

Philosophy 297: Honors Introduction to Philosophy.

Sec. 003: Gibbard

Fall 2007. TuTh 10–11:30, Mason Hall 3314

This is an honors introduction to a sampling of contemporary philosophical problems. The principal topics will be: (i) skepticism and our knowledge of the world, (ii) mind, body, personal identity, and consciousness, (iii) determinism and free will, (iv) the existence of God and the problem of evil, and (v) the bases of ethics. Extensive and very careful reading will be required. There will be little lecturing, and we will expect to benefit from active discussion on the part of everyone. The other requirements for the course are three short papers (c. 5 pp. each) and midterm and final exams.

The readings will be chiefly drawn from the anthology, *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings* John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer, eds. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007).

Two notices that it should be unnecessary to include but that it is prudent (with apologies for insulting your character and intelligence) to make explicit: (1) A passing grade in the course requires completion of all assignments. (2) As I'm sure you know, all work in the course must be your own. (If a student were found to have plagiarized, I would be appalled. I would refer the case to the appropriate dean, who, after a meeting with the student, would advise me on appropriate sanctions. Note that, depending on the circumstances, those sanctions might well include receiving a failing grade for the course.)

The final exam will be held at the regular time determined by the Registrar. Students taking the course must arrange their schedules to be able to take the exam then. (Instructors in other courses are not allowed to impose conflicting requirements.)

There is a website for the course at

www-personal.umich.edu/~gibbard/ph297f07.htm

There is also a Ctools site for information specifically for members of the class. Both sites are fairly minimal at this point.

Office: 2187 Angell Hall, phone 764-6892. E-mail: gibbard@umich.edu

Office hours: Wednesdays 2:30–3:30 and by appointment

Tentative schedule:

- Tuesday Sept. 4, **first class:** Introduction
Thursday Sept. 6: **On the study of philosophy**
 Editors 1–6; Russell 9–12; Smart 12–20; Zeno’s paradoxes 782–783
- Tuesday Sept. 11, week 2: **Skepticism**
 Descartes 171–195
Thursday Sept. 13
 Grau 195–202; Nozick 202–210
- Tuesday Sept. 18, week 3: **Mind and body**
 Editors 275–281; Russell 285–287; Ryle 287–294; Armstrong 295–302
Thursday Sept. 20
 Lewis 302–308; Dennett 308–320; Churchland 321–325
- Tuesday Sept. 25, week 4: **Ancient ethics**
 Editors 481–488; Plato 674–711
Thursday Sept. 27:
 Aristotle 572–587; Nagel 588–592
- Tuesday Oct., 2, week 5: **First short paper due.**
Thursday Oct. **Freedom, determinism, responsibility**
 Chisolm 421–428; van Inwagen 428–440
- Tuesday Oct. 9, week 6:
 Hume 440–450 ; Taylor 451–463
Thursday Oct. 11:
 Frankfurt 464–470; Frankfurt 470–480
- **Fall break,** Tue. Oct. 16
Thursday Oct. 18: **Consciousness**
 Nagel 354–362; Jackson 363–366; Lewis 366–368
- Tuesday Oct. 23, week 8: **Midterm exam**

Thursday Oct. 25: **God and evil**

Editors 75–77; Anselm 78–79; Aquinas 80–82; Pascal 82–86; Russell 86–89;
Hume (parts I–IV) 91–105.

- Tuesday Oct. 30, week 9:

Hume (parts VIII–XII) 106–124; Leibniz 125–127

Thursday Nov. 1:

Paley 128–132; Perry 133–156

- Tuesday Nov. 6, week 10: **Second short paper due**

Thursday Nov. 8: **Ethics: utilitarianism**

Bentham 489–492; Mill 492–509; Quinn’s paradox 790

- Tuesday Nov. 13, week 11:

Carritt 509–511; Smart 511–518; Williams 519–527; Singer 527–534

Thursday Nov. 15: **Ethics: Kantianism**

Kant 536–552; O’Neill 553–558; Puzzles of ethics 793–794

- Tuesday Nov. 20, week 12:

Rawls 607–620; Nozick 620–628

Thanksgiving, Thu. Nov. 22

- Tuesday Nov. 27, week 13: **Moral reality**

Mackie 749–760; Harman 761–765; Sturgeon 765–780

Thursday Nov. 29:

Gauthier 735–742; Mackie 743–748

- Tuesday Dec. 4, week 14: **Third short paper due**

Thursday Dec. 6: **Personal identity**

Perry 368–388; Williams 389–399; Newcomb’s problem 788

- Tuesday Dec. 11, week 15 (last class):

Parfit 368–388; Dennett 412–420

- Friday, Dec. 14, 4:00-6:00pm in 3314 MH: **Final exam**