

Point Loma Nazarene University  
**INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**

PHL 201

FALL 2018

T/R 11:00-12:15

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Office Hours: by appointment

**PLNU MISSION:**

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

1. Students will engage in the disciplined practices of asking questions about God, the world, and of themselves, including questions for which there may be no easy answers. (Learning, Growing)
2. Students will differentiate among interrelated movements or figures in the history of philosophy. (Learning)
3. Students will evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of human reasoning or experience to provide adequate accounts of significant issues that relate to our human condition, the world, ethics and Christian life. (Learning, Growing, Serving)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To develop and widen an openness towards the pursuit of wisdom.
2. To nurture creative and reflective thinking by reading significant primary texts within the Western philosophical tradition.
3. To examine what it means for us to be human.
4. To examine the nature of language and meaning formation
5. To examine ethical questions like courage and humility.
6. To introduce several philosophical issues found in the Western tradition including human knowledge, the relationship of the soul to the body, and the meaning of human existence.
7. To wrestle with these issues as they relate to our lives.

## **GENERAL EDUCATION:**

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and cultures.

This course is a component of the University's General Education program, under the category of "Seeking Cultural Perspectives." By including this course in a common educational experience, the faculty supports the study "of human endeavors from a historical, cultural, and philosophical perspective, including developing critical appreciation of human expression – both artistic and literary" (Catalog).

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:**

All students are expected to meet the minimum standards for this course as set forth by the instructor. Students with learning disabilities who may need accommodations should first discuss options and services with the Academic Support Center (ASC) during the first two weeks of the semester. The ASC, in turn, will contact professors with official notification and suggested classroom accommodations, as required by federal law. Approved documentation must be provided by the student and placed on file in the ASC prior to the beginning of the semester. If you have a diagnosed disability, please contact PLNU's Disability Resource Center (DRC) within the first two weeks of class to demonstrate need and to register for accommodation by phone at 619-849-2486 or by e-mail at [DRC@pointloma.edu](mailto:DRC@pointloma.edu). See [Disability Resource Center](#) for additional information.

## **INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:**

The School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the school urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussion, and in their writings. Thus, terms like "man" or "mankind" or the pronoun "he," should not be used to refer to all humans. Instead "people," "humanity," "humans," and "he or she" better acknowledge women as full persons.

## **TEXTBOOKS:**

1. Plato, *Five Dialogues* 0-87220-633-5
2. Aristotle, *De Anima* 9781605204321
3. René Descartes, *Meditations On First Philosophy* 0-87220-192-9
4. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* 0-87220-354-9
5. Martin Heidegger, *Discourse on Thinking* 0-06-131459-5
6. Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* 0-140-44449-1

## **PROCEDURE/REQUIREMENTS:**

1. We will be reading from some of the most significant **texts** in the history of Western thought. It is vitally important that you become acquainted with the primary material in order that you get a feel for not simply what the writer says, but how she or he makes you think. I want you to be thoughtful and critical of what each of the thinkers writes, as well as of what I say in class.
2. Regular and punctual **attendance** is required for the full benefit of this class. If you are late it is your responsibility to see me after class in order that your attendance may be recorded. Any three tardies will be recorded as one absence. Dialogue tends to spawn new ideas and creativity, so discussion will also be important. Therefore, *each* student will be expected to enter into class discussion. The extent to which this occurs, along with attendance will be considered in your final grade. *You cannot pass the class* if you miss more than six sessions. See the catalogue.
3. There will be one 4 paged typed, double-spaced **essay** on Kierkegaard's *Fear and Trembling*. It will function as the final exam and is due final exam week (to be turned in by noon, Tuesday, May 1st, in my box in Smee Hall). This will be explicative and formal (please follow guidelines given in the *M.L.A. Handbook*, *Chicago Manual of Style* or any manual of style). I will discuss my expectations for this further in class. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in either zero credit for the assignment and a full grade reduction for the class or failure of the course all together. Both will result in a letter to the Provost.
4. There will be three in-class **exams**. The primary nature of each of these will be essay format unless I indicate otherwise.
5. You will write 5 reading **reflections**. The first will be an informal response to your reading of Dr. Martin Luther King's Letter from a Birmingham Jail and will be 2 pages in length. Due 9/4 in class.  
  
