

## PHIL 151-04: KNOWLEDGE AND REALITY

TR 1:30-3:10pm

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Office Hours E&T A422: MW 11:50am-1:20pm & TR 12:50-1:20pm, 3:20-4:10pm

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Philosophy is the most fundamental intellectual discipline. This is because philosophers ask fundamental questions like, “What is knowledge?” “What can we know?” “How can we know it?” “What sorts of things exist?” and “What are those things like?” This course introduces you to a few famous philosophers who have attempted to answer these questions. We will analyze in detail the arguments used to support their positions and the counter arguments used to dispute them.

We will be reading actual texts by actual philosophers. Reading philosophy is difficult. Most of the readings are short, but you will probably need to read each one twice and attend the relevant lectures in order to understand them. If you feel that you are falling behind, you should see me immediately so that I can help you catch up.

This course counts toward the general education humanities requirement, as well as the course requirements for the Philosophy major.

**Texts** Available for free on Moodle.

### **Grades**

The assignments for the course are listed below. The percentage following each assignment indicates the percentage of your overall course grade determined by the particular assignment.

**Midterm (30%)**: Tentatively scheduled for Feb. 5

**Final exam (30%)**: Tentatively scheduled for Mar. 12 (The final is not cumulative)

**Term Paper (30%)**: Due Mar. 17 11:59 pm

**Class Participation (10%)**: Students who show up to class and participate will see this reflected positively in their grade. Those who are absent, either mentally or physically, will lose points.

### **Grading Scale**

A	93-100	C	68-71
A-	89-92	C-	64-67
B+	84-88	D+	59-63
B	80-83	D	55-58
B-	76-79	D-	51-54
C+	72-75	F	0-50

## **Late Work**

Late work will be accepted only if you arrange for it in advance, or if you present a documented excuse (like a doctor's note) for a genuine emergency. Otherwise, no make-up quizzes or exam will be given.

## **Course Topics and Readings**

The following is the tentative course schedule. Slight adjustments may be necessary due to the needs of the class.

**Jan. 6** – Course introduction

**Jan. 8** – What is Philosophy?

- Reading: Plato – The Apology of Socrates

**Jan. 13** – What can we know and what exists?

- Reading: Descartes – Meditation I, II

**Jan. 15** – What can we know and what exists? (Cont.)

- Reading: Descartes – Meditation III

**Jan. 20** – Dualism

- Reading: Descartes – Meditation VI; Princess Elisabeth – Letter to Descartes

**Jan. 22** – Idealism

- Reading: Berkeley – Dialogue Between Hylas and Philonous

**Jan. 27** – Idealism

- Reading: Berkeley – Dialogue Between Hylas and Philonous

**Jan. 29** – Does God Exist?

- Readings: Anselm, Aquinas

**Feb. 3** – Review

**Feb. 5** – Midterm, Paper Topics Posted

**Feb. 10** – Does God Exist?

- Readings: Anselm, Aquinas

**Feb. 13** – Does God Exist? (cont.)

- Readings: Paley, Hume

**Feb. 17** – Materialism

- Reading: G.E. Moore

**Feb. 19** – Materialism (cont.)

- Reading: Churchland

**Feb. 24** – Free Will

- Reading: d'Holbach, Hume

**Feb. 26** – Free Will (cont.)

- Reading: Kane

**Mar. 3** – Personal Identity

- Readings: Locke, Hume

**Mar. 5** – Personal Identity **DRAFT OF PAPER DUE**

- Reading: Parfit

**Mar. 10** – Review

**Mar. 12** – Final Exam

**Mar. 17** – Term Paper Due

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

You must do your own work for the class. If you cheat on any assignment, you will receive a zero on that assignment. For more information you can see the section on plagiarism on the CSULA website: <http://www.calstatela.edu/academic/senate/handbook/appf.htm>.

### **Students with Disabilities**

The University provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented physical and learning disabilities. Faculty members fully support the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and will provide reasonable accommodation to any student with a disability who is registered with the Office of Students with Disabilities (OSD) and needs and requests accommodation. OSD may be contacted to verify the presence of a disability and to confirm that accommodation is necessary. The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD), located in Student Affairs Room 115 coordinates all documentation of disabilities.  
(323-343-3140) <http://www.calstatela.edu/univ/osd/>