PHH 2063 Section U01 Classics in Philosophy

Course Syllabus For Spring 2012 Dr. Hauptli

Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays from 9:00-9:50

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Course Web-site:  www.fiu.edu/~hauptli/PHH2063.html

Course Description:

This course introduces both the tools of philosophical thinking and some of their applications to fundamental topics such as knowledge, value, meaning, and human society.

Course Objectives:

In this course students should become familiar with the problems, positions, and methodologies of the philosophers studied. Students should also become familiar with the interpretation complex texts; they should enhance their ability to provide balanced exposition and examination of such texts; and they should come to understand the philosophical activity of criticism of doctrines and things commonly taken for granted. In addition to introducing students to various philosophical thinkers, this course is intended to enhance the student's critical reading, writing, and speaking skills. As this is a "Core" writing course, students will be expected to write three 2,000-word papers.

The course focuses the students’ attention on inquiry and analysis; seeks to extend their abilities to adopt critical perspectives; and it endeavors to connect the philosophical problems, positions and methodologies studied with the concerns and methodologies of other disciplines, as well as of our culture generally. The lectures, readings, papers, and exams are integrated in a manner intended to promote these objectives. In all of these activities students will be encouraged to interact analytically with, and respond critically to, the primary texts studied. Students will also be encouraged to endeavor to assimilate the ideas studied with those they have previously studied.

Text:


Readings:

- Passage from *Meno* Plato p. 7 [77c-78b]
- *Euthyphro* Plato pp. 20-28
- *Apology* Plato pp. 29-41
Requirements and Policies:

The following requirements and policies will apply for this course, and students should read them carefully. I do not accept claims to ignorance in their regard.

1. **Regular class attendance is required:** after the first three class meetings attendance will be taken via a roll sheet which will be passed around the class ten minutes after class has begun—the roll sheet will quickly circulate and students who arrive later than this will need to explain (after class) their lateness to have their attendance count that day. Students must attend for the whole class period, and those who leave before the class period is over may be counted as absent. Students who have no more than one unexcused absence will have their course grade raised by one third of a letter grade (B to B+, etc.). Students who have three unexcused absences will have their course grade lowered by one third of a letter grade (C+ to C, etc.), students who have five unexcused absences will have their course grade lowered by two thirds of a letter grade (C+ to C-, etc.), students who have seven unexcused absences will have their course grade lowered by one letter grade (C to D, etc.), additional absences will be treated according to this progression.

Acceptable excuses for the first absence are jury duty, or absence because of university sponsored events which the student must attend. Only verifiable excuses will be accepted for the second and subsequent absences, and multiple excuses for any individual are viewed with ever-increasing skepticism. Such excuses must be presented to me in person—messages on my voice mail do not count as excuses. Excuses should be presented as soon after the absence as possible (students who wait till the end of the semester to offer excuses for early absences need to meet a high burden of verification for the absence to be excused). Please note that I check with Doctors’ offices, hospitals and funeral homes; and I will only rarely accept work-related excuses (which should be offered before the absence).

2. **Appropriate conduct is expected in class:** I expect students to silence cell phones and mute any distracting alarms or laptop generated noises (including opening greetings and message announcements). Courteous consideration others is essential in the classroom, and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. I expect students to refrain from engaging in private conversations, derogatory side-comments, noisy snacking; and students should avoid leaving the classroom while class is in session as this is actually disruptive to the class. In short, students are expected to comport themselves in a manner which does not interfere with instruction and learning.

3. **Regular reading is assumed:** students who do not do their readings will have difficulty with the requirements, and students who do not attend class will have difficulty with their
readings. I strongly recommend that students do the readings several times—at least once before the class in which they will be discussed and once after the class. Extensive lecture supplements are available on-line through my web-site, and I am available in my office to discuss readings, paper topics, etc.

4. Papers, examinations, and deadlines: because writing is important to philosophy, students in this course will be required to write three critical, analytical or expository philosophy papers each of which should be at least 2,000 words long (equivalent to eight double-spaced typewritten pages of 250 words per page). This indication of length is meant as a guide to the student—papers much shorter than the indicated length are unlikely to adequately address one of the assigned topics. Papers may, of course, be longer than the indicated length. The papers should be typed and are due in my office by 4:15 P.M. on the following dates: Monday, February 13; Monday, February 27; and Monday, April 2.

The papers written for this course should

- address an assigned topic in a manner that clearly displays its purpose, thesis, or controlling idea,
- clarify the relevant elements of the philosopher’s theory so that they can be understood by other students taking such philosophy courses,
- support the thesis with adequate reasons and evidence,
- show sustained analysis and critical thought,
- be organized clearly and logically, and
- show knowledge of conventions of standard written English.

A supplement entitled “Writing Philosophy Papers” is available on the course web-site. It describes what critical, analytical or expository philosophy papers are like, and it provides a list of the “grader's marks” I employ in grading papers and exams. I provide detailed comments regarding the compositional, expository, and the critical elements of such papers, and I review the comments from earlier papers prior to reading later ones so that I can assess continuing progress and problems.

In addition to the three required papers, there will be two in-class objective essay exams which will be designed to assess the students’ understanding of the philosophical theories, positions, topics, and methodologies studied. Sample study questions will be distributed in advance of the exam so that students have an opportunity to organize their thoughts and integrate the readings and lectures around sample questions designed to indicate what they are expected to have mastered. The Midterm Exam will be on Friday, February 24, and the Final Exam will be on Friday, April 27 from 8:00-9:00 (during the officially scheduled time-period for the course). A supplement entitled “Writing Essay Exams for Professor Hauptli” is available on the course web-site.

