200-04H Reason, Reality, Responsibility

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Philosophy 200-04H: Reason, Reality, Responsibility

MWF Time: 12-12:50
Classroom: Alter 304
Professor David W. Rodick

Office Location: Hinkle 227
Telephone: (513) 745-3827
Email: rodickd@xavier.edu
Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesday 3-4 and by appointment
rodickd@xavier.edu

Course Description: This course investigates questions in Epistemology (What does it mean to know something?), Metaphysics (What is reality?), and Ethics (What does it mean to be or to act in a way required of a human being?) You will have the opportunity to read, discuss, and critique classic works of philosophy. In this way, you will be invited into a long tradition of reflection concerning the meaning of our shared humanity, of the world, and of our relation to it. Students will demonstrate comprehension of the fundamental principles relevant to the subject-matter of the course in addition to demonstrating the ability to reflect upon particular themes in writing.

Universal Definition of 3 Credit Hour Course: A “3 credit hour” course is defined as a sequence of instruction in which students are expected to spend 2 hours outside class studying and doing homework for every 1 hour spent in class. For example: If we spend 50 minutes in class on a topic, we are in principle spending 150 minutes on that topic. [Translation: Expect to work outside of class!]

Texts:
Plato, The Apology The Divided Line, The Myth/Allegory of the Cave; René Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy; Friedrich Nietzsche, The Mad Man and The Twilight of the Idols. Plato’s Apology (in The Trial and Death of Socrates) and Descartes’ Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy are required texts and must be purchased, rented, or somehow obtained. You will be required to demonstrate that you have these texts and a folder in your possession no later than Friday September 2!*

Requirements

• A “folder” of some kind to store course materials.
• Attendance and Class Participation (10%). You must come to class on time and actively participate.
• A sign in sheet will be circulated at the time class begins – tardiness will be noted.
• Quizzes (announced and unannounced) will be administered at my discretion (10%).
• 3 in-class exams: Plato’s *Apology*, Divided Line, The Good, and Myth of the Cave (20%) Descartes’ *Discourse on Method* and *Meditations on First Philosophy* (20%) and the meaning and importance of Nietzsche’s notion of the “death of God” (20%). [In-class exams will consist of a 50 minute “in-class” component of short answer questions in addition to a “take-home” component consisting of a short essay (1-2 pages) due in class the following class period.]

• A cumulative final exam covering Plato, Descartes, and Nietzsche (20%).

**Class Sequence**

M Aug 22: Syllabus Review and Signature

**Plato: The Life and Legacy of Socrates**

W Aug 24 *Apology*: Speaking the Truth [17a-19d]

F Aug 26 *Apology*: Socratic Wisdom [20c-23c]

M Aug 29 *Apology*: The Philosopher and the City [28a-33b]

W Aug 31 *Apology*: The Guilty Verdict / “The unexamined life is not worth living” [35e-38b]

*F Sept 2 *Apology*: Implications of the Trial of Socrates; The Trial of Socrates as the Trial of Philosophy [38c-42a].

W Sept 7 Divided Line (DL): Images and Objects [509d-511e]

F Sept 9 DL: Objects and Concepts [509d-511e]

M Sept 12 DL: Concepts and Forms [509d-511e]

W Sept 14 DL: Finish DL

F Sept 16 The Good [504b-509b]

M Sept 19 The Good [504b-509b]

W Sept 21 The Good [504b-509b]

F Sept 23 Myth of the Cave (MC) [514a-518e]

M Sept 26: MC [514a-518e]

W Sept 28 MC [514a-518e]

F Sept 30 MC [514a-518e]

M Oct 3 Review

**W Oct 5 Plato: Exam**

Descartes’ *Discourse on Method* and its Importance for A Modern, Scientific Age

M Oct 10 Introduction to Descartes


F Oct 14 DM I: Lessons Learned at *La Flèche*: The Importance of Foundations

M Oct 17 DM II: Cartesian and Non-Cartesian Cities

W Oct 19 Conclude DM I & II.

