COURSE SYLLABUS
Fall 2008

PHI 120B Introduction to Philosophy
TR 5b (12:50 PM-2:00 PM)
Classroom: Memorial 302

Instructor: Dr. Bernie Cantens
Office: Zinzendorf 203
Phone/E-Mail: (610) 861-1589/ bcantens@moravian.edu
Web Page: http://berniephilosophy.com/
Office Hours: W 11:00 AM – 12:00 AM
T 2:00 PM – 4:00 PM
MF 10:00 AM – 12:00 By Appointment

Text
Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy, 6th Edition


Course description
Tasks and subject matters of philosophy, including major theories of reality, knowledge, religion, morality, and social justice. Attention to several classic philosophical texts as primary source readings (M3)

Relationship of course to university mission
A quality liberal arts education must take into account the ability to reflect across the spectrum of disciplines. This task requires skills of analysis of basic concepts and principles, reading and writing skills, and a constructively critical attitude. The study of philosophy is an integral part of a general curriculum that helps students achieve these cognitive skills.

Course Goals
The objectives of this course are the following: 1) to study the origin and nature of philosophy and philosophical reflection; 2) to study the various branches of philosophy (ethics, epistemology, metaphysics, etc.) and how these relate to everyday practical concerns; 3) to understand the methods and nature of philosophical inquiry; 4) to understand the difference between inductive and deductive reasoning; 5) to develop critical reading and writing skills; 6) to understand the central role of the discipline of philosophy in relation to the arts and sciences, and 7) to introduce students to the thought of some of the most prominent philosophers in history through primary texts.

Learning Outcomes
The following outcomes are expected of the students who complete this course: 1) Students should be able to think and write intelligibly about ultimate questions. 2) Students should have a basic understanding of the relevance and importance of ultimate questions for the prosperity of
individuals and society. 3) Students should be able to critically evaluate their own and others’ answers to ultimate questions. 4) Students should have a basic understanding of prominent themes in the history of philosophy. 5) Students should have a basic understanding of ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological concepts, doctrines, and theories. 6) Students should have a basic understanding of the nature of philosophical inquiry and how it relates to inductive and deductive reasoning. 7) Students should have a basic understanding of the central role of philosophy for a liberal arts education. 8) Students should have a basic understanding of the thoughts of some of the most prominent philosophers in history.

**Assessment**

**Reflection Paper (25 points)**

Students will complete a philosophical reflection paper of 3 to 5 pages on a topic directly related to this course. The students will be graded according to four criteria: (1) Whether the introduction has a clear and explicit thesis and organized developing statements; (2) Whether the paper is well organized and demonstrates a logical flow of ideas; (3) Whether there are well constructed and developed arguments and/or well developed critical explanations of philosophical problems and solutions; and (4) Whether the writing skills, such as word use, sentence structure, grammar, and punctuation are correct.

The paper will be completed in parts and graded accordingly. The first 4 assignments will be student graded.

- **Assignment 1: Thesis (2 points)**  
  Student and Professor Graded September 23, 2008
- **Assignment 2: Introduction (2 points)**  
  Student and Professor Graded October 14, 2008
- **Assignment 3: Outline (2 points)**  
  Student and Professor Graded October 14, 2008
- **Assignment 4: First Draft (4 points)**  
  Student and Professor Graded November 18, 2008
- **Assignment 5: Final Paper (15 points)**  
  Professor Graded December 9, 2008

**Quizzes (20 Points)**

There will be 5 quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz is worth 5% of the final grade and will consist of a one page essay. The worst quiz will be dropped. There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes. If a student is absent for a quiz the missed quiz will be counted as his or her worst grade and will be dropped. If a student misses 2 or more quizzes they need to make an appointment to see me.

- **Quiz 1:** September 4, 2008
- **Quiz 2:** September 18, 2008
- **Quiz 3:** October 23, 2008
- **Quiz 4:** November 13, 2008
- **Quiz 5:** December 4, 2008

**Exams (50 Points)**

There will be two exams throughout the semester. Each exam is worth 20% of the final grade. The exam will be composed of essays and short answers.
Class Participation (5 Points)
Attendance will be taken every class period and students will be marked down for unexcused absences. Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students who attend all the classes on a timely basis will earn 5 points in class participation. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions. Unexcused absences included only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors’ note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

Chronological Order of Assignments, Quizzes and Exams

- September 4, 2008 Quiz 1 (5 points)
- September 18, 2008 Quiz 2 (5 points)
- September 23, 2008 Assignment 1: Thesis (2 points)
- October 2, 2008 Exam 1 (25 points)
- October 14, 2008 Assignment 2: Introduction (2 points)
- October 14, 2008 Assignment 3: Outline (2 points)
- October 23, 2008 Quiz 3 (5 points)
- November 13, 2008 Quiz 4 (5 points)
- November 18, 2008 Assignment 4: First Draft (4 points)
- December 4, 2008 Quiz 5 (15 points)
- December 9, 2008 Assignment 5: Final Paper (15 points)
- December 15-18, 2008 Exam 2: (25 points)

Topics:
1) Religion and the Meaning of Life.
2) Science, Mind and Nature.
3) Thinking and Knowing
4) Living a Good life
5) The Dilemma’s of Personhood
6) Justice and Responsibility

Learning Methods
Multimedia This course will combine traditional classroom lecturing with multimedia presentations. Every lecture will be supplemented with power point presentations and internet information. All course materials, such as syllabus, review questions, term paper information, etc., are posted on my web site http://berniephilosophy.com. This will give the students direct access to most of the materials at their convenience.

