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PHIL 100.01: Introduction to Philosophy

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**INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
PHIL 100, SECTION 01 (73519)
LIBERAL ARTS BUILDING, ROOM 337
TR 9:40-11:00 AM
FALL SEMESTER 2001**

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Broadly speaking, philosophy involves a "second-order" or reflective approach to various areas of human inquiry. Whereas the empirical sciences (both natural and social) try to formulate laws to describe the phenomena that they observe, philosophy seeks to penetrate the appearances that give rise to these empirical laws to determine whether there is actually some deeper essence or reality that they fail to grasp -- and, if so, the nature of this deeper essence or reality.

In this course, which is a general overview of the western philosophical tradition, we shall consider six areas that, historically, have been the subject of philosophical inquiry: 1) the fundamental nature of reality (metaphysics); 2) whether this reality includes God, and the relation between religious belief, on the one hand, and human reason and evil, on the other (religion); 3) the nature of our knowledge and its relation to reality (epistemology); 4) the nature of "the self," i.e., whether there is some aspect of who we are that is essential to our identity (self-identity); 5) whether we are free, and therefore responsible for our actions, or merely determined like all other objects in the natural world (freedom); and 6) whether there is conduct that is innately "good," and whether human beings are capable of it (ethics). (If time permits, we shall also consider questions of justice and their relation to arguments for the legitimacy of the state).

REQUIRED TEXT:

Robert C. Solomon, *Introducing Philosophy: A Text with Integrated Readings*, Harcourt Brace, Seventh Edition, 2001

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION:

The reading assignments for this course are, for the most part, only 20-40 pages per week, but they are difficult. You should therefore read the materials once before coming to class and at least once afterwards.

Your evaluation for the course will be based upon three tests, each of which will be worth one third of your final grade. Tentatively, the tests are scheduled for Thursday, October 4, Thursday, November 8, and Thursday December 13. I do, however, reserve the right to reschedule the tests (with at least one week advance notice) if we do not move through the materials at a speed that conforms to the schedule below.

POLICIES:

Unless evidence of emergency or serious illness is provided, make-up tests will not be arranged.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Page numbers refer to *Introducing Philosophy*.

WEEK:	READINGS:
Sept. 4, 6	(Administrative Considerations; Introduction to Philosophy); 46-57 (Introduction to Metaphysics; the Presocratics)
Sept. 11, 13	67-88 (Plato, Aristotle)
Sept. 18, 20	130-147 (Introduction to Religion ; Ontological, Cosmological, and Teleological Arguments for God's existence)
Sept. 25, 27	147-158 (Religion and Practical Reason; The Problem of Evil); 161- 175 (Reason and Faith)
Oct. 2, 4	175-181 (The Attack on Religion); FIRST TEST
Oct. 9, 11	184-201 (Introduction to Epistemology ; Descartes)
Oct. 16, 18	201-237 (Locke, Berkeley, Hume)
Oct. 23, 25	248-259 (What is Truth?); 271-295 (Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche); 259-271, 298-304 (Modern Theories of Truth)
Oct. 30/Nov. 1	321-348 (Introduction to Self-Identity ; Consciousness and the Self; Existentialism and Self-Identity)
Nov. 6, 8	348-372 (Individual and Community; The Self in Question); SECOND TEST
Nov. 13, 15	421-467 (Introduction to Freedom ; Fatalism, Predestination, Determinism; Compulsion/Ignorance, Conditioning)
Nov. 20, 22	475-482 (Existentialism and Freedom); Thanksgiving
Nov. 27, 29	487-504 (Introduction to Ethics ; Morality; Egoism and Altruism); 504-518 (Aristotle's Virtue Ethics)
Dec. 4, 6	526-553 (Kant's Reason Based Morality; Utilitarianism)
Dec. 11, 13	553-565 (Morality and Existentialism); THIRD TEST