**PHL 201 Introduction to Philosophy (3)**

**Linn-Benton Community College**

**TR 11.30-12.50, NSH-206**

Instructor: Marta D. Kunecka

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Office Hours: IA-220; Tuesdays: 10.30-11.30

**Course Description**

In this course we will use reflective and critical reading, thinking, writing, and discussion to explore the methods and ideas of ancient and modern philosophy. The course focuses on the nature of reality, free will, determinism, the existence of God, knowledge, ethics, the nature of personhood, and whether or not there is a meaning in life. It features such important figures as Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, James, and Sartre. Prepares students for other classes in Philosophy and Religion.

**Performance Based learner outcomes**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Conduct close, critical readings of difficult philosophical texts.
2. Critically appreciate and be able to articulate competing theories of the nature of reality, free will, determinism, God, knowledge, ethics, and personhood.
3. Assess the cogency of arguments in general, and especially, of arguments in philosophy.
4. Develop and articulate a reasonably coherent and well-supported personal worldview.
5. Use Philosophy to better understand and address personal, social, and political problems.
6. Use various forms of written and verbal discussion to articulate understanding and practical application of various aspects of Philosophy.
7. Write coherent essays using textual support, documentation (where applicable), and standard grammar/mechanics.
8. Thoughtfully and respectfully engage those who hold a different philosophical worldview.

**Assignment Expectations**

\*Readings are due at the beginning of class. Come to class ready to discuss and engage the material. There will be large and small group discussions, in-class writings, formal essays, and reading quizzes (that cannot be made up).

\*Essays are due in class on the date due. There will be a 10% grade reduction for each day an assignment is late. Essays will be typed, double-spaced, stapled, and utilize one-inch margins with 12-point Times-New Roman font. No emailed essays accepted unless arranged by the instructor.

\*Examinations will be taken on the day scheduled unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor; otherwise, a zero will be earned.

\*Writing well is important, and the Linn-Benton Writing Center is a great free resource for all students.

**Participation and attendance**

\* Students must participate to receive credit for each day’s class (arrive on time, complete in-class assignments, follow instructions, etc.). One point will be deducted off a student’s participation grade if: absent, late or leaves early more than twice, disrupts the class by having side-bar conversations, in class but not participating, fails to bring the proper textbook more than twice.

It is your responsibility to sign up the presence list each time you come to class!

\*Please do not email me if you can’t come to class from any other reasons then the medical ones (e.g. you can’t start your car, you need to take your grandma shopping etc.)

\*You are responsible for your learning process as much as for your work. Keep copies of assignments and “back up” your computer files. If absent, make sure to obtain notes from another student.

\*Check LBCC email regularly as it is the instructor’s first point of contact. You may also want to check Instructor’s website since there may be some updated information during the term.

\*Incomplete grades are only an option for students who have finished at least 80 percent of the course work with a passing grade and are facing an emergency that prevents them from finishing the class. Requests for incompletes must be made to the instructor in writing.

\*Students with a disability who need accommodation should notify the instructor and the Office of Disability Services at the start of the term.

\*Emergency. A policy exception may be made is if a student has kept in close contact with an instructor during an emergency, though that does not guarantee an exception.

**STUDENT CONDUCT**

Students are expected to conform to all standards in Linn-Benton CC Student Handbook. This includes practicing both personal and academic integrity. Students are to respect the rights of all people and contribute to a safe, cooperative and respectful learning atmosphere.

Respect. We will maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect. Cell phones will be silenced during class unless arrangements are made with the instructor. There will be no text messaging, no headphones, no Ipods, no laptops except for note taking. One person talks at a time. To learn and grow together, people must feel free to share and explore ideas in a safe, open setting. Disagreement is fine, but it must be intelligent, considerate, and respectful. If a student is disruptive and/or disrespectful, the student will be removed.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic honesty is an indispensable value as students acquire knowledge and develop skills in college. Students at Linn-Benton Community College are expected to practice academic honesty by not cheating, plagiarizing, or misrepresenting their coursework in any way. Students are ultimately responsible for understanding and avoiding academic dishonesty whether such incidences are intentional or unintentional. Consequences for cheating, plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty may include receiving a score of zero on an individual assignment or failing the class.

If at any time you are not sure about the legitimacy of your writing, ask your instructor for clarification. Note: students may be required to turn in copies of any source they use.

**Final Grade**

Participation/attendance 30%

Midterm Test 25%

Term Essay 20%

Final Test 25%

Final grades will be determined based on the following scale:

A 90-100 B 80-89 C 70-79 D 60-69 F 59 and below

**Written Assignment Grading Criteria**

A: Superior achievement; far exceeds demands of assignment.

B: Goes beyond adequate achievement; exceeds demands of assignment.

C: Achieves assignment purpose adequately; fulfills assignment.

D. Problems outweigh strengths, does not quite fulfill assignment.

F: Problems overpower strengths, clearly does not fulfill assignment.

Essay topics will be assigned in class.

**FINAL REMARKS**

\*One-on-one conferences with the instructor may be required.

\*Students who do not contact the instructor prior to the start of the second class may be dropped per Linn-Benton Community College’s No Show Drop policy.

\*Students may be required to submit electronic copies of their essays to their instructor for examination with Safe Assign and/or other plagiarism detection software.

Just because I am friendly does not mean that I am your friend so please refrain from calling me by name and dropping of emails that hae nothing to do with the class.

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

Available at the LBCC bookstore; purchase each and bring them to class.

1. White, T. I. ***Discovering Philosophy,*** Second Edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2008.

If necessary: all additional texts will be announced in class.

**Winter Term 2014 Schedule**

**Week One**

1/7 Introductions, Syllabus, Expectations, What is Philosophy?

1/9 White: 1-14 Introduction; 439-444 Writing about Philosophy;

**Week Two**

1/14 White, 15-35, Critical thinking

1/16 White, 36-55, Logical Fallacies

**Week Three**

1/21 White, 117-132 and 145-156, Ethics and morality

1/23 White, 157-181, Why be ethical?

**Week Four**

**ESSAY DUE on 1/30**

1/28 White, 217-234, What is real?

1/30 White, 235-248, Materialism vs Idealism

**Week Five**

2/4 Plato, „The Cave” + Review

2/6 **MIDTERM TEST (weeks I-V)**

**Week Six**

2/11 White, 249-261, Rationalism

2/13 White 261-281, Empiricism

**Week Seven**

2/18 White, 57-84, Determinism

2/20 White, 85-97, The Case for Freedom + James, “What Pragmatism Means”

**Week Eight**

2/25 White 97-115 + Sartre, “The Humanism of Existentialism”

2/27 White, 183– 216, Question of Democracy

**Week Nine**

**ESSAY DUE on 3/6**

3/4 White, 283-308, Question of God

3/6 White, 311-312 and 328-339, West meets East

**Week Ten**

3/11 Review Session

3/13 **FINAL TEST (weeks V-X)**

\* I reserve the right to modify this schedule at any time and introduce changes in the course. It is a responsible student’s obligation to be aware of the changes announced during the term (please visit my LBCC instructor website frequently – I will use it as a form of communication board with you).