The next 2 will be on Simone de Beauvoir's Introduction to *2nd Sex*. The 4th and 5th will be on Heidegger's "Memorial Address" from *Discourse on Thinking*. They should be 1 page each -typed and double spaced. The first of each will be a reflection on the reading (due the class day we discuss the figures) and the second of each will be due the day after class discussion and will be a reflection on the class period. They are meant to be informal reflections on your reading and interpretation of the texts. See the schedule for the precise due dates.
6. The **grades** are based on all of these mentioned assignments. All outside assignments are due at the beginning of class. I will accept no assignments late. I will give no make-up exams unless you have an excused absence AND have notified me in advance. All make-up exams must be taken within one week of the exam. Do not expect to be able to make-up the exam unless I have written or spoken this to you explicitly.

CLASS PARTICIPATION/ ATTENDANCE	2% of final grade
SURVEYS/ASSIGNMENTS	3%
APOLOGY EXAM	22%
PLATO/ARISTOTLE EXAM	23%
DESCARTES/NIETZSCHE ANSELM/EXAM	22%
MLKJ REFLECTION	2%
SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR REFLECTION	2%
HEIDEGGER REFLECTION	2%
<u>FEAR AND TREMBLING ESSAY</u>	<u>22%</u>
TOTAL	100%

100-94% A	79-77% C+	63-60% D-
93-90% A-	76-74% C	59-0% F
89-87% B+	73-70% C-	
86-84% B	69-67% D+	
83-80% B-	66-64% D	

PLNU POLICIES:

**FINAL EXAMINATION POLICY:**

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

**PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY:**

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

**PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY:**

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the

university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

### **PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY:**

Regular and punctual attendance at all classes is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent from more than 10 percent of class meetings, the faculty member can file a written report which may result in de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog.

### **SCHEDULE:** A Guideline for the Semester

8/30 Introduction to the Course

9/4 Read and write a 1/2 page response Martin Luther King, Jr.'s ["Letter from a Birmingham Jail"](#)

9/4 **Apology discussion questions due, MLKjr response due**

9/4-11 *Apology*

9/13 **Apology Exam**

9/18 Plato –1st 1/2 *Crito*

9/20 Plato –2nd 1/2 *Crito*

9/25 Plato – 1st 1/2 of *Meno*

9/27 Plato –2nd 1/2 of *Meno*

10/2 Aristotle *De Anima* pp.47-63

10/4 Aristotle pp. 63-71

10/9 Aristotle pp. 73-90

10/11 Aristotle pp. 90-103

10/16 **Plato/Aristotle Exam**

10/18 Augustine, Anselm, etc.

10/23 Descartes –first 1/3 of *The Meditations*

10/25 Descartes -2<sup>nd</sup> 1/3 of *The Meditations*

10/30 Descartes –Finish *Meditations*

11/1 Nietzsche – *Twilight of the Idols* –finish the 1<sup>st</sup> half -**bring a reading question with page #**

11/6 Nietzsche –finish *Twilight of the Idols* -**bring a reading question with page #**

11/8 FLEX

11/13 **Descartes Nietzsche Anselm Exam**

11/15 Heidegger – “Memorial Address” from *Discourse on Thinking* -Heidegger Reflection #1 Due

11/20 Simone de Beauvoir 2nd Sex [Introduction to 2nd Sex](#) -**Simone de Beauvoir Reflection #1 Due, Heidegger Reflection #2 Due**

11/22 Thanksgiving Break

11/27 **Simone de Beauvoir Reflection #2 Due**

11/27-12/6 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*

12/11 **Fear and Trembling Paper Due** –Noon, Tuesday, Smee Hall #200

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### ***Apology* Group Discussion Questions**

Due 9/4

1. Is Socrates a good orator?
2. What is the difference between Socrates' new and old accusers?
3. Which of the two sets of accusers does Socrates fear more? Does he fear either? Explain.
4. **What are the accusations against Socrates?**
5. Explain the role of the oracle. What does the oracle say?
6. What groups of people does Socrates examine?
7. What does Socrates come to realize about himself and others? How does Socrates come to understand the oracle's statement?
8. What is the significance of the "horse trainer" analogy?
9. What "punishment" does Socrates believe he deserves?
10. **Does Socrates fear death? Why/why not?**

### ***Fear and Trembling* Essay**

22 Points

Due 12/11

In great detail, please compare the Knight of Infinite Resignation to the Knight of Faith from Kierkegaard's work *Fear and Trembling*. Make sure to include a discussion of Abraham's silence.

- The paper should be approximately 4 pages typed and double-spaced.
- Plagiarism will result in failure of the class. Please follow M.L.A., Chicago or any formal manual of style.
- Please include your thesis in **bold** print.
- The paper is due by Noon, Tuesday, 12/11 -in my box in Smee Hall
- If you would like comments, please turn in a self-addressed stamped envelope with your paper