

PHIL 101 - 003: Introduction to Main Problems in Philosophy
Fall 2006
University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill
Course Syllabus

Course Time and Location: TR, 8:00 – 9:15 AM, Caldwell Hall 103

Instructor: Mike Bruno

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Office hours: Tuesdays 9:30 AM – 11:30 PM, by appointment

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Course Description: This course is an introduction to philosophy. The course is divided into two parts. In the first part we will spend time thinking about a number of central issues in philosophy in order to give students a sense of the questions which have long preoccupied philosophers. In the second part of the course, we will examine the nature of truth, realism, and objectivity. This perennial issue has important implications for a many areas within philosophy as well as other academic disciplines and daily life.

Academic Honesty: Students are bound by the university's Honor Code (<http://honor.unc.edu/honor/code.html>). The minimum punishment I'll recommend for plagiarized work is that the student *fails the course*.

Classroom Conduct: Students are expected to conduct themselves in a professional manner in the classroom. This includes being respectful to both the instructor and fellow students. Note that conducting yourself in a professional manner includes refraining from using cell phones, listening to ipods, reading newspapers, etc.

Grades: Grades will be determined on the basis of the following factors.

- (1) Participation: 15%
- (2) First Paper: 20%
- (3) Second Paper: 35%
- (4) Final Exam: 30%

Class participation is required for this course. Class participation means asking questions, raising objections, and engaging in dialogues with me and your other classmates. Just showing up to class does not contribute to your participation grade.

Students will have to write two short papers (1500-2000 words each). Topic prompts will be handed out at least two weeks before papers are due.

The final exam will be cumulative and will contain a mix of matching, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions.

Readings: Students should expect to read every assignment carefully and thoroughly and be prepared to discuss them in class on the day indicated. The assigned load is light, though it's heavier in the second part of the course. It is a good idea to read each assignment at least twice and to spend a while thinking about them.

Required Texts:

Nagel, Thomas. *What Does it all Mean?* Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 0195174372.

Blackburn, Simon. *Truth: A Guide for the Perplexed.* Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 0195168240.

Optional Text:

Blackburn, Simon. *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy.* Oxford University Press.
ISBN: 0198610149.

Schedule:

Thursday, August 24	Introduction to the Course
Tuesday, August 29 Thursday, August 31	Nagel, Chapter 1, 'Introduction' Nagel, Chapter 2, 'How Do We Know Anything?'
Tuesday, September 5 Thursday, September 7	Nagel, Chapter 3, 'Other Minds' Nagel, Chapter 4, 'The Mind-Body Problem'
Tuesday, September 12	Nagel, Chapter 4, 'The Mind-Body Problem' Dennett, 'Where Am I?'
Thursday, September 14	Nagel, Chapter 5, 'The Meaning of Words'
Tuesday, September 19 Thursday, September 21	Nagel, Chapter 6, 'Free Will' Nagel, Chapter 6, 'Free Will'
Tuesday, September 26 Thursday, September 28	Nagel, Chapter 7, 'Right and Wrong' Nagel, Chapter 8, 'Justice'
Tuesday, October 3 Thursday, October 5	Nagel, Chapter 9, 'Death' Nagel, Chapter 10, 'The Meaning of Life'
Tuesday, October 10 Thursday, October 12	Blackburn, Introduction FIRST PAPER DUE Blackburn, Chapter 1, 'Faith, Belief, and Reason'
Tuesday, October 17 Thursday, October 19	Blackburn, Chapter 2, 'Man the Measure' NO CLASS, FALL BREAK
Tuesday, October 24 Thursday, October 26	Blackburn, Chapter 2, 'Man the Measure' Blackburn, Chapter 3, 'Ishmael's Problem and the Delights of Keeping Quiet'
Tuesday, October 31	Blackburn, Chapter 3, 'Ishmael's Problem and the Delights of Keeping Quiet'
Thursday, November 2	Blackburn, Chapter 4, 'Nietzsche: The Arch Debunker'
Tuesday, November 7	Blackburn, Chapter 4, 'Nietzsche: The Arch Debunker'

Thursday, November 9	Blackburn, Chapter 5, 'The Possibility of Philosophy'
Tuesday, November 14	Blackburn, Chapter 5, 'The Possibility of Philosophy'
Thursday, November 16	Blackburn, Chapter 6, 'Observation and Truth: From Locke to Rorty'
Tuesday, November 21	Blackburn, Chapter 7, 'Realism as Science; Realism about Science'
Thursday, November 23	NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING
Tuesday, November 28	Blackburn, Chapter 7, 'Realism as Science; Realism about Science'
Thursday, November 30	Blackburn, Chapter 8, 'Historians and Others', SECOND PAPER DUE
Tuesday, December 5 th	Review for Final
Friday, December 15 th	FINAL EXAM