Instructor: Wendell G. McMurrain, Jr.
wmcmurra@kennesaw.edu

* Please, do NOT email or message D2L

History & Philosophy: 770–423–6294

Kennesaw State University, Spring ‘14
T/TH 2pm – 3:45pm
Social Sciences Bldg.: 2023
Office: SSB 4120, Hours: By apt. only

Philosophy 2200: “Ways of Knowing”

Course Description and Goals
A philosophical, critical examination of the different ways of knowing and thinking in the humanities, natural sciences, and social sciences including ethical and religious perspectives. Emphasis is on the nature and purpose of philosophical inquiry as applied to selected issues within philosophy and the broader implications of these methods and questions for other disciplines and in everyday contexts.

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) 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. All students’ paper submissions must be typed (12 pt./double spaced) and stapled. 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: a Midterm & Final Exam (30% each) totaling 60% of overall grade. You are required to supply a Large Exam Book (aka, Blue Book) for both exams, which will be collected and redistributed the day of the exam. EXAM BOOKS can be purchased from the KSU Bookstore for @ 35¢

Schedule and Reading List: All readings are posted on D2L

Philosophical Inquiry: “How and Why?”

1/9: 1st day of classes

1/14: Intro to the Intro, pt.1 “Follow your bliss”

1/16: Intro to the Intro, pt.2 (Vocabulary) ~ Joseph Campbell

1/21: Bertrand Russell, “The Value of Philosophy”

1/23: “God Talk”

*THOUGHT PAPER 1 due

1/28: Plato, “The Apology”

1/30: Boethius, from “The Consolation of Philosophy” “There is no cure for birth or death save to enjoy the interval” ~ George Santayana

Epistemology


2/6: Peirce, “The Fixation of Belief”

2/11: Locke & Descartes (Certainty & Knowledge)


*THOUGHT PAPER 2 due

2/18: FLEW, HARE & MITCHELL

2/20: Clifford & James: “The Ethics of Belief” + “The Will to Believe”

2/25: Midterm Exam
Metaphysics
2/27: Visual Experience
3/11: B.F. Skinner & Walter Stace
3/13: SARTRE, “EXISTENTIALISM”
3/18: Sri Aurobindo: “Reincarnating Soul”
3/20: The Bhagavad-Gita
*THOUGHT PAPER 3 due
3/25: St. Anselm & St. Aquinas
Martin Buber “God is ...”
4/1-3: *SPRING BREAK (NO CLASSES)

Ethics & Morality
4/8: Benedict & Midgley: Ethics
4/10: Intro to Ethics
4/15: Bentham & Kant
4/17: Gandhi, “Nonviolent Resistance”
*THOUGHT PAPER 4 (OPTIONAL)
4/24: M.L. King, Jr., “Letter From ...”
4/29: Review for FINAL
5/1: Final Exam (1-3pm)
The schedule for the final exam is set by the university and cannot be altered.

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

PHIL 2200 satisfies one of Kennesaw State University’s general education program requirements. It addresses the CRITICAL THINKING general education learning outcome. The learning outcome states: Students articulate a position on an issue and support it by evaluating evidence relevant to the position, considering opposing positions or evidence, and evaluating the implications and/or consequences of this issue. For more information about KSU’s General Education program requirements and associated learning outcomes, please visit: http://catalog.kennesaw.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=14&poid=1248

Kennesaw State University is currently engaged in a campus-wide assessment of its general education program. The purpose is to measure student achievement with respect to faculty defined student learning outcomes. This course has been selected to participate in the process. No individually-identifiable student information will be collected as part of the assessment. Data will be reported only in aggregated form. Students should know that the data may be used for scholarly work by members of KSU faculty (but only in anonymous and aggregated form). If you are opposed to having your anonymous data used for scholarly work, you can “opt out” of this specific aspect of the process. For more information on the general education assessment process and for access to an “opt out” form, please click http://www.kennesaw.edu/ged/optoutform.html

Electronic Devices Policy

Absolutely no cellphone usage during class (including texting). Please turn them off, or at least silence the ringers. I prefer you take notes the old fashioned way: with pen or pencil + paper. If you must use a laptop, be sure you are taking notes for my class, and not updating Facebook or any other social media apps (There are spies … everywhere!).

Grading Scale  

(Rubric on last page)

Students are evaluated on the following scale:
A (4.0) = 90-100, additionally: (A- = 93 / A+ = 97)
B (3.0) = 80-89  (B- = 83 / B+ = 87)
C (2.0) = 70-79  (C- = 73 / C+ = 77)
D (1.0) = 60-69  (D- = 63 / D+ = 67)
F = (59 and below)

I = Indicates an incomplete grade for the course, and will be awarded only when the student has done satisfactory work up to the last two weeks of the semester, but for nonacademic reasons beyond his/her control is unable to meet the full requirements of the course. Incomplete grades are only valid after submission of the Incomplete Grade form (signed by both the instructor and student) to the Department Chair’s office.

Academic Honesty

The high quality of education at Kennesaw State University is reflected in the credits and degrees its students earn. The protection of high standards of academic integrity is crucial since the validity and equity of the University's grades and degrees depend upon it.

No student shall receive, attempt to receive, knowingly give or attempt to give unauthorized assistance in the preparation of any work required, and to be submitted for credit (including examinations, laboratory reports, essays, themes, term papers, etc.). Unless specifically authorized, the presence and/or use of electronic devices during an examination, quiz, or other class assignment is considered cheating. Engaging in any behavior, which a professor prohibits as academic misconduct in the syllabus or in class discussion is cheating. When direct quotations are used, they should be indicated, and when the ideas, theories, data, figures, graphs, programs, electronic based information or illustrations of someone other than the student are incorporated into a paper or used in a project, they should be duly acknowledged. No student may submit the same, or substantially the same, paper or other assignment for credit in more than one class without the prior permission of the current professor(s).

Examples of Plagiarism Avoidance websites:

http://plagiarism.org/
http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml
http://www.library.arizona.edu/help/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html

ADA Compliance

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Public Law 101-336, gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities. This statute guarantees equal opportunity for this protected group in the areas of public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services and telecommunications.

Should you require assistance or have further questions about the ADA, please contact: Ms. Nastassia Sanabria, ADA Compliance Officer for Students 770-423-6443.
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<th>Use of Examples</th>
<th>Comprehension and Synthesis of Ideas</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
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<td>Serious grammatical errors; language inappropriate or vague; errors that affect understanding of the concept or issue; little or no support for explanation; no attempt at integration or major inclusions; major elements not discussed; major gaps left in understanding; lack of coherence; elements merely listed; little attempt at explanation.</td>
<td>Examples are confusing and do not relate to the concept or issue.</td>
<td>Elements are explained and integrated into the essay.</td>
<td>The essay accurately identifies and elaborates on the elements.</td>
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<td>Academic prose; language appropriate to the topic; no serious grammatical errors; reading flows smoothly and naturally; examples in order to explain; relationships between ideas are clear.</td>
<td>Examples explain the concept clearly.</td>
<td>Elements are explained and integrated into the essay.</td>
<td>The essay cleanly and accurately elaborates on the elements.</td>
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