Together the papers are worth 60% of the grade (20% each), and the exams are worth 40% (20% each). Students must submit all papers and exams to pass the course—that is, failure to complete any of the course requirements will result in a grade of F for the
course. Therefore, students who do not turn in a paper or take the exams on time must nonetheless submit that paper or take a make-up exam if they wish to pass the course (grades higher than an F are given only for performance and accomplishment; and late papers and make-up exams may demonstrate these, while unfulfilled requirements demonstrate neither). An incomplete will not be assigned simply because work is late—after the designated final exam day, if a student has not been granted an extension and any required work has not been turned in, the student will receive a grade of F for the course.

5. Grading Scale: in grading papers and exams, and in calculating the course grade, I use the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+/A-</td>
<td>3.49</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.33</td>
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<tr>
<td>B/B+</td>
<td>3.16</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-/B</td>
<td>2.83</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+/B-</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<td>C/C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>C-/C</td>
<td>1.83</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>1.67</td>
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<td>D+</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>D-</td>
<td>0.67</td>
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The "split" grades (B+/A-, for example) are assigned when the work is between the indicated grades. Of course, these split grades can not be used for the ultimate course grade, and thus the grades for the various individual papers and exams are calculated using the percentages indicated above (and adding or subtracting the appropriate fractional consideration in accordance with the attendance policy). For the overall course grade the above point equivalents constitute the minimum necessary to receive the indicated grade (thus students must earn at least a 3.67 to receive an A-). Where students are very close to a minimum point, I may take into consideration improvement in the grades throughout the course.

6. **Extensions and late work:** I indicate the due dates for the papers and exams above. Moreover, I hand out paper topics so that students have two weekends to work on their papers. I also hand out sample exam questions in advance of the examinations and conduct an in-class review for each exam. I will consider reasonable requests for extensions. Note, however, that excuses do not guarantee extensions, and excuses offered *after* due dates are far, far less successful than those offered before due dates. If I grant an extension to a student, that extension will establish a new due date, and that date must be met (or in extraordinary circumstances, an additional extension may be arranged (but only when it is requested prior to the [extended] due date). Please note that requests for extensions must be made directly to me—neither my secretary nor your doctor may grant extensions for this course, and last minute calls to my voice-mail provide no assurance of extensions. On and after the due date, only an extraordinary request will be accepted (acceptable examples: hospitalization on due date, extremely serious personal problem, death in the immediate family; unacceptable examples: running out of time; and flat tires).

**Papers are due in my office by 4:15 P.M. on the due date**—papers turned in after 4:15 will be treated as if they were turned in the *next day*. Papers submitted after 4:15 but before 4:15 P.M. the ensuing day will receive a *one-third decrease* in their grade (example: a B+ changes to a B); papers turned in two days late will receive a two-thirds grade decrease, and additional days will be treated according to this progression. Papers turned in between 4:15 on Fridays and 9:00 on Mondays will be counted as turned in on *Monday* morning, and will be assessed a "*double penalty*" for each weekend day. Thus a paper turned in one week late receives a *three grade reduction* (an A paper would receive a D). Clearly, students have a strong incentive to contact me if they are going to be unable to turn their papers in on time—failure to do so may have serious consequences in terms of the course grade. If your paper is late, it makes sense to speak with me (after class, in my office, or on the phone)—when I am provided with a good reason, I will stop the penalties from continuing to pile on to those already assessed for the lateness. Note that unless I have explicitly granted you an incomplete, all late papers must be turned in end of the last class (before final exam week). Note that I will not accept any but the most extraordinary of excuses for missing or being late for the examinations.

7. **Pass/Fail" grades:** this is a "Core" course and must be taken for a letter grade.

8. **Plagiarism and academic misconduct:** when you engage in plagiarism you present as your work the opinions or arguments of someone else. Plagiarism is dishonest since the plagiarist offers for credit what is not her or his own. It is also counter-productive because it defeats a
purpose of education—the *improvement of the student's own powers of thinking, reasoning, and expression*. Plagiarism may even occur when one expresses another's sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, or pattern of thought in one's own words. We have a case of plagiarism when a sequence of ideas is transferred from a source to a paper without a process of digestion, integration, criticism, and inquiry in the writer's mind and without acknowledgment (I have borrowed this statement, to a large extent, from the FIU English and Sociology/Anthropology Departments' descriptions of plagiarism). Academic misconduct occurs when the norms of inquiry are violated. Examples include students who present false Doctors' notes, who pretend that they have a family or medical emergency, or who seriously hinder other students' scholarly activities. I assign a course grade of F when I confront cases of plagiarism or academic misconduct, and I bring such students before the appropriate disciplinary body (the processes are set forth in the *Student Handbook*). I have found that the minimal penalty for students found guilty of plagiarism through the process is an F in the course, the provision that the University’s “Forgiveness Policy” may not be used to expunge that grade, and such students are placed on Academic Probation for the remainder of their undergraduate careers at FIU (so that a second such act usually results in expulsion from the University).

Students should be aware that it is not hard for professors to spot many cases of plagiarism. In the Fall 2011 semester, for example, I caught and charged two students plagiarizing, and all it took to catch this was a simple web search! The University’s Policies on Academic Misconduct and Code of Academic Integrity may be found on the FIU web-site at:

http://undergrad.fiu.edu/academic_misconduct/index.html

Contemporary web-based search engines make it easy to detect such activities, and I routinely filter passages I am suspicious of through one or more such filters.

**Office Hours:** Mondays and Fridays: 11:00-11:50, and 3:00-4:00; and by appointment.

**Office:** DM 341D.
Phone/Voice Mail: 305-348-3350.
E-Mail: hauptli@fiu.edu
I check both Voice and E-Mail several times a day, and I return my calls.