

PHILOSOPHY 100
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
SPRING 2008

Your Friendly Master of Ceremonies (i.e., Instructor): Emmett Holman
Holding Court (Office hours): T & Th 8:00-8:50 and T 12:30-1:30 or by appointment
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REQUIRED BOOKS (available at GMU Bookstore)

Feinberg & Shafer-Landau (ed), Reason and Responsibility (13th edition)
Phil. 100 Reader

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your grade for the course will be based on two critical discussion papers (25% each), an in-class midterm essay exam (25%) and an in-class final essay exam (25%).

ON LATE PAPERS AND EXAMS

I realize that, on occasion, serious illness or some other emergency can make it difficult to turn in a paper or take an exam on time. I'm willing to give you a modest amount of slack on this provided you notify me of the emergency right away (not several days or weeks after the paper is due or the exam scheduled). Otherwise, forget it. You can contact me or the Philosophy Dept. by phone or e-mail.

A WORD FROM OUR SPONSOR

If you find the topics in this course to be interesting and would like to learn more about the philosophy program here at GMU, you can check out the Philosophy Dept. webpage at:

<http://www.gmu.edu/departments/philosophy>

A WORD FROM OUR OTHER (SUBSIDIARY) SPONSOR

Something else you may want to do if you find the topics in this course to be interesting, is to attend some of the meetings of the GMU Philosophy Club this semester. To learn about the Philosophy Club, you can go to the Philosophy Club webpage at:

http://www.gmu.edu/departments/philosophy/Philosophy_club.htm

A link to this can be found on the departmental webpage cited above. Meetings of the club will be announced in class and elsewhere. One of those 'elsewhere's' is the Phil. Club listserv. If you are interested in being added to that, let me know.

AND A CAUTIONARY WORD ABOUT DEADLINES

Last day to submit Domicile Reclassification Application: Jan. 22

Last day to add classes: Feb. 5

Last day to drop without tuition liability: Feb. 5

Last day to drop without academic liability: Feb. 22

ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE - The following represents the material to be covered in this course, together with an approximate schedule. All assignments are from the Feinberg & Shafer-Landau book unless otherwise indicated.

I. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION (Jan. 22-Feb. 7)

1. Editors' Introduction to Part 1 of book (pp. 1-6)
2. Aquinas, "The Five Ways" (pp. 21-22)
3. Hume, Dialogues concerning Natural Religion
Parts II & III (pp. 38-46)
Part V (pp. 49-51)
Part VI, first 5 paragraphs (pp. 51-52)
Part VII (pp. 54-56)
Parts X, XI (pp. 61-71)
4. Clifford, "The Ethics of Belief" (pp. 101-105)
5. James, "The Will to Believe" (pp. 106-114)

II. THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE (Feb. 12-Mar. 6)

1. Editors' Introduction to Part 2 of book (pp. 130-137)
2. Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy
Synopsis and Meditation I-IV (pp. 164-184)
Meditation VI (pp. 187-196)
3. Berkeley, Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous, Phil. 100 Reader
First Dialogue, excerpts (pp. 217-229 (bottom of col. 2), pp. 234 (middle of col. 1)-236)
Third Dialogue, excerpt (pp. 250 (bottom of col. 1)-257 (bottom of col. 2))
4. Reid, "Of the Existence of a Material World" (pp. 213-216)

III. PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY (Mar. 18-Apr. 10)

A. Free Will, Determinism and Moral Responsibility (Mar. 18-27)

1. Editors' Introduction to Part 4 of book (pp. 408-413)
2. Holbach, "The Illusion of Free Will" (pp. 458-463)
3. Taylor, "Freedom and Determinism", section entitled "Simple Indeterminism", in Phil. 100 Reader
4. Stace, "The Problem of Free Will" (pp. 419-424)
5. Taylor, "Freedom and Determinism", first 3 sections, in Phil. 100 Reader
6. Campbell, "Has the Self 'Free Will'?" in Phil. 100 Reader
7. Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self" (pp. 438-445)

B. Computers and the Mind (Apr. 1-10)

1. Editors' Introduction to Part 3 of book (pp. 280-285)
2. Lycan, "Robots and Minds" (pp. 342-348)
3. Searle, "Minds, Brains and Programs" (pp. 330-342)

IV. ETHICS (Apr. 15-May1)

1. Editors' Introduction to Part 5 of book (pp. 514-520)
2. Shafer-Landau, "Ethical Subjectivism", excerpts (pp. 555-560, 563-566)
3. Rachels, "The Challenge of Cultural Relativism", Phil. 100 Reader.
4. Mill, Utilitarianism
 chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 594-607)
 chapter 4, in Phil. 100 Reader
5. Ross, "What Makes Right Acts Right?" (pp. 653-661).