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Social Science Building 4120
Dept. of History & Philosophy: 770–423–6294

Kennesaw State University, Spring ‘09
M/W 9:30am – 10:45pm, Social Science 1022
M/W 12:30pm – 1:45pm, Social Science 1022
M/W 3:30pm – 4:45pm, Social Science 1022

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 will cover the spectrum of conventionally held beliefs: 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) 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 on the dates assigned. Late papers will be assessed a penalty of one letter grade deducted for each additional class session. Four Papers are assigned.

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

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

Schedule and Reading List
Philosophical Inquiry: “How and Why?”
1/12: 1st day of class
1/14: Intro to the Intro
1/19: MLK Holiday
1/21: Intro, part 2
   *THOUGHT PAPER #1 due
1/26: Russell, 65
1/28: “God Talk”
2/2: Plato’s “The Apology,” 15
2/4: Boethius, 28

Epistemology
2/9: Nietzsche, 91
2/11: Peirce, 94
2/16: Locke & Descartes, 111 --
   *THOUGHT PAPER #2 due
2/18: Suzuki, 138
2/23: FLEW, HARE, MITCHELL (WebCt)
2/25: Clifford & James, 151 --

3/2: Exam 1
Meta

Metaphysics
3/4: Visual Experience
3/9-11 Spring Break
3/16: Plato’s “The Allegory,” 187
3/18: Skinner & Stace, 247 & 252
3/23: SARTRE, 258
*THOUGHT PAPER #3 due
3/25: Sri Aurobindo, 243
3/30: The Bhagavad-Gita, 271

Ethics & Morality
4/1: Anselm & Aquinas, 284 & 286
4/6: Christ, 311
4/8: No class
4/13: Benedict & Midgley, 333 & 337
4/15: Intro to Ethics
4/20: Bentham & Kant, 395 & 403
4/22: “Love & War”
*THOUGHT PAPER #4 due
4/27: Gandhi, 514
4/29: M. L. King, Jr., 473

5/4-6: Exam 2 TBD (exam week)

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