Syllabus for HU2700

Introduction to Philosophy

Section R01, Fall 2010

Mo., We., Fr., 3:05 p.m. to 3:55 p.m., Fisher Hall, Room 125

Instructor: Prof. Dr. Dieter Wolfgang Adolphs
Telephone: 487-3231 (work); 482-3182 (home)
E-Mail:
Office: Walker Arts and Humanities Center, Room 308
Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m. and Thursday, 10:30 to 11:30 a.m.
(other times by appointment)

Course Objectives
The principle purpose of this class is to acquaint students with the basic issues and approaches of philosophy. This course will also expose students to some of the most influential authors and texts in the Western philosophical tradition. Students will be actively involved in examining the impact of various philosophical stances on their own lives and the lives of others.

We will base our discussions on close reading of the assigned texts as well as oral reports on historical and critical information. We also will aim to investigate the impact of philosophical principles or the depiction of life in literary works and a number of (international and US) movies.

Every class member is strongly encouraged to voice his or her personal opinion and to actively participate in class discussions.

Required Books and Readings
Rene Descartes: Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy (online)

Course Requirements
a) regular attendance and active participation (25 points)
b) assigned readings; five reading responses ("log sheets;" 20 points)
c) oral report (10 points)
d) participation in two debates (10 points)
e) mid term exam (15 points)
f) final exam (20 points)
Grading Scale

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>92-100%</td>
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<tr>
<td>A/B</td>
<td>87-91.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82-86.9%</td>
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<td>B/C</td>
<td>77-81.9%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>72-76.9%</td>
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<td>C/D</td>
<td>67-71.9</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>62-66.9%</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>0-61.9</td>
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This course can be taken for partial fulfillment of the general education distribution requirements.

Attendance

*Attendance is required.* Students who miss more than two classes without university-approved excuses will lower their final grade by half a grade; those who miss more than three will lower their grade by a full grade. There will be no passing grade for students who more than 30% of classes without university-approved excuses. Excessive tardiness will also result in a grade reduction.

Cell Phone Free Environment

This class room is a "cell phone free environment" from 11:00 to 12:25 p.m. Students who use their cell phones during class will lower their final grade by half a grade.

Laptops

You can bring your laptop to class. I may hold a few longer lectures, and during these times you may type notes. However, you may not type during class discussions (neither should you use text messaging on your cell phones). Before you use the internet, possibly to support your own or your discussion group's point of view, you must ask me for permission. At any other time, the use of programs and files that are not related to our class is prohibited. Should you open such files or visit sites that are clearly not related to our class (such as looking up NHL scores or using programs such as MySpace), you will lower your grade by half a grade (for each incident).

Academic Integrity

MTU’s Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "knowingly copying another’s work and calling it one’s own or not giving proper credit or citation." The penalties for plagiarism or other forms of cheating range from receiving a failure grade on work in question to **expulsion from the university**. Students who have any questions about the issue, or who have questions about whether they have cited their sources properly, should consult the instructor or a coach in the Writing Center.

MTU's Policy on Discrimination and Harassment

MTU complies with all federal and state laws regarding discrimination, including the Americans with Disabilities 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 of Students (487-2212). For other concerns about discrimination, you may contact your advisor, department chair, or the Affirmative Action Office (487-3310).
This course description and all schedules are tentative and may be changed. If any such changes are made, you will receive a printed update during our regular class meetings.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1

Monday, 30 August
Introduction to HU2700
Beginning of film: Run, Lola, Run (German: Lola rennt)

Wednesday, 1 September
Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 1-10:
"What is reality?"
Continuation of film: Run, Lola Run (German: Lola rennt)
Log sheet 1 due on Monday (by 3:10 p.m.)

