

PHIL 0006 - INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY: KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY

Catalog Description

Advisory: Eligibility for ENGL 1A

Hours: 54 lecture

Description: Introduction to the method and primary problems of philosophy including argumentation, conceptual analysis, analysis and evaluation of fundamental assumptions and principles of various philosophical systems and philosophical interpretation of primary texts on topics from epistemology and metaphysics. (C-ID PHIL 100) (CSU, UC)

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- CSLO #1: Define and explain concepts in epistemology and metaphysics found in primary philosophical texts.
- CSLO #2: Critically evaluate theories in epistemology and/or metaphysics for their strengths and weaknesses.
- CSLO #3: Compare and contrast major epistemological and/or metaphysical theories.
- CSLO #4: Communicate effectively orally or in writing on a major epistemological and/or metaphysical problem in philosophy.

Effective Term

Fall 2022

Course Type

Credit - Degree-applicable

Contact Hours

54

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Student Learning Hours

162

Course Objectives

1. Describe and critically evaluate major philosophical positions concerning the nature of knowledge and justification;
2. Compare and contrast major philosophical positions concerning the nature of knowledge;
3. Describe major positions concerning conceptions of, and tests for, truth;
4. Compare and contrast differing conceptions of, and tests for, truth;
5. Describe and major philosophical positions concerning the nature of reality.
6. Compare and contrast major philosophical positions concerning the nature of reality;
8. Describe the relationship between metaphysical assumptions and theories of knowledge;
9. Analyze and define concepts as used in primary texts in philosophy;

10. Explain the mind/body problem and describe and evaluate various solutions to the problem
11. Explain the problem of free will versus determinism, and describe and evaluate various solutions to the problem;
12. Explain problems associated with knowing God, and describe and evaluate various arguments for God's existence;
13. Explain and critically evaluate the relationship between faith and reason, and morality and religion.

General Education Information

- Approved College Associate Degree GE Applicability
 - AA/AS - Literature & Language
- CSU GE Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU approval)
 - CSUGE - C2 Humanities
- Cal-GETC Applicability (Recommended - Requires External Approval)
- IGETC Applicability (Recommended-requires CSU/UC approval)
 - IGETC - 3B Humanities

Articulation Information

Methods of Evaluation

- Classroom Discussions
 - Example: In an instructor led discussion prompting students to explain the relevance of language and logic as it applies to epistemology and metaphysics. During the last few minutes of the class, students will answer the following question: "What the clearest point you learned today?"; and, "What point remains least clear to you?".
- Essay Examinations
 - Example: Select one of the following questions (a, b, or c) and write a three page, typed, double spaced, size 12 font essay thoroughly responding to your chosen question. a) Compare and contrast the moral positions regarding belief advocated by Clifford and James. Explain the circumstances under which James thinks that we are relieved from Clifford's moral dictum. Define each aspect of this exception. Provide a quote from your text that justifies each point in your compare and contrast answer. b) Provide a quote from your text in which James describes the logic utilized by William Clifford. Evaluate this logical approach to knowledge production. c) Quote James' definition of "Religion." Thoroughly explain this definition. Compare and contrast the definition offered by James with what you believe to be the popular definition of 'religion' utilized in our society. Student essays will be assessed based upon a rubric that includes criteria such as correctness of response, thoroughness of explanation, relevance of quote provided, and demonstration of "justification" by way of quote selection.
- Objective Examinations
 - Example: Students will take a multiple-choice examination aligning the terminology of epistemological and metaphysical with the corresponding definitions. Example: According to William Clifford in his essay, "The Ethics of Belief," the ship owner is immoral... A. because people lost their lives in the shipwreck. B. because the ship sank. C. because he pushed away doubts about the ship being safe. D. because he wasn't on the ship when it went down.
- Projects

- Example: Students create poster presentations depicting historical approaches to metaphysics and epistemology. Posters will be graded based upon (a) correctness and (b) thoroughness.

Repeatable

No

Methods of Instruction

- Lecture/Discussion
- Distance Learning

Lecture:

1. Instructor will lead students in a classroom or online discussion on the strengths and weaknesses of Plato's theory of knowledge (doctrine of recollection) as it relates to his metaphysics (theory of forms). Students will learn to think critically about the relationship between metaphysical assumptions and theories of knowledge.

Distance Learning

1. Students will read Galen Strawson's article, "The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility," then the instructor will lead the students in small in-person groups or in an online discussion forum defining concepts used in reading. Students will reflect on their own lives to analyze (a) whether they 'true moral responsibility' according to Strawson's definition, and (b) whether free will as a property reality is coherent. Students will to analyze and define concepts as used in primary texts in philosophy.

Typical Out of Class Assignments

Reading Assignments

1. Read Galen Strawson's article, "The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility" and be prepared to discuss in class. 2. Read "Meditations on First Philosophy," by Rene Descartes and be prepared to discuss in class.

Writing, Problem Solving or Performance

1. Formal Paper: write a 3 page minimum essay answering all parts of the question prompt that is typed, double-spaced, size 12 font paper. Formal Paper Prompt: Based upon Galen Strawson's article, "The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility," (a) describe Strawson's Basic Argument for what it is to be truly morally responsible, and (b) explain why he concludes that 'true moral responsibility' is impossible whether determinism is true or false. 2. Short Answer Questions for Essay Exam 1: write a Blue-Book (large) short essay minimum of 3 pages answering all parts of the following question prompt. Short Essay Prompt: Based upon Descartes Meditations on First Philosophy (a) Why doesn't Descartes simply determine what's real by looking around him and use his sense experience? (b) Is the point in Descartes' Meditations to convince us to think that we are actually living in a Matrix-like scenario? Justify your answer and use Descartes' writing to support your justification. 3. Formal Paper: write a 3 page minimum essay answering all parts of the question prompt that is typed, double-spaced, size 12 font paper. Formal Paper Prompt: Based upon William Clifford's, "The Ethics of Belief," and William James', "The Will to Believe," (a) explain why Clifford and James agree that it is paramount to believe truths and avoid falsehoods, yet (b) disagree about the moral worth of faith.

Other (Term projects, research papers, portfolios, etc.)

Required Materials

- Western Philosophy: An Anthology
 - Author: John G. Cottingham
 - Publisher: Wiley-Blackwell
 - Publication Date: 2007
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings
 - Author: Robert Solomon and Kathleen Higgins
 - Publisher: Oxford University Press
 - Publication Date: 2015
 - Text Edition: 11th
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Free Will
 - Author: Gary Watson
 - Publisher: Oxford University Press
 - Publication Date: 2003
 - Text Edition: 2nd
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:
- Does the Center Hold? An Introduction to Western Philosophy
 - Author: Donald Palmer
 - Publisher: McGraw-Hill
 - Publication Date: 2020
 - Text Edition: 8th
 - Classic Textbook?:
 - OER Link:
 - OER:

Other materials and-or supplies required of students that contribute to the cost of the course.