290-10 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 worth 20%.

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

Course Introduction

8/26: Review Syllabus
Introduction to Plato’s Divided Line

Plato

8/28: Divided Line (DL) 509d – 511e
9/2: DL
9/4: Myth of the Cave (MC) 514a – 516d
9/9: MC: 516e – 517e
9/11: MC: 518a – 518d
9/16: Exam: DL & MC
9/18: Introduction to Apology
9/23: Apology: 17a – 21e. Plato Paper Assignment Distributed in class
9/25: Apology: 21e – 24b
9/30: Apology: 28d – 33b
10/2: Apology: 36b - 42

Descartes

10/7: Discourse on Method (DM) I
10/9: DM II (Plato Paper Due in Class)
10/14: DM III
10/16: DM IV
10/21: DM V
10/23: DM VI
10/28: Meditation I
10/30: Meditation II
11/4: Meditation III
11/6: Descartes Exam

Nietzsche

11/11: Introduction to Nietzsche: “Forward” – pages 3-4 and The Death of God (Handout)
11/13: Film
11/18: Twilight of the Idols: “Reason and Philosophy” Sections 1 – 4 (pp. 18-20)
11/20: Twilight of the Idols: “Morality as Anti Nature” Sections 1 - 2 (pp. 25-26)
11/25: No class
12/2: Twilight of the Idols: “The Four Great Errors” Section 3 (pp. 31-32) & “Reason in Philosophy” Section 5 (pp. 20-21)
12/4: 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)
12/9: Nietzsche Exam
12/11: 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

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
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.

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!!