COURSE OBJECTIVES:

You will study some famous philosophers' attempts to answer some very difficult philosophical questions. For example, is the mind something different from the brain or can mind be reduced to brain activities? Do our perceptions correspond to the way the world actually is? Is morality relative to cultures? Is morality even possible? Is there one conceptual framework that is adequate to guide moral decisions and, if so, what is it? If God is omnipotent and benevolent, why is there evil in the world? Can the existence of God be proved? You will be asked to read about, think about, and write about questions such as these. You should learn something about the nature of argumentation in the process.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. The course grade is primarily determined by three essay type hour exams, 20% each. The hour exams will be in class on Thursday, May 27, June 8, and June 24, 2004. All three exams are required for a passing grade in the course.

2. You should submit a discussion question based on the readings, along with a suggested answer, as these are assigned. Discussion questions may be submitted in class only on the date they are due. At least two discussion questions may be missed to allow for excused absences. Flippant or irrelevant questions (or suggested answers) will be regarded as a non-submission. In addition, there will be occasional in class writing assignments which can be turned in only at the end of the class period. The discussion questions and in class writing assignments are worth 10% of the course grade. In class writing assignments will require you to refer to your textbook, so you should bring your text to each class meeting.

3. Two brief out of class writing assignments on assigned topics are due on the date announced in class. Quality of out of class writing assignments will be judged on the basis of quality of argumentation, logical organization, appropriateness to the assignment, degree of effort, completeness, etc. Out of class writing assignments are worth 20% of the course grade (10% each). Details on length, etc., will be given when the assignments are made.

4. Regular class attendance and participation in discussion is expected. If you miss class, you are responsible for finding out what was assigned, covered or discussed in your absence. Class attendance and participation is worth 10% of the course grade.
READING SEQUENCE:

To begin with we will examine Chapter 1, What is Philosophy, and Chapter 2, A Little Logic. We will also look at Chapter 13, God and Reason, pp. 297 - 304 and Chapter 12, God and the World, pp. 279 - 288. These two sections will give us “real life” examples of deductive and inductive arguments. After that, the class will choose the chapters we will cover.

The professor reserves the right to revise the syllabus as the course progresses.

Michigan Technological University complies with all federal and state laws and regulations regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disability Act of 1990 (ADA). If you have a disability and need a reasonable accommodation for equal access to education or services at MTU, please call Dr. Gloria Melton, Associate Dean for Students (2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department head, or the Affirmative Action Office (3310).