Philosophy 2100: Values and Society
Gabriel Soldatenko, Asst. Prof. of Philosophy
MW 11:00-12:15, Room: EB 172, Fall 2012

Office Hours: Monday 8:00-9:00, Tuesday 12:00-2:00, and by appointment.
Social Science #4091

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Course Description: “Values and Society” takes as its object of inquiry those aspects of our society that most directly affect and shape our everyday lives. In this way, the course shows how philosophy can be helpful in thinking more deeply about everyday life by focusing on those social relations, institutions, and systems that structure the way we live, and which we often take as given. Put another way, if one of the classical projects of philosophy has been to define and outline “the good life”, then this course traces some of the central features through which social life has been arranged in our present. Consequently, this course encourages students to ask critically, and reflect on, how close we have (or have not) come to that “good life” in our modern society.

Text: All course materials will be provided through Georgia View. Note that the cost you save in not having to buy books may be incurred through printing and photocopying.

Course Requirements: Over the course of the semester students
- will bring the days reading to class according to the schedule on the syllabus and/or the professor’s instructions;
- will actively engage the course material and participate in the class discussion; and
- will attend class regularly, even if attendance is not taken.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of the term students will have gained
- a firm historical sense of the roots of what we call “Western” or “modern” society;
- a hemispheric understanding of our society, such that North American social formation cannot be thought as developing independently from the rest of the Americas;
- a general understanding of the philosophical discourse around the themes of race, patriarchy, the nation-state, and capitalism;
- a localized sense of how these themes have been arranged and put into practice in our society; and
- a practical sense of how philosophy can be used as a lever for thinking about everyday life, and one’s location in society.

Evaluation: There will be four in-class writing exams covering each of the major sections of the course. Each will be worth 22% of your grade. The other 12% of your grade will be an evaluation of students’ in-class participation, and short in-class writing assignments and group work.
Exam Grading: Typically, exams will contain ten to fifteen short-answer questions, and each question will be graded on a scale from one to five. The following is the rubric by which the exam questions will be graded:

1. Major inaccuracies; major elements/issues not even mentioned; and, little or no details, examples, or discussion.
2. Major confusions or gaps; little effort to describe elements; and, limited use of details or examples.
3. Accurately identifies most general parts of an answer; some serious confusions; and, superficial discussion with some detail and use of examples.
4. Accurately identifies most of the elements of an answer; some minor confusions; and, discussion and examples not as strong as they could be.
5. Clearly and accurately identifies all the elements of an answer; and, strong use of examples and details.

Extra Credit: You may acquire extra credit, but all exams must have been completed to receive points. Extra credit is obtained by completing a 500-word summary of any philosophically relevant lecture you attended at KSU or off campus (check with instructor for eligibility). A summary is an objective (no critique) account of the presenter’s main ideas that also includes the specific details of when and where the event took place, who spoke, and the title of the speaker’s presentation.

Academic Integrity Statement: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including but not limited to provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, and misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program.

Absence Policy: There are no excused absences in college. Students are responsible for making up class by conferring with classmates (i.e. getting notes and discussing the main topics of conversation). Students are responsible for all material covered: readings, lectures, and documentary presentations. I will allow make-up exams only if I’m contacted at least two days prior to the exam date.

Schedule of Readings:

August 20: Introduction: América and Power

I. Race and Racism

“Lust for Gold, Lust for Silver”

August 27: Ronald Takaki, A Different Mirror (Little, Brown, and Co.: NY, 1994)
“The Tempest in the Wilderness”
    “Consuming Passions”
    “The Property”
    “The Owners”

September 3: No Class

    “Who Invented the Concept of Race?”

    “Eurocentrism and Modernity”

    “Overview”

September 17: Derrick Bell, *And We Are Not Saved* (Basic Books: NY, 1989)
    “The Real Status of Black Folks Today”
    Exam Review

September 19: Exam #1

**II. Gender, Patriarchy and Heterosexism**

    “The Ways of Our Grandmothers”

    “Women”
    “Sex in the Slave Quarters”
Andrea Smith, *Conquest* (South End Press: Cambridge, Mass, 2005)
    “Sexual Violence as a Tool of Genocide”

    “Introduction”
    “Sexuality, Medicine, and Imperialism”


October 8: *La Operacion* (movie)
October 10: Maria Lugones, “Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System” (continued)

October 15: James Baldwin, Collected Essays (Library of America: NY, 1998)
“Freaks and the American Ideal of Manhood”
“Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power”
Exam Review

October 17: Exam #2

III. The State

Books I and II, and sections 1-3, and 9-14 of Book III

October 24: Michel Foucault, Security, Territory, Population (Palgrave: NY, 2007)
“Chapter 10”

October 29: Michel Foucault conversation continued

Ch. 13: Depression and a New Deal
Ch. 14: From World War to Great Society

November 5: Walter Trattner conversation continued
Walter Trattner, From Poor Law to Welfare State
Ch. 16: War on the Welfare State

November 7: Loic Waquant, “Race as Civic Felony”, International Social Science Journal, 181 (Spring 2005)
Christian Parenti, Lockdown America (Verso: New York, 1999)
“A War for All Seasons”
“The Rise of Big House Nation: From Reform to Revenge”
“Balkans in a Box”

November 12: Michel Foucault, “Alternatives to the Prison: Dissemination or Decline of Social Control?”, Theory, Culture, and Society, 26:12 (2009)
Exam Review

November 14: Exam #3

IV. Capitalism

November 19: Karl Marx, Early Writings (Penguin: New York, 1992)
(Selections)
November 21: No Class

November 26: Marx continued

“Chapter 1”

“Neoliberalism and Global Order”

December 5: Exam Review

December 12: Final Exam (10:30-12:30)