

PHI 2010 – INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
Dr. Howe

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the nature of philosophical thinking and addresses fundamental problems of philosophy. The topics discussed will include the nature of self, questions about reality and theories of truth and knowledge.

Course Objectives:

1. To critically reflect on philosophical issues.
2. To become familiar with basic concepts of philosophy.
3. To think philosophically about man's place in the universe.
4. To explore the origins of Western thought.

Texts:

Robert Solomon: *The Big Questions*

Class Work:

There will be assigned reading for each class. Students are to be prepared for class discussions as well as lectures on the readings. Pop-quizzes may be given to evaluate student preparations.

Outline of Topics

- I. Introduction
 - A. What is philosophy?
 - B. Critical Thinking: Articulation and Argument

- II. The Nature of Reality
 - A. The Pre-Socratic Philosophers: Permanence and Change
 - B. Plato and Aristotle: Being and Becoming
 - C. Modern Philosophy: Theories of Substance

- III. Theories of Knowledge and Truth
 - A. Empiricism
 - B. Rationalism
 - C. Skepticism
 - D. Tests for Truth: Correspondence, Coherence, Pragmatic

- IV. The Nature of Self
 - A. Substance Theory vs. Process Theory
 - B. Problems about the Mind-Body relation
 - C. Individual Self and Social Self

Tests:

There will be two tests: one mid-term essay and one final essay. Each test will be based on lectures and readings assigned from the text.

Philosophical Journal

Each student is required to keep a philosophical journal. The journal will be composed of your responses/answers to questions assigned throughout the semester. These responses may be read in class.

Grading:

The final course grade will be based on the cumulative grades of the two essay examinations and the philosophical journal. Each graded assignment will count for 1/3 of the overall grade. This course meets the Gordon Rule requirement of 6,000 written words for the term.