Instructor: Wendell G. McMurrain, Jr.  
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Kennesaw State University – Summer ‘09  
Monday & Wednesday 2 pm – 4:45 pm  
Social Science Classroom Building # 2035  

Philosophy 2200: “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 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) 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. After two (2) recorded class absences, there will be a deduction of one (1) letter grade from the Class Participation grade – 10% of overall grade. And, an additional deduction for each additional absence.

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 beyond the due date.

3) Two, in-class, essay examinations (30% each) totaling 60% of overall grade. You are required to supply a large Exam Book: “BLUE BOOK” (or GREEN = recycled) for both exams. This will be collected and redistributed on the day of the exam. EXAM 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?”

6/1:  
1st Day of class  
Introductions

6/3: Concepts & Definitions  
Russell, p.65  
“The unexamined life is not worth living”  
-- Plato

6/5:  
Plato’s “The Apology,” p.15  
Boethius, p.28  
“Follow your bliss.”  
-- Joseph Campbell

6/8:  
Locke, p.99  
Descartes, p.111  
Suzuki, p.138

Epistemology

6/10: Nietzsche, p.91  
Peirce, p.94

6/15: Locke, p.99  
Descartes, p.111  
Suzuki, p.138

*THOUGHT PAPER DUE*

6/17: Flew, Hare, Mitchell (WebCt)  
Clifford, p.151 & James, p.156

6/22: Exam 1
Metaphysics

6/29: Plato’s Allegory, p.187
      Skinner & Stace, p.247 ...

7/1:  Sartre, p.258
      ... and a ‘Groundhog’

7/6:  Sri Aurobindo, p.243
      The Bhagavad-Gita, p.271
      * THOUGHT PAPER DUE

7/8:  Anselm & Aquinas, p.284 ...
      Buber, p.279

Ethics & Morality

7/13: Christ, p.311
      Benedict, p.333
      Midgley, p.337

7/15: Visual Experience

7/20: Intro to Ethics
      Bentham & Kant
      * THOUGHT PAPER DUE

7/22: Gandhi, p.514
      M. L. King, Jr., p.473

7/27: Exam 2

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