2014

290-04 Theory of Knowledge

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Course Description: This course investigates issues in the theory of knowledge through a reading of foundational texts in the history of western philosophy.

Required Texts:
Plato, The Apology;
Descartes, Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy;
Nietzsche, The Twilight of the Idols.

Requirements:
1 Paper: 4-5 pages (Plato)
4 Exams (including final)
Each requirement is worth 20%.

Class attendance and class participation are required! Repeated unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade.

Course Introduction

8/25: Review Syllabus
Introduction to Plato’s Divided Line

Plato

9/3: DL
9/8: Myth of the Cave (MC) Myth of the Cave (MC): 514a – 516d
9/10: MC: Myth of the Cave: 516e – 517e
9/15: MC: Myth of the Cave: 518a – 518d
9/17: Exam: DL & MC
9/24: Apology: Apology: 21e – 24b  
10/1: Apology: Apology: 36b - 42

**Descartes**

10/6: Discourse on Method (DM) I  
10/8: DM II (**Plato Paper Due in Class**)  
10/13: DM III  
10/15: DM IV  
10/20: DM V  
10/22: DM VI  
10/27: Meditation I  
10/29: Meditation II  
11/3: Meditation III  
11/5: **Descartes Exam**

**Nietzsche**

11/10: Introduction to Nietzsche  
11/12: Film  
11/17: Twilight of the Idols: “Forward” – pages 3-4 and The Death of God (Handout)  
11/19: Twilight of the Idols: “Reason and Philosophy” Sections 1 – 4 (pp. 18-20)  
11/24: Twilight of the Idols: “Morality as Anti Nature” Sections 1 - 2 (pp. 25-26)  
12/1: Twilight of the Idols: “The Four Great Errors” Section 3 (pp. 31-32) & “Reason in Philosophy” Section 5 (pp. 20-21)  
12/3: Twilight of the Idols: “How the True World Became a Fiction” (pp. 23 – 24);  
“What the Germans are Missing” Sections 4-5 (pp. 45-47)  
12/8: **Nietzsche Exam**  
12/10: Review for Final Exam

**This course fulfills the following requirements of the Core Curriculum:**

**Grading Policy**

Papers and Exams will be graded in accordance with the Department of Philosophy grading standards to be distributed. Semester grades are administered in accordance with the Registrar’s Grading Standards. See [http://www.xavier.edu/registrar/facultyandstaff/Grading-Scales.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/registrar/facultyandstaff/Grading-Scales.cfm)

**Very Important!**  
**Administrative Issues**
**Academic Honesty:** *Plagiarism* is appropriating someone else’s words or ideas without formal acknowledgement. **Go to** [http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/index.cfm](http://www.xavier.edu/library/xututor/plagiarism/index.cfm)

*Any plagiarism will result in an F for the course, and your dean will be notified of the incident.*

**Don’t Do IT!**

**Electronics:** Laptops, phones, iPods, and similar devices will not be used in class. Exceptions must be documented.

**Any learning accommodations requested by the Office of Student Services will be supported completely.**

**Late Assignments will be reduced** one letter grade for each class session assignment is late.

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**Class Room Etiquette**

**Rude and Unacceptable Behaviors:**
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;
Tuning-out;
Sleeping.

**Recommendations:**
Arrive on time;
While waiting for class to begin, instead of talking or checking your phone, review your notes from last class;
Choose a seat in a location other than the last row;
Have your books on your desk ready to use;
Consult your 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;
Engage the Professor – An education is a terrible thing to waste!!