

SYLLABUS

Philosophy 100B
Introduction to Philosophy
Fall, 2007

MW 2:30
Thompson 104
Fred Feldman

This course provides an introduction to philosophy by way of a discussion of three central philosophical problems -- the problem of free will and determinism; the "mind-body problem"; and the problem of the existence and nature of God. In each case, the focus is on careful formulation of doctrines and arguments. The goals are (i) to understand the doctrines and arguments; (ii) to develop the ability to evaluate the doctrines and arguments; and (iii) to begin to develop the ability to extract interesting arguments from philosophical texts.

Required Reading

All reading assignments are in an anthology of selected readings for the course. The anthology is called "Introduction to Philosophy", it is edited by Fred Feldman, and it is available at the Jeffrey Amherst College Store in downtown Amherst.

Discussion Sections

Each student is assigned to a discussion section. Discussion sections are intended primarily to give students the opportunity to raise questions about the material covered in lectures and readings, but they serve other purposes as well. Some material on which you may be tested will be presented in discussion sections, but not elsewhere. Handouts will be distributed in discussion sections. Important administrative information about the course may also be provided there. We try to arrange things so that very little that goes on in discussions repeats things that go on in lectures.

Handouts

Handouts are intended primarily as aids to the understanding of the lectures and readings. They do not cover all of the material on which you may be tested, and they do not contain complete accounts of the topics they do cover. Merely memorizing the handouts will not enable you to pass the course.

Course Requirements

There will be three quizzes, given on the dates indicated below in the course calendar. Each student will be permitted to take (or take over) one quiz during final exam week. Quizzes will be based on material covered in lectures, discussions, readings, handouts, and review sessions. There will also be three written homework assignments. There will be no other papers. There is no final exam in this course.

Grading

Each quiz will be graded on a scale of 0 to 90. A preliminary correlation of number grades to letter grades will be announced when the first quiz is returned. Do not assume that our correlation is the same as that used in any other course at the University. Your final grade will be based entirely on your quiz grades and homework grades. If you take some quiz over, we will disregard your lower grade on that quiz. If possible, graded bluebooks will be returned in the first lecture following the quiz. Please pick up your bluebook then, and be sure to retain it.

Cheating

Cheating on quizzes will not be tolerated in this course. If you are caught cheating, we will do our best to see to it that you receive the harshest possible penalty consistent with University policies. If you are not clear on what constitutes cheating on a quiz, please see your TA.

Office Hours

Heidi Buetow	Bartlett 385	Wed 3:30 – 4:30
Alex Sarch	Bartlett 359	Wed 1:00 – 2:00
Josh Moulton	Bartlett 351	Wed 3:30 – 4:30
Ed Ferrier	Bartlett 367	Mon 3:30 – 4:30
Fred Feldman	Bartlett 362	Fri 3:30 – 5:00

Course Calendar

- Sep 5 Philosophy: Some Misconceptions
- 10
- 12 The Problem of Freedom and Determinism
- 17 Paul Ree - Hard Determinism
- 19
- 24 A. J. Ayer - Soft Determinism
- 26 R. M. Chisholm - Libertarianism
- Oct 1 The Case of the Great Falsifier
- *3 First Quiz - Freedom and Determinism

- 9 Philosophical Anthropology
- 10 Materialism
- 15
- 17 Some Problems for Materialism
- 22 Plato - Socratic Dualism
- 24 Descartes - Cartesian Dualism
- 29 Armstrong - More Problems for Dualism

31
Nov 5
*7 Second Quiz - Philosophical Anthropology

14 Philosophical Theology
19 Sandbox Cosmological Arguments
21
26 Leibnizian Cosmological Argument
28
Dec 3 St. Anselm - The Ontological Argument
5
10 John Mackie - The Problem of Evil
*12 Third Quiz - Philosophical Theology
*TBA Take Over Day