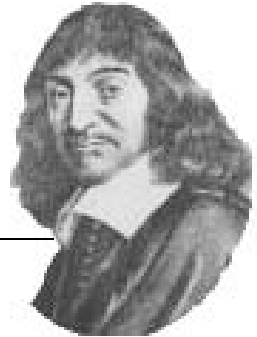


Syllabus

Trad 104, Section 795 – Fall 2009

Mind Matter and God

Orlin Vakarelov
Office: S Sci 105
E-mail: okv@u.arizona.edu



Course Description

In this course we shall explore how historically important western philosophers have attempted to understand the structure of *reality*, the nature of the human *mind*, the possibility of *knowledge*, and the question of God's existence and role. We shall start with the *pre-Socratic* thinkers and proceed with Plato and Aristotle.

The philosophical theories of Plato and Aristotle are undoubtedly the most influential works of the western philosophical tradition. They shape philosophy, theology and science up to the Renaissance. We shall acknowledge the Platonic and Aristotelian influences on the development of the Christian theological thought through the Middle Ages. We shall also look at the writings of *St. Augustine*, *Anselm of Canterbury* and *Thomas Aquinas*, attending especially to their attempts to prove the existence of God.

The period from the 14th century on witnessed incredible changes in all aspects of European society, culture and thought. From this period we shall explore some of the philosophical writings of Descartes, Berkeley. These thinkers contributed to the modern scientific outlook on the world, humankind, and God!

Course Text:

Philosophical Reflections on Mind, Matter and God, 2002 or later; Second Edition or later

Course Administration

The class meets every Wednesday at 6 – 8:30 pm. The location of the class is: M LNG 310. **My office hours are Mondays 12:15 – 3:15.**

This class has a Desire2Learn web page where readings, assignments, and news may be posted:

<http://help.d2l.arizona.edu>

Course Requirements

You are expected to attend the classes, and you are required to do the assigned weekly readings. I cannot emphasize enough how important that is. To assure that you, in fact, do the readings, a major portion of your grade will be based on your having done the assigned readings. At the beginning of every class for which there is an assigned reading there will be a quiz on the reading. You will either pass or fail the quiz, depending on whether you have done the reading. You can pass the quiz even if you have answered some of the questions incorrectly. If you pass a quiz, you will receive 1, if you fail the quiz, i.e. if you do not do the reading for the class on time, you will receive 0.

The grade partition of the class will be as follows:

1. **Thirteen Quizzes (25%):** 5 minutes each. The quizzes will be True/False format. The quizzes will take place around 10 minutes after the beginning of the class to allow for some room for late arrivals, but if you arrive too late, you will miss the quiz. Quizzes cannot be taken late. The answers will be made available immediately after each quiz. **You must use a PEN! Quizzes answered with a PENCIL will not be counted. All quizzes will be taken on the same paper; I will distribute it before the quiz and collect it after. Because of the possibility of retroactive correction, I must initial any correction that you make during each quiz.**
2. **Short written assignment (5%):** The assignment (2 pages) will be on a fixed topic. The purpose of this assignment will be to give you an early feedback on your academic writing skills. While this assignment is not worth much as a grade, it is a crucial step towards the larger final paper.
3. **Midterm Examination (20%) *On October 7*:** The midterm exam will consist of a collection of short answer questions related to the text and class discussion.
4. **Final paper (25%) *Due on December 2*:** The paper (4-6 pages) will be on one of several topics assigned in class. More information will be provided when the topics are handed out.
5. **Final Examination (25%) *On December 16* :** The final exam will consist of a collection of short answer questions related to the text and class discussion.

The latter grade cutoffs will be the standard:

A = 90 – 100%

B = 80 – 89%

C = 70 – 79%

D = 60 – 69%.

Schedule

(Q) indicates that there will be a *Quiz* that day.

26-Aug	Introduction
2-Sep	Pre-Socratics: No readings, you should take notes Short Written Assignment Topic Posted
9-Sep	(Q) Plato – Apology Short Written Assignment Due in Class
16-Sep	(Q) Plato – Crito
23-Sep	(Q) Plato - Phaedo
30-Sep	(Q) Plato - Republic Books II - IV
7-Oct	Midterm (6-6:50)
14-Oct	Plato - Republic Books V - VII (7 - 8:30)
Friday, 16-Oct	<i>Last Day to Drop with W</i>
21-Oct	(Q) Aristotle - Categories
28-Oct	(Q) Aristotle - Physics and Metaphysics
4-Nov	(Q) Aristotle - On the Soul Paper Topics Posted
11-Nov	(Q) Augustine – Confessions
18-Nov	(Q) Anselm - Prosologion <i>and</i> Gaunilo and Anselm
25-Nov	(Q) Aquinas - Summma Theologica
2-Dec	(Q) Descartes - Medetations (1-3) Final Paper Due in Class
9-Dec	(Q) Descartes - Medetations (4-6)
16-Dec	Final Exam - 8 - 10 p.m. Same Room

Policies

Attendance: Attendance is required and reflected by the quizzes. Quizzes and exams will be excused without penalty only for valid documented absences including: medical conditions, serious emergencies, UA –recognized religious holidays, and situations approved by the Dean of Students.

Class Behaviour: You are required to conform to the UA Code of Conduct and to behave appropriately:
<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/policiesandcodes/studentcodeofconduct/>

Also, please turn off any cell phones or loud electronic devices during class.

Special Needs: Students registered with the S.A.L.T. Center or the Disability Resource Center must submit appropriate documentation to me if they are requesting special accommodations. If you need any special accommodations on the quizzes, I will assist you during class.

Academic Integrity: You should be familiar with and conform to the University of Arizona Code of Academic Integrity:
<http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity/>

Plagiarism will not be tolerated and students caught plagiarizing will be subject to serious actions.

Contested Grades: Students who wish to contest a grade on an assignment must submit their request in writing by email directly to me within three days of the date on which the assignment was returned to class. The request must explain the specific points in dispute. Disputes will be resolved within seven days of being filed.