Instructor: Wendell G. McMurrain, Jr.
wmcmurra@kennesaw.edu
*(please, do NOT email GA View/Vista)
History & Philosophy: 770–423–6294

Kennesaw State University, Fall ‘12
M/W 3:30 – 4:45pm, English 72
Office Hours: M/W, by appointment
Social Science Building 4120

Philosophy 2200/09: “Ways of Knowing”

Course Description and Goals
This course will offer an introduction to some of the central issues of philosophy. We will read and discuss some of the most important figures from the history of philosophy including: Plato, Descartes, Nietzsche, Bertrand Russell, Daisetz Suzuki, Gandhi, and many others. Topics covered will range from the nature of Free Will, the concept of Self; the existence of God, to philosophical bases of “truth.”

Course Requirements
Each student’s grade will be based upon:

1) An active and well-prepared class participation, including the completion of all readings before the class for which they are assigned. Attendance is a requirement, and students are responsible for all assignments. For every two (2) recorded class absences, there will be a deduction of one (1) letter grade from the Class Participation grade – 10% of overall grade.

2) Your grade will also be based on the completion and quality of three short “Thought Papers.” These are position papers in which you must state an opinion on a debate topic assigned by the Instructor (10% each) totaling 30% of the overall grade. Papers are due in-class on the dates assigned. Late papers will be accepted, but assessed a penalty of one letter grade deducted for each additional class session.

3) Two, in-class, essay examinations (30% each) totaling 60% of overall grade. You are required to supply a Large EXAM BOOK (BLUE BOOKS) for both exams, which will be collected and redistributed the day of the exam. EXAM BOOKS can be purchased from the KSU Bookstore for $0.30 each.

Required Text: Kit R. Christensen, Philosophy and Choice (Second Edition), McGraw Hill.

Schedule and Reading List

Philosophical Inquiry: “How and Why?”
8/20: 1st day of classes
8/22: Intro to the Intro, pt. 1 “Follow your bliss”
8/27: Intro to the Intro, pt. 2 (Vocabulary) ~ Joseph Campbell
8/29: Russell, p.65
9/3: Labor Day (no class)
9/5: “God Talk”
*THOUGHT PAPER due
9/10: Plato, “The Apology,” p.15 “There is no cure for birth or death save to enjoy the interval”
~ George Santayana
9/12: Boethius, p.28

Epistemology
9/17: Nietzsche, p.91
9/19: Peirce, p.94
9/24: Locke & Descartes, p.111
9/26: Suzuki, 138 *THOUGHT PAPER due
10/1: FLEW, HARE, MITCHELL (GA View/Vista) “The unexamined life is not worth living” ~ Plato
10/3: Clifford & James, 151 --

10/8: Midterm Exam
Metaphysics
10/10: Visual Experience
10/15: Plato’s “Allegory,” 187
10/17: Skinner & Stace, 247 & 252
10/22: SARTRE, 258
10/24: Sri Aurobindo, 243
10/29: The Bhagavad-Gita, 271
*THOUGHT PAPER due
10/31: Anselm & Aquinas, 284 & 286
       Buber, 279
11/5: Christ, 311

Ethics & Morality
11/7: Benedict, 333
       Midgley, 337
11/12: Intro to Ethics
11/14: Bentham & Kant, 395 & 403
11/19: *THOUGHT PAPER due
11/21: Thanksgiving (no class)
11/26: “Love & Death”
11/28: Gandhi, 514
12/3: M.L. King, Jr., 473
12/5: Review for FINAL
12/10: Final Exam (3:30-5:30pm)

* Note: This syllabus represents a general plan for the course; changes may be necessary as the semester progresses.