

Point Loma Nazarene University
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
PHL 201
Spring 2015
TR 1:30-2:45

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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 practice 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 an adequate account of significant issues that relates 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:

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.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE:

The School of Theology and Christian Ministries is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people often use language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, the School strongly urges students to join faculty and staff in avoiding any sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and in writing.

TEXTBOOKS:

1. Plato, *Five Dialogues* 0-87220-633-5
2. Aristotle, *Introductory Readings* 0-87220-339-5
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 *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 nine 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, Dec. 15th, in my box in Smee Hall –main campus). 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. 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 (doctor's note required) AND have notified me in advance. All make-up exams must be taken with-in 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%
ANCIENT GREEK EXAM	25%
DESCARTES/NIETZSCHE EXAM	20%
HEIDEGGER REFLECTION	3%
<u>FEAR AND TREMBLING ESSAY</u>	25%
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	

SCHEDULE: A Guideline for the Semester

- 9/3 Introduction to the Course
- 9/8 **Apology discussion questions due**
- 9/8-9/15 *Apology*
- 9/17 **Apology Exam**
- 9/22 Plato – ½ *Crito*
- 9/24 Plato – last ½ *Crito*
- 9/29 Plato – ½ *Meno*
- 10/1 Plato –last ½ *Meno*
- 10/6 Aristotle pp. 64-86
- 10/8 Aristotle pp. 86-95
- 10/13 **Attend Wiley Lecture Crill Hall**
- 10/15 Aristotle pp.180-194 **Wiley response due**
- 10/20 Aristotle
- 10/22 **Plato/Aristotle Exam**
- 10/27 Anselm, etc.
- 10/29 Descartes –first 1/3 of *The Meditations*
- 11/3 Descartes -2nd 1/3 of *The Meditations*

- 11/5 Descartes –Finish *Meditations*
 11/10 Nietzsche – *Twilight of the Idols* –finish the 1st half
 11/12 Nietzsche –finish *Twilight of the Idols*
 11/17 **Descartes Nietzsche Exam**
 11/19 Heidegger – “Memorial Address” from *Discourse on Thinking*
 11/24 Heidegger **reflection due**
 11/26 Thanksgiving
 12/1-12/10 Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling*
 12/15 **Fear and Trembling Paper Due** –Noon, Tuesday, Smee Hall #200 (main campus)

Apology Group Discussion Questions

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

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25 Points

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. or any formal manual of style.
- Please include your thesis in **bold print**.
- The paper is due by Noon, Tuesday, Dec. 15th -in my box in Smee Hall
- If you would like comments, please turn in a self-addressed stamped envelope with your paper