Black Board: Some basic information and assignments provided through black board.

Class Dynamic Class participation is expected of all students enrolled in this course. Questions and class discussions are encouraged as an effective vehicle to motivate the student’s interest in
the subject matter. *If there are few questions and little discussion taking place in the classroom, the professor reserves the right to choose individual students to answer questions or give their view and the arguments on a particular issue.* Therefore, careful daily reading of the text and handouts is essential for success in this course. The exams will consist of identification, multiple choice and essay-form questions.

**Attendance Policy:**
Attendance is mandatory. Students will lose 1 point for every unexcused absence up to a possible 5 points. Students can make up lost points in unexcused absences by actively participating in class discussions. Unexcused absences included only the following: (1) sickness with a doctors’ note, (2) death in the family, or (3) some other extraordinary event.

**Academic Dishonesty Policy**
See Student Handbook pp. 32 – 38

**Student Behavior:**
See Student Handbook pp. 38 – 40

**Course Requirements**
Reading of required text on a daily basis is essential to succeed in this course. Students are expected to be ready for class. This means that he or she should read the assigned chapters before the professor introduces it. Class participation, note taking, and discussion are highly encouraged. The study of philosophy does not only consist of memorization; students must also read analytically and reflect critically on the reading. When studying difficult material, it is often necessary to read it several times before a proper understanding is achieved. Do not be disappointed if you do not understand a philosophical text on your first reading.

**Grading/Measures of evaluations:**
- Quizzes: 20%
- Exam 1: 25%
- Exam 2: 25%
- Reflection Paper: 25%
- Class participation: 5%

A=100-93; A- =92-90; B+=89-87; B=86-84; B- = 83-80; C+=79-77; C = 76-70;
D=69-60; F=<59

**PROGRAM AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**
Lists of Readings, assignments, Exams and Dates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What is Philosophy</td>
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<td>Some Logic</td>
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|        | RELIGION AND THE MEANING OF LIFE |
| Week 2 | DOES RELIGION GIVE MY LIFE MEANING?  
Friedrich Nietzsche “God is Dead” pp. 21-22.  
Albert Camus “The Absurd” pp. 30-33. |
|---|---|
| Week 3 | HOW DO I KNOW WHETHER GOD EXISTS?  
Anselm “The Ontological Argument” pp. 43-45  
Thomas Aquinas “Whether God Exists” pp. 45-47  
Immanuel Kant “Proving the Existence of God by Way of Morality” pp. 54-55. |
| Week 4 | David Hume “Why Does God Let People Suffer?” pp. 50-54.  
Fyodor Dostoesky “Rebellion” pp. 55-58.  
| Week 5 | SCIENCE, MIND AND NATURE  
WHAT DOES SCIENCE TELL ME ABOUT THE WORLD?  
Carl G. Hempel “The Deductive-Nonomological Model of Science” pp. 77-84.  
Thomas Kuhn “The Structure of Scientific Revolution” pp. 84-91.  
Karl Popper “Science: Conjectures and refutations” pp. 91-98. |
| Week 6 | CREATION OR EVOLUTION?  
Charles Darwin “The Descent of Man” pp. 120-125.  
Duane T. Gish “Creationist Science and Education” pp. 125-134.  
Philip Kitcher “Against Creationist” pp. 134-144.  
| Week 7 | EXAM 1 |
| Week 8 | THINKING AND KNOWING  
WHAT DO I KNOW?  
Rene Descartes “Meditations” pp. 207-210 |
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<th>Week 9</th>
<th>WHY SHOULDN’T I BE SELFISH?</th>
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<td>Thomas Hobbes “People are Selfish” pp. 466-467.</td>
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<th>Week 10</th>
<th>WHAT IS THE RIGHT THING FOR ME TO DO?</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aristotle “Happiness and the Good Life” pp. 524-531.</td>
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<td>John Stuart Mill “Utilitarianism” pp. 536-539.</td>
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<th>Week 11</th>
<th>IS IT OK TO BE EMOTIONAL?</th>
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<th>Week 12</th>
<th>HOW SHOULD I FEEL ABOUT ABORTION?</th>
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<th>Week 13</th>
<th>WHAT DOES RACE HAVE TO DO WITH ME?</th>
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<tr>
<th>Week 13</th>
<th>WHAT DOES RACE HAVE TO DO WITH ME?</th>
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<td>Week 14</td>
<td>WHAT DO I JUSTLY DESERVE?</td>
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<td>Plato “Does Might Make Right” pp. 621-624.</td>
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<th>Week 15</th>
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<td>Peter Singer “Rich and Poor” pp. 644-646.</td>
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<td>Amartya Sen “Property and Hunger” pp. 649-655.</td>
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**Exam**

PLEASE, as a courtesy to the other students in the class, turn off all phones upon entering class!