F Oct 21 DM III: Cartesian Method

W Oct 26 DM IV: Skepticism, *Cogito ergo Sum*
F Oct 28 DM IV: *Res Cogitans, Res Extensa*
M Oct 31 Conclude Part IV
W Nov 2 DM VI: Mastery and Possession of Nature
F Nov 4 The Wax Example: A Case Study (Second Meditation: “The Wax Example”: 67-68)
M Nov 7 Descartes’ Appeal to God as a “Principle of Connection” (An anticipation of Nietzsche?)
W Nov 9 Review for Exam
F Nov 11 Descartes Exam

**Nietzsche: Living in the Wake of the “Death of God”**

M Nov 14 The Madman and the Death of God (Hand out)
W Nov 16 The Madman and the Death of God
F Nov 18 Twilight of the Idols (Handout)
M Nov 21 Twilight of the Idols
M Nov 28 Nietzsche BBC Film: “Human, All Too Human”
W Nov 30 Nietzsche BBC Film: “Human, All Too Human”
F Dec 2 Discuss Film
M Dec 5 Review of Nietzsche: A philosophy of the future!
W Dec 7 Nietzsche Exam
F Dec 9 Review for Final

**Note:** The Final Exam for **Philosophy 200-01** is scheduled for 12:00-1:50pm on Monday December 12, 2016. The final exam will be cumulative.

**Grading**

Grades are not given. They are earned!

*Grading is administered strictly in accordance with the Registrar’s Grading System.*

See [http://www.xavier.edu/registrar/facultyandstaff/Grading-Scales.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/registrar/facultyandstaff/Grading-Scales.cfm)

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In the absence of prior arrangement, any late assignment will be penalized **one letter grade per class period** the requirement remains outstanding.

[Note: There are important differences between a “course” grade and a grade assigned to a finite piece of work. Whereas a “course” grade is intended to reflect the totality of effort and performance demonstrated by the student throughout the entire semester, a grade assigned to a finite piece of work is based simply upon the content of that particular assignment. Grade discussions of a personal nature must be conducted in my office during office hours – or at some other pre-arranged time – and not before, during, or immediately following class or via E-mail!]

**Very Important!**

**Administrative Issues**

**Academic Honesty:** *Plagiarism* is appropriating someone else’s words or ideas without formal acknowledgement. You need not “cut and paste” to be guilty of plagiarism. Go to [http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/index.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/index.cfm) Plagiarism results in an F for the course and a letter sent to the Office of the Dean of your particular school. Literal paraphrasing (copying) of someone else’s work is plagiarism and the same applies to using the “copy and paste” function to insert the words of somebody else on to your paper. **Don’t Do IT!** [Using Spark Notes or Cliff Notes or anyone’s work other than your own without the proper citations is plagiarism.]

**Electronics:** Laptops, phones, iPods, and similar devices will **not** be used in class. Exceptions **must** be approved in advance by the professor.

**Any learning accommodations requested by the Office of Student Services will be completely supported through LAC@Xavier.edu**
Expectations for Class Room Behavior

Class will start on time and end on time!
You will arrive on time or be marked late;
Please do not leave the classroom during class unless it is absolutely necessary;
Complete assigned reading before class;
Review notes from prior class while waiting for class to begin (What if there is a quiz??);
Have books/handouts available and on your desk ready to use;
Do not talk between with the person sitting next to you while the professor, or anyone else, is speaking;
Have syllabus readily available to consult; review syllabus before class in order to understand what a particular class session will cover;
Have questions prepared for the professor based upon a prior reading of the material.

Unsatisfactory behavior includes:
Phones will not be used at all during class period;
Not having books/handouts used in class in your possession;
Coming to class unprepared;
Texting (or any use of electronic devices) during class;
Talking with others concerning matters unrelated to the class;
Tardiness;
Eating;
Tuning-out;
Sleeping.
Please do not talk amongst yourselves, get out of your seats, or shuffle your books/papers until the professor dismisses you (which I will do before the end of the assigned class period!)

* * *

I understand the requirements and expectations of Dr. Rodick for Philosophy 200.

(Print) Your Name: ___________________________________
Signature: ________________________________ Date: ___________