Friday, 3 September
Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 16-25
The physical World – The supernatural - Cause - Hume
Conclusion of film: Run, Lola, Run (German: Lola rennt)

Week 2

Wednesday, 8 September
Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 10-25
Oral report 1: Descartes, Life and Works
Discussion of Descartes, Meditations I and II

Week 3

13 September
Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 26-33
Idealism – Phenomenology - Heidegger
Discussion of Descartes, Meditations (entire text)

Wednesday, 15 September
Oral report 3:
Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 34-41
Truth - Mathematics – The infinite - Time and space

Friday, 17 September
Film viewing (excerpts): Dark Star
Oral report 4: Fodor, Life and Works
Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 44-52
“What is the mind?” – Thinking – Descartes – Fodor
Log sheet 1 due on Monday (by 3:10 p.m.)

Week 4

Monday, 20 September
Oral report 5: Artificial Intelligence
Final discussion of Dark Star and Descartes' Meditations

Wednesday
Oral report 6: Wittgenstein, Life and Work
22 September  Further discussion of group questions

Friday,
24 September  Oral report 7: Derrida, Life and Works
          Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 53-61
          Consciousness – Feelings and emotions – Language
          Wittgenstein - Derrida - Deconstruction
          Film (beginning): The Physicists

Week 5

Monday,
27 September  Report 8: Spinoza, Life and Works
          Report 9: Kant, Life and Works
          Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 63-71
          Free will (and justice), Spinoza. The self, Sanity/insanity
          Life and death
          Discussion of The Physicists, pp. 9-31

Wednesday,
29 September  Report 10: Hume, Life and Works
          Report 11: Hegel, Life and Works
          Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 134-45
          Discussion of The Physicists, pp. 32-56
          Preparation for debates

Friday, 1 Oct,  HOME COMING

Week 6

Monday,
4 October  Report 11: Simone de Beauvoir
          Report 12: Hannah Arendt
          Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 146-159
          Discussion of The Physicists, pp. 57-79
          Preparation for debates

Wednesday,
6 October  Debates
          Debate 1: Is everything, including our mind, part of the material
          world and to be explained by cause and effect, or is the mind all
          there is, and the material world a mere illusion?
          Debate 2: Do we have free will?

Friday,
8 October  Report 13: Nietzsche, life and work
          Report 14: Heidegger, life and work
          Discussion of The Physicists, pp. 80-
          Sample Exam

Log sheet 3 due on Monday

Week 7

Monday, 11 Oct.  Mid-Term Exam
Wednesday, 13 Oct.  
Report 17: Locke  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 160-177  
Final discussion of *The Physicists*

Friday,  
15 October  
Report 18: Plato  
Report 19: Aristotle  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 178-189

**Week 8**

Monday,  
18 October  
Report 20: Max Frisch, life and works  
Report 21: Volker Schloendorff, life and works  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 190-97  
Discussion of Max Frisch, *Homo Faber*, pp. 3-20  
Beginning of film, *Voyager*

Wednesday,  
19 October  
Report 22: Augustine’s life and works  
Report 23: Augustine’s *Confessions*  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 198-209  
Discussion of Max Frisch, *Homo Faber*, pp. 20-70

Friday,  
21 October  
Report 24: Hume’s *Enquiry*  
Report 25: Kan’s essays on enlightenment and peace  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 210-215  
Discussion of Max Frisch, *Homo Faber*, pp. 70-127  
Continuation of the film, *Voyager*

Reading report 4 due on Monday, 14 June

**Week 9**

Monday,  
25 October  
Report 26: Hegel’s *Philosophy of History*  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 106-115  
Discussion of Max Frisch, *Homo Faber*, pp. 129-166

Wednesday,  
27 October  
Report 27: *The Communist Manifesto* (by Marx and Engels)  
Discussion of Max Frisch, *Homo Faber*, pp. 167-214  
End of the film, *Voyager*

Friday,  
29 October  
Report 28: Nietzsche on history  
Final discussion of *Homo Faber* and *Voyager*

**Week 10**

Monday,  
1 November  
Report 29: Heidegger’s *Being and Time*  
Discussion of *Philosophy*, pp. 116-131
Wednesday,
3 November  Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 72-83
            Film (beginning): The Edukators
Friday,
5 November  Report 31
            Discussion of Philosophy pp. 84-95
            Film

Log Sheet 5 due on Monday (8 November)

Week 11

Monday,
8 November  Report 32
            Discussion of Philosophy, pp. 96-105
            Film (conclusion):