Philosophy 160:
Philosophy of Human Nature:
An Introduction to Philosophical Questioning

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Classroom: UNIV 3222
Times: Sect. 08 10:00
Sect. 12 11:00
No Class: 8/31, 10/19, 11/9
And University Holidays

Course Description:
How do I know that God exists? What makes me me? What do all human beings have in common? What distinguishes one human being from another? What are the emotions? What makes an artwork beautiful or special? Philosophy is about asking the big questions – questions that do not have easy answers.

In this course we will think of philosophy not as a set subject matter but as a methodology that helps us in the search for answers to a variety of questions. We will think of philosophy as a way of figuring out what it is most reasonable to believe about a given question. By the end of this course you should be able to (1) demonstrate knowledge of course topics, (2) track the progression of a philosophical dialectic, (3) participate in a dialectical exchange on a philosophical question of your choice in the final paper. The ultimate aim of the course is to develop a life-long habit of inquiry - a habit of asking the big questions and looking for reasoned answers to those questions.

Philosophy is an active enterprise. This class will challenge you to engage with the materials inside and outside of class time. Class projects will require you to take responsibility for course materials. So, it is important for you to come to class prepared to discuss and engage with the material

Some Warnings:
You are expected to come to all class meetings on time and prepared to engage with the material. If you do not think that you can consistently make it to class on time, ready to think through the material, I strongly recommend that you find a different section.

Many of the reading assignments for this course are only a few pages long. But don’t be fooled! The readings are difficult and will require you to read them carefully and more than once. It will help you to look over the reading questions that I will give you before you start to read.

Required Text:
Bowie, Michaels, and Solomon, Twenty Questions, 6th Edition

Recommended Text:
Soccio, How to Get the Most Out of Philosophy
This is a helpful text for students new to philosophy. It is available from bn.com and amazon.com for $26.95.
Blackboard:
I have set up a blackboard page for this course. You will find a wealth of information on this cite, including copies of the syllabus, assignments, any handouts that you may have misplaced – and your grades for the course. Familiarize yourself with blackboard as soon as possible, you will need to use it to submit assignments.

Course Assignments and Grading:
Your grade for this course will be determined based on points earned out of the total possible points.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>50 pts total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading Questions</td>
<td>70 pts total (aprx.14 x 5 pts. Each)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm #1</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm #2</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>100 pts. (broken into several parts)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100 pts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>520 points</td>
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♦ Attendance and punctuality are requirements of this course. You are expected to attend all class meetings and participate in class discussions. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class period.

♦ There will be eleven In-Class Projects throughout the semester. These projects will be unannounced, and they cannot be made up if you are absent from class. In-class projects will comprise an important part of your participation grade.

♦ I will assign reading questions/reading journals to go along with many of the reading assignments. I will drop your lowest 2 scores on reading questions from your final grade calculation. (In other words, you can skip 2 sets of reading questions without penalty. Use these wisely.)

♦ There will be two midterms. The first is scheduled for Friday, Sept. 28. The second is scheduled for Friday, Nov. 2. You must take all exams at the scheduled time.

♦ The culminating project of the course is a final paper. The paper will be broken down into several steps, including a peer review. Details about the paper will follow.

♦ I do not accept late work and I do not give extra credit.

♦ The final exam is scheduled for Friday, Dec. 14 at 8:00 for the 10:00 class and Monday, Dec. 10 at 11:00 for the 11:00 class. You must take the final exam with your class at the scheduled time. Schedule your travel plans with this in mind.
Grading Scale:
Your final grade will be determined by something like this scale. Final grades may be curved, if need be.
94% – 100% A, 90 – 93 A-, 87 – 89 B+, 84 – 86 B, 80 – 83 B-, 77 – 79 C+, 74 – 76 C,
69 – 73 C-, 55 – 68 D, 55 & under F.

The guide below will give you an idea of how I am thinking of the relation between letter grades and performance in the course:

B level work: Above Average, engages the material at an above average level, shows an understanding of the philosophical views and problems at issue. B is the standard grade for this course. I will assume that each student has a B until I am shown otherwise.

B+ — A-: Very good work, shows quite a good grasp of the material and ability to reason and engage with the material clearly and effectively.

A level work: A level work is exceptional, shows a complete grasp of the material, shows facility and creativity with philosophical reasoning and critical thinking skills.

C — B-: Satisfactory, shows a basic ability to explain and engage with the material.

D: Passing work, demonstrates an ability to explain the material in rudimentary terms.
F: Failing work.

Getting Help with the Course:
Getting the help that you need for this course should not be a problem. I am available in office hours, by appointment, and by email to help you. If you think you need additional help with the course, talk to me. I can help you find a tutor or other campus resources.

Academic Integrity:
It should go without saying that all of the work that you do for this course (and any other course) should be your own. This means that you should always use appropriate methods of citation for any sources that you use in your written work. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. If you have questions about how to cite materials or what might count as academic dishonesty, ask me. (A more comprehensive account of LMU’s policies on academic integrity can be found on pp. 57-59 of the Undergraduate Bulletin.)

A note about the internet: Anything that you find on the internet that pertains to your papers or other work for this course needs to be cited, just like any other written material. In general, you should be extremely cautious with materials that you find on the internet. There is a broad array of stuff available on the web concerning philosophy, ranging from very sophisticated work in philosophy to perfectly awful work. It might be best to stay away from philosophical sources on the internet altogether or to check with me about the quality and appropriateness of the source.

“Don’t compromise yourself. You’re all you’ve got.” — Janis Joplin
Philosophical Questions and Reading Assignments:

I. Is belief in God rational?
   Recommended Reading: Chapter 2 Introduction, p. 39
   • St. Augustine, “Faith and Reason” p. 42
   • St. Anselm, “The Ontological Argument” p. 43
   • St. Thomas Aquinas, “Whether God Exists” p. 45
   • Paley, “The Teleological Argument” p. 47
   • Hume, “Why Does God let People Suffer?” p. 50
   • Pascal, “The Wager”, handed out in class
   • Kierkegaard, “The Leap of Faith and the Limits of Reason” p. 58
   • James, “The Will to Believe” p. 61

II. Who am I?
   Recommended Reading: Chapter 4 Introduction, p. 266
   • Perry, “The First Night” p. 269
   • Lock, “Of Identity and Diversity” p. 283
   • Hume, “Of Personal Identity” p. 288
   • Michaels, “Persons, Brains, and Bodies” p. 323
   • De Beauvoir, “I am a Woman”, p. 300

III. What is “race”?
   Recommended Reading: Chapter 13 Introduction, p. 433
   • Appiah, “But Would that Still Be Me?” p. 445
   • Sartre, “Anti-Semite and Jew” p. 435
   • Thomas, “What Good Am I?” p. 437
   • Spelman, “The Erasure of Black Women” p. 449

IV. What Makes it Art?
   Aristotel, “The Nature of Tragedy” p. 560
   • Hume, “Of the Standard of Taste” p. 561
   • Tolstoy, “What is Art?” p. 565
   • Danto, “The Art World” p. 577
   • Devereaux, “The Male Gaze”, p. 584

V. What are Emotions?
   Recommended Reading: Chapter 9 Introduction, p. 312
   • Aristotle, “On Anger”, p. 315
   • Hume, “On Pride” p. 321
   • James, “What is an Emotion?” p. 325
   • Sartre, “Emotions as Transformations of the World” p. 332
   • Solomon, “Anger as a Way of Engaging the World” p. 335
   • Plato, “Two Speeches on Love” p. 339
   • Solomon, “What Love Is” p. 342

**This Syllabus is subject to change or revision.**