

**Introduction to Western Philosophy
Philosophy 101
Fall 2011**

Instructor: Philip M. Mouch
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Where: MacLean 172
When: TTh 1:30-2:45
Office Hours: M 10-2:30, W 11-2:30; TTh 12-1
and by appointment

homepage: <http://www.mnstate.edu/mouch/101/101index.html>

Course Description: An introduction to Western philosophical thinking and methods through an examination of selected figures and movements from the history of the discipline.

Reading Assignments and Texts: You should read the assignments before coming to class. I will be lecturing on these assignments and expect you to be able to participate in the class. While some of the reading assignments might seem relatively short, don't be fooled by this. The material can be difficult at times, though I don't think it will be overly difficult. Still, I strongly advise you to read through the assignments carefully and a couple of times. This will help you to understand the material and prepare you for the class meetings. Finally, be sure to bring whatever text we are working with to class. The texts we will be reading in this class are as follows:

Plato Five Dialogues, trans. G. M. A. Grube, Hackett, 2nd ed.
Plato Republic, trans. G. M. A. Grube, Hackett 2nd ed.
René Descartes Meditations, Objections, and Replies, trans. Roger Ariew & Donald A. Cress, Hackett
John Stuart Mill Utilitarianism, Hackett 2nd ed.

Learning Outcomes (General):

1. Explain the major issues and some major theories in Western epistemology.
2. Explain the major issues and some major theories in Western metaphysics.
3. Explain the major issues and some major theories in Western axiology.
4. Recognize theoretical commitments that distinguish major historical figures in Western philosophy.
5. Restate arguments of major historical figures in Western philosophy.
6. Identify cultural influences on major historical figures in Western philosophy.
7. Explain how theories change as part of an ongoing historical dialogue.

Learning Outcomes (MN Transfer Curriculum):

Goal 6: The Humanities and Fine Arts

- Demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
- Understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within a historical and social context.
- Respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
- Articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.

Evaluation:

We will have three in-class exams: one after Plato, one after Descartes, and one at the end of the semester. These will be short essay tests, equal in value. You are expected to take each exam on the day and time scheduled, so plan accordingly.

Policies:

(1) I will not allow make-up exams unless there is some good reason (it should be a true emergency – not a family vacation or birth of a niece or nephew). In any event, written documentation will be required. You should get in touch with me as soon as possible if such a situation arises. The final exam will be held the day listed on the syllabus. Please plan accordingly

(2) You are permitted to have three unexcused absences. Your overall grade for the course will be lowered by two percentage points for each unexcused absence beyond the first three. As with exams and assignments, excused absences will only be given for emergencies and only when there is written documentation.

(3) You are expected to be in class and have done the reading for the day. It is simple courtesy to be in class on time and in your seat. If you have to be late for some reason, please enter the room and take your seat quietly, so as not to disturb the class. PLEASE TURN OFF ALL CELLPHONES AND PAGERS. Finally, do not stand up and walk out in the middle of the class period. This is distracting and rude to the other students and me. If you must leave early for some reason, please talk to me before class and sit near the door.

Schedule: These dates are tentative. I may have to make changes to these dates as the semester goes on. I will make any necessary changes in class.

Aug 23	Introduction
Aug 25	Plato – Euthyphro
Aug 30	Plato – Apology
Sept 1	Plato – Crito
Sept 6	Plato – Meno
Sept 8	Plato – Republic books V & VI
Sept 13	Plato – Republic book VII
Sept 15	No Class
Sept 20	Plato – Review
Sept 22	Plato Exam
Sept 27	Descartes – First Meditation
Sept 29	Descartes – First Meditation
Oct 4	Descartes – Second Meditation
Oct 6	Descartes – Second Meditation
Oct 11	Fall Breather – No Classes
Oct 13	Descartes – Third Meditation
Oct 18	Descartes – Fourth Meditation
Oct 20	Descartes – Fifth Meditation
Oct 25	Descartes – Sixth Meditation
Oct 27	Descartes – Review
Nov 1	Descartes Exam

Nov 3	Mill – Chapter One
Nov 8	Mill – Chapter One
Nov 10	Mill – Chapter Two
Nov 15	Mill – Chapter Two
Nov 17	Mill – Chapter Three
Nov 22	Mill – Chapter Three
Nov 24	Thanksgiving Break – No Classes
Nov 29	Mill – Chapter Four
Dec 1	Mill – Chapter Five
Dec 6	Last Day of Class

FINAL EXAM: Thursday, December 8 – Noon

Students with disabilities who believe they may need an accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact Greg Toutges, Director of Disability Services at 477-4318 (Voice) or 1-800-627-3529 (MRS/TTY), Flora Frick 154 as soon as possible to ensure that accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion.