

The University of Findlay: College of Liberal Arts

SYLLABUS

*The Mission of the University is to equip our students
for meaningful lives and productive careers.*

"Philosophy asks the simple question: what's it all about?"
-- Alfred North Whitehead

Philosophy 100: "Introduction to Philosophy"

- ◆ 3 Semester Hours
- ◆ T TH 9:30-10:45
- ◆ No Prerequisites

Instructor:

Dr. Rich Smith

Office – WTS 222 Office Phone: 434-4592 (or campus ext 4592)

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Office Hours: T TH 8:45-9:30 & 12:15-1:30

(Mon, Wed, Fri, and other times by appointment)

Course Description:

- ◆ Survey of important philosophical problems relevant to human life in an age of rapid social and intellectual change, including the ultimate nature of reality, belief in God, personal identity, freedom and responsibility, the search for meaning in life, theories of knowledge, and ethical considerations of right and wrong.

Overarching Purpose of the Course:

- ◆ To further the university's mission to equip students for meaningful lives and productive careers.
- ◆ To further the mission of the university's general education program to offer students a broad-based foundation of knowledge and skills that will help them become life-long learners as members of a profession as well as members of the global society.
- ◆ To further the mission of the philosophy department to help students cultivate self-knowledge, develop critical thinking skills, complement other specializations, and strengthen career preparation.

Specific Course Objectives: Upon completion of the course students will be able to:

- ◆ Intelligently discuss classic concepts and theories relating to important issues of longstanding philosophical interest, including matters regarding human nature, the existence of God, the meaning of life, and questions of morality.
- ◆ Effectively exercise skills and abilities of critical reasoning, problem solving, and decision making when confronting difficult and complex philosophical issues.
- ◆ Demonstrate an attitude of responsibility and maturity when exploring a given subject matter, including being open minded, optimistic, creative, flexible, and inquisitive.
- ◆ Discuss how concepts, principles, and skills learned in the study of philosophy have relevant applications in other areas of everyday life, including people's personal beliefs, practices, attitudes, and relationships.
- ◆ Identify and articulate personal moral values, demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of alternative value systems, and implement appropriate strategies for making rationally informed moral decisions in ordinary life situations.

(2)

The Following General Education Learning Outcomes Will Be Addressed:

- ◆ Students will take courses which expose them to a range of basic religious beliefs and diverse ethical perspectives and which encourage them to develop their own perspectives on global issues.
- ◆ Students will become familiar with the historical, scientific, literary, and/or philosophical content of a range of disciplines.
- ◆ Students will acquire and practice skills for reading, writing, speaking, listening, abstract inquiry, critical thinking, logical reasoning, and using computers and related technology.
- ◆ Students will develop an appreciation for and means of analyzing art, literature, music, communication, science and/or theatre.
- ◆ Throughout their general education experience, students will analyze and reflect upon the challenges facing our global society as well as the importance of being a life-long learner and responsible citizen.

Required Textbook:

- ◆ Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*, Revised edition, Washington Square Press (ISBN: 0-671-02337-3).

Instructional Strategies:

- ◆ Multiple teaching strategies will be used, including but not limited to traditional lecture, Socratic questioning and class discussion/debate, videos, along with reading and writing assignments. A conscious effort will be made to foster an enthusiastic, exciting, and active learning environment.

Methods of Assessment:

- ◆ Attendance/Participation Reflective Writing Assignments
- ◆ Exams Journaling

Grades Will Be Determined on the Following Basis:

- ◆ Five Quizzes (No Make-ups; Drop Lowest Score) 40% (10% each)
- ◆ Two Summary/Response Papers (Details Will Be Given) 20% (10% each)
- ◆ Two Open Book Exams (Including the Final) 35% (15%, 20%)
- ◆ Three “Keepers” (Details Provided with the Syllabus) 5%

Course Grading Scale:

A	92-100	A-	90-91		
B+	86-89	B	82-85	B-	80-81
C+	76-79	C	72-75	C-	70-71
D+	66-69	D	62-65	D-	60-61
F	Below 60				

(3)

Final Exam Date(s): Section 01: Tuesday, December 8 (12:00-1:50pm)

Honor Code:

- ◆ *I will not knowingly engage in any dishonorable behavior, cheat, steal, lie or commit any act of plagiarism during my academic work, course, or endeavor. If I observe an act which I believe violates the University's Honor Code, I may, in my discretion, report it to the appropriate personnel.*

Attendance And Exam Policies:

- ◆ Attendance is important not only in pursuit of one's own individual learning but also as a contribution to the learning of others in the class. Active participation means completing daily assignments on time, having the textbook and other study materials ready at hand, and joining in discussions attentively and in a critical spirit, both as a respectful listener and as a speaker.
- ◆ Class attendance will be taken and students are expected to participate voluntarily in class activities. Attendance and participation will influence course grades in borderline cases, e.g. 89-90, 79-80, etc. Active participation and fewer than four absences (for any reason) will be considered positive.
- ◆ Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Make-up exams will be given only if the instructor determines that the circumstances of absence are legitimately excusable.

Special Services:

- ◆ If you are a student with a disability it is your responsibility to register with the Office of Disability Services and your instructor at least one week prior to a needed service so reasonable accommodations can be made.

Rough Outline:

1. INTRODUCTION. Goals of the course. What is philosophy? What is the value of philosophy and how does it relate to one's own life?
2. INTELLECTUAL INTEGRITY. What is meant by "intellectual integrity"? Should people be held responsible for their beliefs? Socrates: living by honor and reason.
3. FREEDOM AND DETERMINISM. Are human beings truly free? Is free will always desirable? What is the relationship between freedom and responsibility? Discovering meaning in life: Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*.
4. EXISTENTIALISM. Audio-tutorial "minicourse" on Sartre's philosophy.
5. PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION. The existence of God. Faith and reason. How to reconcile suffering in the world with the existence of God.
6. ETHICAL THEORY. Basic issues in moral philosophy. What makes an action "good" or "evil"? Are moral values subjective or objective? Are there rational guidelines for ethical decision-making? Practical application: the ethics of euthanasia.

(Course Schedule Will be Provided the First Day of Class)