Spring Semester 2009

Philosophy 2200, Section 10
Tuesday and Thursday, 8:00 – 9:15 a.m.
Social Sciences 2021

Professor: Dr. Hugh C. Hunt
Office: Social Sciences 5010
Office Hours: 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. TTH
9:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. TTH
Other times by appointment
Contacts: Telephone: 770-423-6124 (office)
Email: use the email system in WebCT

The Course

Prerequisites: English 0098 and Reading 0099, if required; English 1101 recommended.

Description: A philosophical examination of the different theories of knowledge and morality in the western intellectual tradition—with some attention to the same themes in non-western thought. Emphasis is on the nature and purpose of philosophical inquiry and how one applies it not only in philosophy, but also in other disciplines and in everyday contexts.

Objectives: When you complete this course, you should have working knowledge of the following discipline-specific topics

- the vocabulary of philosophy
- the nature and purpose of philosophical inquiry
- the major areas of study in the discipline of philosophy
- the major periods in the history of philosophy and the way themes of the course have developed through the periods

and the following course-specific themes

- the nature of knowledge and morality in the western philosophical tradition
- the nature of knowledge and morality in at least one non-western tradition
- the relationship between knowledge and morality

Goals: Course objectives are specific and relate principally to the course-at-hand. Goals are more general and relate to the nature and purpose of education. I hope this course contributes to your general education. Meeting the course
objectives will greatly facilitate the achievement of the goals of general education. Throughout the course, think about the specific objectives; throughout your general education, think about your educational goals and the role this course plays (played) in helping you achieve them.

**Teaching Methods:** This course combines lecture and discussion. I introduce each topic with a lecture, but even during the lecture, I invite questions and comments. In fact, I thrive on questions that lead to open, serious, and honest debate. Many of the topics we study in this course lend themselves to good, healthy debate. When we debate, however, let us focus on the issue-at-hand and avoid generalizations and other comments that do not foster intellectual grappling with the topic under consideration. In order for this process to work to the satisfaction and benefit of everyone, make sure you are prepared for each class, and by "prepared" I mean coming to each class with at least a preliminary knowledge of the theme of the class and the reading for the (if one is assigned for the class).

**The Requirements**

**Readings:** All readings for this course are posted on WebCT. For each class, I make a specific assignment. I make the assignment well in advance of the class during which we consider it.

**Examinations and quizzes:** This course has midterm and final essay examinations.

All exams and quizzes are online. I shall explain the procedure in class.

The essay exams test your ability to grapple with the ideas encountered in the readings—and to write about them. The essay questions are either argumentative or compare/contrast. If you need to refresh your memory in regard to writing either kind of essay, consult with.

The midterm essay counts 25% of the grade; the final essay, 30%.

In addition, the course has four **objective quizzes.** These quizzes test your factual knowledge of the philosophical terms, concepts, and positions we study; and your ability to make simple inferences based on the factual knowledge. The objective quizzes come approximately every three weeks during the semester. Well in advance of each quiz, I shall announce it in class and put it on the WebCT calendar. The average of the quizzes counts 30% of the course grade.

**Important note:** everyone must take the exams on the scheduled dates—all of which are posted on WebCT. If, because of an emergency, you have to miss a scheduled exam, let me know beforehand and I will work with you. Otherwise, the grade for the exam is zero and I do not give make-up exams.
I apply this policy strictly and do not make exceptions. Please make sure you pay careful attention to the dates and times of the exams.

**Grading:** I evaluate the midterm and final essays on the basis of clarity, coherence, and the degree to which you completely address the question.

I assign a letter grade for the essay. Use the following scale to convert the letter grade to a number: A+ is 98, A is 95, A- is 92; B+ is 88, B is 85, B- is 82, and the same for the other letters. F is any grade below 60.

I evaluate the short quizzes strictly on an objective basis, e.g., right and wrong answers.

**Participation:** Learning involves active participation in the entire classroom experience. Active participation can take many forms, some of which are: listening, asking questions, and offering your interpretation of the readings, my lectures, and the observations of your classmates. Regarding the latter two categories, the topics we study in this course are basic to the meaning of human existence and thus, by definition, lend themselves to different points of view. In addition, the discussion board in WebCT is an excellent way to participate in the class. Whatever forum you use, actively present and defend your perspective on a theme, but allow everyone else the same right. Respect for others is fundamental to the success of the classroom dynamic and guarantees an open, inviting atmosphere where we all can share our thoughts and feelings. Humor, directness, and a healthy, positive cynicism are welcome. Hostility, narrow-mindedness, and personal attacks are not. Your sensitivity to the atmosphere of the class is very important. Think about that throughout the quarter and make an effort to contribute positively to the development of a community of learners committed to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom. Participation counts 15% of the course grade.

Note: since this may seem to be—but actually is not—a subjective part of the grade, at any point along the way (especially after the mid-point of the course), if you want to know how I am evaluating you in this area, check with me and I'll be glad to tell you.

**Summary of Grading:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm essay</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Objective quizzes</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final essay</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Total 100%

To calculate the letter grade for the course, I use the following scale: A is 90 – 100 points; B is 80 – 89 is B; C is 70 – 79; D is 60 – 69; F is below 60.

Additional Information

Academic Honesty: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct are handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement.

If you have any questions about the meaning and significance of KSU's academic honesty policies and procedures, please consult the documents mentioned above or consult with me.

Attendance: Regular attendance is necessary to achieve the objectives of this course. In the final analysis, attendance is your responsibility. However, please see the section Participation.

Note: Everything we do in class is material for the examinations. If you miss frequently, it will be very difficult for you to do well on the exams.

Courtesy: I request your attention to several areas where courtesy is essential to the proper functioning of the class:

- "Better late than never," but please try to be on time. I begin each class on-time and latecomers can be distractive

- I try to end each class at the designated time. After the class ends is the appropriate time to gather your things and leave. Quite frankly, very few things are more discourteous than five or ten minutes before the end of the class, folding your notebook, gathering your things, and sitting on the edge of your seat, waiting for the class to end. Of course, there may be a day when you have to leave early. On that day, please inform me at the beginning of the class and, if possible, sit near the door.
• One thing I will not tolerate is disruptive behavior which, for the most part, I interpret as carrying on conversations during class. I find that extremely bothersome and quite disrespectful. Do not be surprised (in fact, expect it) when I ask you to leave the class if you are talking while I am in the middle of a presentation or while one of your classmates has the floor.

**Extra Credit:** Students often ask about extra credit, so note: I do not give extra-credit assignments. From the outset, approach the course in general, the individual assignments in particular, with an attitude of commitment and seriousness and you should not have to concern yourself with thinking about extra credit. Also, see **Participation** (above).

**Support Services:** There are many support services available to you at KSU. First, I am here to support you both inside and outside class. I have office hours exclusively devoted to providing time for you to consult with me about any aspect of the course. Second, the writing center provides assistance with some of the details of writing essays. Third, there are extensive computer facilities available in various labs across campus. Fourth, CAPS provides an array of services including, but not limited to: seminars on critical thinking, study skills, test-taking, and other topics. Fifth, the library has a wealth of material that supplements what we do in class. Finally, wise use of the Internet will lead you to many philosophical riches.

**Withdrawal Date:** The last day to withdraw from this course without academic penalty is **March 6, 2009**.