the Unit; don't just bunch them up at the middle or end. Since this is an accelerated course, plan on participating in the discussion every day or, at *the very least, every other day*. Complete the unit or unit-part reading by the second day of the unit. In order to get full points, your postings should be of substantive quality. Substantive main replies to the DQs are worth up to 3 points and subsequent participation replies to others' postings are worth up to 2 points each. The participation replies do not have to be 200 words long, but they should be substantive (at least 100 words and intellectually engaging). Points will be deducted from posts that are lacking in substance and for not posting by the second day of the Unit. There will be 7 DQs in total, each requiring a main reply plus two additional participation posts. **Do not post before the Unit begins. Posting to a DQ after its time limit is over will not count for participation points.**

What counts as "substantive?"

If you were told you were just going through the motions, you would understand that it means that you are merely feigning appearance of doing the job, not doing the real work of the job. Insubstantive posting to the discussion board is just "going through the motions" in so far as the posts are not contributing anything new to the discussion at hand. Substantive messages, then, contribute to the discussion. "What counts as contributive?" you ask. Posts that add new information, provide a different view, critically analyzes previous posts, illustrates with personal experience, answers questions, asks new questions, supplies reasons, updates, reconsiders, synthesizes different views, reframes a problem, etc., are ways that contribute to the discussion in a substantive way. Posts that merely say "I agree" (without providing reasons why), "That's interesting," etc., state an opinion without backing it up with reasons, or something similar, are insubstantive and do not fulfill the requirement for substantive posting. You are certainly post comments that fall short of these substantive criteria, but you must still make substantive posts that further the discussion. Netiquette requires that you consider the time your fellow students have to spend opening up your messages--our messages should count and not merely take up people's time.

Netiquette here at COS also expects that we respect each other and not attack one another. If you disagree with another's opinion, be matter-of-fact about it and explain your reasons why without making a personal attack. We must also abide by the code of conduct described in the Student Handbook and keep our cyber environment one that is safe from harassment.

GRADING SCALE

PERCENTAGE POINTS	GRADE
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D

Withdrawal & Incomplete:

Students are responsible to officially withdraw from classes they are no longer attending. Failure to do so will result in a grade of F or FW to be inscribed in your official record. (institutional SLO)

Incompletes must be formally requested and, if granted, must be satisfactorily completed by the deadline established by the instructors. Forms available from the registrar and from academic advisors should be used for establishing grade contracts in the case of an Incomplete. Incompletes automatically revert to F if not satisfactorily completed on time.

Late Work

This is an accelerated course; late postings and quizzes will not be accepted. Late submissions for the final paper will be penalized one grade per day.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is an act of theft committed by a person who is stealing someone else's intellectual property. Plagiarism is an act of dishonesty. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, a writer plagiarizes when misrepresenting someone else's words or ideas as his or her own.

Intentional plagiarism exists when a student lists sources that he or she has not used; when a student copies from a source but fails to cite it, thereby misrepresenting the original source's idea as his or her own; when a student copies material from another student's work without giving that other student credit; when a student buys or borrows a whole paper or portions of a paper from another student or from the Internet.

Unintentional plagiarism, which is also punishable, may exist when a student attempts to paraphrase or summarize a source, but copies too much from the source instead of rewriting the ideas in his or her own words; when a student inadvertently fails to include a parenthetical reference to a source, although the source is listed among the citations at the end of the paper; when a student fails to put quotation marks around quoted material; when a student relies too heavily on external sources, thus expressing few or none of his or her own ideas.

Students guilty of intentional plagiarism will receive an F for the course. Unintentional plagiarism could result in an F for the assignment.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The Learning Services Office (Eddy Hall 1) provides resources and information to accommodate students with special needs. If you feel that tutorial assistance would benefit you with the course material, please see <http://www.siskiyous.edu/dsps/tutor.html>. We will be happy to recommend any student for tutoring, by signing the application, if requested.

Library Resources: Library resources include, but are not limited to:

- Access 24 hours a day to a wide array of subscription databases including full-text articles from thousands of magazines, journals, and newspapers and reference sources.

- Access 24 hours a day to the library's online catalog
 - Access to thousands of current ebooks on a broad range of topics
 - Expert help from library staff
 - Distance students can apply on-line for their library card and it will be mailed to you.
- Go to <http://www.siskiyous.edu/library/libraryform.htm>. If you need a netlibrary account, call the librarian at 530-938-5331.

The Library can be assessed at <http://www.siskiyous.edu/library>

Online Requirements

This class meets entirely online, using the ETUDES online classroom. Enter the ETUDES online class <http://etudes-ng.fhda.edu/portal> portal here. You will need a user id to access the class. This login is generated automatically by the COS registration system the day after you register.

Your user id is: **the first 2 letters of your first name (lowercase) + the first 2 letters of your last name (lowercase) + the last 5 digits of your Social Security number**

Be sure to use all lower case letters and make sure you are using the name that is in the COS registration system (check your class receipt.) EXAMPLE: John Smith's User ID would be **josm45678** (if his SS# was 123-45-678)

Your initial password is: MonthDay of birth in school records Example: Birthday is April 11th, 1982 (**04 / 11 /82**) Password = **0411** **Note: If you have taken an ETUDES-NG class before, use your current password.**

You may **change the default password upon login**. Once you log on, click on "Account" (under My Workspace on the upper left menu), scroll down a bit, and click on "Modify Settings ." Type a new password in the "Create new password" box and then repeat it again in the "Verify new password" then click "Update Details". Set the password to something you can remember. REMEMBER TO WRITE IT DOWN! This account will give you access to all your ETUDES-NG courses, which will be added to your Workspace automatically. Once you log in, all the classes you are currently registered for will display at the top in different tabs. To access this course, click on the correct tab. You can reorder your tabs by going to MyWorkspace >> Preferences >> Customize Tabs.

Support Hour Requirement

The support hour provides COS students, including online students, with access to professional assistance, supplemental instruction and remediation opportunities to help improve student success. Supervised support, via the COS Critical Skills Center, is offered for reading, writing, information technology, computer competency, and other skills outside of web publishing specific content. The support hour allows you to go to the computer labs on either campus, obtain a computer account, and get the one-on-one help you need. Some of the personal support you may utilize relating to this course include:

- help with basic computer competencies (saving files, attaching files, finding and organizing files), questions about Etudes.
- help with formatting the paper
- help with writing

The instructor **strongly advises** that all students take advantage of the resources available in the computer labs on campus. The staff is knowledgeable and can provide immediate assistance as problems arise. Computer lab accounts will be set up for you the first time you access either campus lab. Be sure to allow extra time for this on your first visit. It would be best to set up your account and get to know the lab assistants *before* you need desperate last-minute help. You'll find the Weed computer lab schedule at www.siskiyous.edu/computerlab/ and the Yreka lab at www.siskiyous.edu/yreka/ComptrLab. Be sure to call the Yreka campus at 842-1245 to check computer lab availability. Since this is an online only course, physical visits to the writing or computer Labs are not required. You may email them at asc@siskiyous.edu, or call them at 530-938-5514. If there is no answer, and you need immediate assistance, please call 530-938-5325.