

FIRST DAY HANDOUT -- COURSE GUIDELINES -- CHANGES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS

Course: PHI 111, Introduction to Philosophy, Meeting in Arvada

Instructor: Guy Till – guytill@msn.com guy.till@rrcc.edu 303-914-6100 x 3867 (Voicemail RRCC – if you miss class, please later check this RRCC number for a voicemail message about homework); 720-394-6911 (Cell).

This class has three Friday evening sessions and three Saturday sessions.

Friday, February 5, 2010, 5:00 PM till 10:00 PM
Saturday, February 6, 2010, 8:00 AM till 5:30 PM.

Friday, February 12, 2010, 5:00 PM till 10:00 PM.
Saturday, February 13, 2010, 8:00 AM till 5:30 PM.

Friday, February 19, 2010, 5:00 PM till 10:00 PM
Saturday, February 20, 2010, 8:00 AM till 5:30 PM.

Text (**Required**): *Fifty Readings Plus, An Introduction to Philosophy*, Second edition, by Donald C. Abel.

NOTE: For perspective, it may be useful to refer to resources such as a dictionary of philosophy or encyclopedia for general descriptions or definitions of terms used in philosophy. Remember, if it seems confusing, that the purpose of this course is to give you an INTRODUCTION. The class will proceed by reviewing passages, lectures, some pertinent videos, and discussion. Please plan on talking in class. If you do not like to speak publicly, please consider the “reaction paper” approach, below.

I. General objectives of the course: Students will be introduced to some of the traditional ways of discussing issues in philosophy. We will examine several philosophical theories in relation to human life, thought, and experience. Philosophical theories may be applied or motivated through a selection of contemporary personal and social issues. Students should improve their abilities to identify core values and beliefs and communicate about core values and beliefs.

II. Specific course outcome objectives:

1. Recognize and distinguish several major philosophical systems.
2. Place several historically significant or influential philosophical thinkers in historical perspective.
3. Recognize some elements of one's own philosophical system in relation to other philosophical traditions.
4. Be able to discuss some of the issues arising from the relationships between several of the metaphysical (i.e. what is real) schools of thought, epistemological (i.e. how does one know) schools of thought, and ethical (i.e. what is right) schools of thought in the philosophical traditions. Critical reflection – avoiding the “unexamined life” is a tradition in Philosophy. Being able to engage in a dialogue about core values and beliefs in a reasonable manner is very important to Philosophy.

III. Course requirements and grading:

1. Regular attendance is important.
2. Grading will be based in part on classroom participation and timeliness in meeting requirements. Good questions are appreciated as well as helpful remarks. Listening to other students carefully is essential.
3. Please expect a short quiz each day of class. The quizzes will be "open book/open notes." There will be a final examination on the last day, which will cover the material that is addressed in the course. Each quiz will count for approximately 5 to 10 % of the final grade. The final test will count approximately 40 %. Taking a test late, unless the delay or absence is excused for business travel, illness, family obligations or some other valid reason, may result in a reduction of the grade earned on the test.
4. OPTIONAL: You may turn in a legible hand written or typed "reaction paper," reflecting YOUR impressions or personal reaction to some point in the assigned readings or classroom events. The reaction paper should not be more than one page long.
5. Where the cumulative course grade is close to a breaking point, e.g. if the cumulative grade based on test results is a B+, class participation will be given extra weight and can result in a higher grade - - similarly, if you have turned in thoughtful reaction papers, your efforts can be recognized through an improved grade.
6. Changes in these guidelines will be announced in class.

IV. Tentative Reading Assignments from *Fifty Readings Plus, an Introduction to Philosophy* (FR+):

First Meeting -- Discussion of Philosophy in general --
FR+ -- Chapter One - Pages 4-28
Chapter Three - Pages 136-146

Second Meeting -- FR+ -- Chapter Three -- Pages 146--225
FR+ - Chapter Four - Pages 278-314

Third Meeting -- FR+ - Chapter Four- Pages 226-277

Fourth Meeting -- FR+ -Chapter Five - Pages 318-382

(To be assigned ...)

CHANGES IN THESE GUIDELINES WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS.