Introduction to Philosophy: Self and Reality
Saint Louis University - 1818 Program
PHIL:105: X34

Spring 2014

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Location: Lift for Life Academy
Time: B Days; 11:20-12:45
January 15-May 22

Saint Louis University Mission Statement:
The Mission of Saint Louis University is the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity. The University seeks excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research, health care and service to the community. It is dedicated to leadership in the continuing quest for understanding of God's creation and for the discovery, dissemination and integration of the values, knowledge and skills required to transform society in the spirit of the Gospels. As a Catholic, Jesuit university, this pursuit is motivated by the inspiration and values of the Judeo-Christian tradition and is guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus.

Lift for Life Academy Mission Statement:
Lift For Life Academy is a challenging and supportive learning community where students are valued and empowered to maximize their full potential as students, citizens and productive members of society.

Course Description:
This course introduces students to the Western cultural tradition of philosophy, the love of wisdom. Using the foundational works of Plato, Aristotle, Boethius, and Descartes, students will be engaged in asking and answering some of the richest questions in life, including what we can know, what the good life is for us, and whether there is a god. This is accomplished in the context of learning logical rules and applying this reason to the texts and problems at hand. Upon completion of the course, students will not only know basic arguments from Classic thinkers, but also will be able to apply these arguments and think critically through problems in their own lives.

Objectives:
By the end of the course, students will be able to:
1. Outline and evaluate basic inductive and deductive arguments.
2. Analyze Euthyphro’s dilemma, including its implication on morality.
3. Evaluate the philosophical challenges connected to the life of Socrates, including Intellectualism.
4. Analyze the Immoralist’s Challenge of Plato’s Republic, including Plato’s complete argument against it.
5. Evaluate basic metaphysics, including Plato’s Forms and Aristotle’s criticisms of the Forms.
6. Analyze Aristotle’s account of happiness and virtue.
7. Analyze Aristotle’s justification of human beings being ‘political animals’, including the nature of friendship.
8. Evaluate the Problem of Evil, including Boethius’ use of Greek metaphysics.
9. Analyze Boethius’ arguments for Freedom of the Will, including God’s foreknowledge.
10. Analyze Cartesian skepticism, including its influence on modern thought.
11. Evaluate Descartes’ Ontological Argument for the existence of God.

Textbooks:
All of the course textbooks are currently available at the campus bookstore. All texts are required reading for this course.

Evaluation:
Grades will be based on four categories:
1. **Daily Reading Questions** (4 points each): Readings assigned for each week are to be read and completed before the date on which they are listed. Each reading will be accompanied by Reading Questions that are intended to focus student attention on key ideas. They will be scored as follows:
   - 4 points – Obvious effort was made to answer each question, and no key idea was significantly mistaken.
   - 3 points – Obvious effort was made to answer each question, though some key ideas were significantly mistaken.
   - 2 points – Some effort was made to answer each question, and some key ideas were significantly mistaken.
   - 1 point – Little effort was made to answer each question, or one question was left unanswered.
*Since much of the content in the textbook will be new to most, it is not expected that every idea will be completely understood the first reading through. The answers to reading questions need not reflect a complete understanding of each idea. Rather, the answers given should demonstrate the student is working to understand each idea. Through the reading, discussions, and additional provided sources, students should work toward a better grasp of each topic.*

2. **Three Exams** (3 x 50 points = 150/2 = 75 Points): Three exams will be used to evaluate to what extent students have mastered the course objectives. Each exam will have a minimum of 4 short essays, normally 2-3 paragraphs each. Each exam should take 90 minutes to write.

3. **One Term Paper** (10 points for Rough Draft; 40 points for graded Final Draft; 10 + 40 = 50 Points): One full, term paper of no less than 1,500 words will be started in class in March, turned in as a rough draft at the end of April, and completed by May. Applying the skills and content learned in class, students will:
   - (a) develop appropriate thesis statements,
   - (b) use resources judiciously,
   - (c) develop arguments that support their theses

4. **Attendance, Preparation, and Participation** (4 points per week): Since you are responsible for any and all material covered in class, regular attendance is essential to doing well. As with any other skill, you cannot develop philosophical abilities without practice. And practicing philosophy means, among other things, discussing philosophical issues with others. Accordingly, I will not only expect you to be in class, but also to participate regularly and thoughtfully in class discussions. I assign points in this category along the following lines:
   - 4 = Regular attendance and regular, thoughtful contributions in class discussion.
   - 3 = Regular attendance but irregular/uneven contributions to class discussion.
   - 1-2 = Irregular attendance and/or little, no, or disruptive contribution to class discussions.

The official grades issued by the School for Professional Studies to indicate the assessment of the student’s performance are listed below:

- **A**: 4.0 High achievement and intellectual initiative.
- **A-**: 3.7 Approaching high achievement.
- **B+**: 3.3 Slightly higher than above average achievement.
- **B**: 3.0 Above average achievement.
- **B-**: 2.7 Approaching above average achievement.
- **C+**: 2.3 Slightly higher than average achievement.
- **C**: 2.0 Average achievement.
- **C-**: 1.7 Below average achievement.
- **D**: 1.0 Inferior, but passing achievement.
- **F**: 0.0 Failure.
- **AF**: Failure due to unauthorized withdrawal, failure to take required examinations, turn in assignments, or excessive absences. This grade is computed in the GPA as a failing grade.
- **I**: Course work incomplete due to unusual or extraordinary circumstances (see details below).

**Basic Policies:**

**Attendance Policy:**
Your success in this course will heavily depend on your attendance and participation in the classroom. You are expected to be present for every meeting of the course. If you are unable to attend a class or will be late for a class, you must notify the instructor in advance of the absence. The instructor reserves the right to make judgment on accepting and/or making-up assignments missed because of class absence. Un-excused absences may result in failure of the course.

**Courtesy Expectations:**
Students will treat their classroom obligations as they would treat any serious professional engagement. That includes:
1) Preparing thoroughly for each session in accordance with the instructor’s request;
2) Arriving promptly and remaining until the end of each class meeting;
3) Participating fully and constructively in all classroom activities and discussions;
4) Displaying appropriate courtesy to all involved in the class sessions. Courteous behavior specifically entails communicating in a
manner that respects, and is sensitive to, the cultural, religion, sexual and other individual differences in the SLU community;
5) Adhering to deadlines and timetables established by the instructor;
6) Providing constructive feedback to faculty members regarding their performance.

SLU Academic Integrity
The following is a statement of minimum standards for student academic integrity at Saint Louis University:
The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. As members of this community, students share with faculty and administrators the responsibility to maintain this environment of academic integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty in submitting for academic evaluation the assignments and tests required to validate the student's learning.

Where there is clear indication of such dishonesty, the faculty and/or administration have the responsibility of applying sanctions in order to protect the environment of integrity necessary for learning. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, the following instances should be seen as actions that not only violate the mutual trust necessary between faculty and students, but also undermine the validity of the university's grading of students, and take unfair advantage of fellow students. It is academically dishonest to solicit, receive or provide any unauthorized assistance in the completion of assignments and tests submitted for credit as part of a course. Examples of such unauthorized, and therefore academically dishonest assistance would be:

1. Copying from another student's test paper, lab report or assignment, or allowing another student to copy from one's self;
2. Copying from a textbook or class notes during a closed-book exam;
3. Submitting material authored by another person but represented as the student's own work;
4. Submitting as one's own work/material without permission of the instructor that has been subjected to editorial revision;
5. Copying a passage of text directly from a book or journal without indicating the source or without using a recognized style for citing sources;
6. Taking a test or writing a paper for another student;
7. Taking a course for another student or securing another student to take a course for oneself;
8. Securing or supplying in advance a copy of an exam without the knowledge or consent of the instructor.

Possible sanctions for a violation of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Disability Services:
In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:
-- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
--University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314-977-8885 or to visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.