

PHL 100: Introduction to Philosophy
Spring 2015

Instructor: Matthew Katz
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Office: Anspach 244
Office Hours: M 4:45-5:45,
W 9-10, F 2-3, and by appt.

Course Description: This course is a general introduction to philosophical issues and methods. Topics include moral theory, the existence of god, the relationship between mind and body, freedom of the will, personal identity, and skepticism about knowledge. Readings will be both contemporary and historical. Requirements include regular attendance, homework and quizzes, three regular exams, three short writing assignments, and one comprehensive final exam.

Required Text:

1. Joel Feinberg and Russ Shafer-Landau. *Reason and Responsibility*, 15th edition. Wadsworth, 2013.
2. Other readings provided on Blackboard.

Requirements:

Attendance/Homework/Quizzes: 5%
Three short writing assignments: 7% each
Three regular exams: 16% each
Comprehensive final exam: 26%

Academic Integrity: Cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt with in accordance with CMU's Policy on Academic Integrity, which can be found here: http://academicsenate.cmich.edu/NonCad_ACADEMIC_INTEGRITY_POLICY.pdf.

Accommodations for students with disabilities: CMU provides students with disabilities reasonable accommodation to participate in educational programs, activities, or services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in class activities or meet course requirements should first register with the office of Student Disability Services (Park Library 120, telephone 989-774-3018, TDD #2568), and then contact the professor as soon as possible.

Tentative Schedule:

Weeks	Topic
1–3	How Should I Behave? Readings: Walter Stace, “A Critique of Moral Relativism” (BB) Russ Shafer-Landau, “Ethical Subjectivism” Plato, “The Immoralist’s Challenge” Joel Feinberg, “Psychological Egoism” John Stuart Mill, “Utilitarianism” Immanuel Kant, “The Good Will and the Categorical Imperative”
4–6	Does God Exist? Readings: St. Thomas Aquinas, “The Five Ways” Samuel Clarke, “A Modern Formulation of the Cosmological Argument” William Paley, “The Argument from Design” Anselm of Canterbury, “The Ontological Argument” Guanilo of Marmoutiers, “On Behalf of the Fool” B.C. Johnson, “God and the Problem of Evil” W. K. Clifford, “The Ethics of Belief”
7–9	What’s the Relationship Between Mind and Body? Readings: Brie Gertler, “In Defense of Mind-Body Dualism” Peter Carruthers, “The Mind is the Brain” Paul M. Churchland, “Functionalism and Eliminative Materialism” William G. Lycan, “Robots and Minds” Peter Caruthers, “Brute Experience” (BB)
10–11	Who am I? Readings: John Locke, “The Prince and the Cobbler” Thomas Reid, “Of Mr. Locke’s Account of Our Personal Identity” David Hume, “The Self” Derek Parfit, “Divided Minds and the Nature of Persons”

12–13 **Am I Free?**

Readings:

Paul Holbach, “The Illusion of Free Will”

A. J. Ayer, “Freedom and Necessity”

Robert Kane, “Free Will: Ancient Dispute, New Themes”

Harry Frankfurt, “Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility”

Harry Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person” (BB)

14–15 **What Can I Know?**

Readings:

Bertrand Russell, “Appearance and Reality and the Existence of Matter”

Rene Descartes, “First Meditation”

John Pollock, “A Brain in a Vat”

Plato, “Knowledge as Justified True Belief”

Tentative Exam Schedule:

First Exam:	February 6 th
Second Exam:	March 6 th
Third Exam:	April 10 th
Final Exam:	May 4 th , 12pm (12pm section)
	May 6 th , 12pm (1pm section)