INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
PHIL 1301.001 Fall 2013
Time: Monday & Wednesday 3:30-4:45 Location: CI-106

Instructor: Prof. Glenn Tiller
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Office hours: Monday & Wednesday 1:15-3:15; Tuesday 11:15-12:15; and by appointment.

Course Description
This course is an introduction to the problems and practice of philosophy. We begin with some general considerations on the nature and relevance of philosophy. We will also familiarize ourselves with the basic tools of logical reasoning. Next we will inquire into fundamental questions in the areas of epistemology and metaphysics, such as “What is knowledge?”, “Do we have free will?”, “What is the relationship between the mind and the body?”, and “Does God exist?”. Our inquiry into these questions will involve examining both classic and contemporary readings.

Student Learning Outcomes
Successful completion of the course provides you with a foundational understanding of Western philosophical thought. In particular, you will be familiar with basic logical, epistemological and metaphysical issues discussed in classic and contemporary literature. These outcomes will be measured through in-class quizzes and tests, and take-home essay assignments. By the end of the course, you will be conversant in basics of logic (e.g. recognizing arguments, argument forms, and using terms of appraisal). You will also be able to compose philosophical essays on topics such as the mind-body problem, the existence of God, and freedom of the will. Ideally, you will develop a richer, more coherent understanding of the nature philosophical inquiry and begin forming a philosophical perspective of your own. Since much of our time is spent on close textual analysis, you will also improve your reading comprehension skills and strengthen your abilities to construct logical arguments.

Required Text
2. Readings distributed in class.

Course Website
To get to the course website, go to the main philosophy page at: http://philosophy.tamucc.edu/
Click on the tab “Courses” and you’ll find a link for our course. Note: to fully access the philosophy website, login using your “islander” email account.
Attendance
Regular attendance will be taken. All materials discussed in lectures and covered in the readings are the potential basis for quiz and test questions. Students are therefore expected to attend all lectures and keep up with assigned readings. Any student who misses more than three classes without a reasonable excuse (e.g. medical) can expect to be penalized (up to a letter grade) on their final grade. If you don’t attend class, don’t expect to pass.

Requirements
Percentage of Final Mark

1. Précis, September 9  
   5%  
   Worth
   Description: Provide a brief synopsis of Bertrand Russell’s “The Value of Philosophy”. Further instructions will be provided in class.

2. Ten reading quizzes  
   20%  
   Worth
   Description: Short quizzes held at the start of class, usually answerable in a word or sentence.

3. In class test, October 23  
   15%  
   Worth
   Description: General test consisting of some combination of true/false, multiple choice, short and long answer questions. It will cover all materials up to and including October 21 and will take the entire period to write.

4. Essay, November 11  
   20%  
   Worth
   Description: Essay topic and specific instructions to be distributed in class.

5. In class test, December 9  
   Worth
   Description: General test with the same structure as the first test. Will cover all materials up to and including December 4.

6. Essay, Due by the end of the exam period  
   Worth
   Description: Essay topics and specific instructions for this essay to be distributed in class.

Grading Scale
All grades will be assigned on the standard scale: 90%-100% = A, 80%-89% = B, 70%-79% = C, 60%-69% = D, 59% and below = F.

**Missed Test Policy**
Students unable to write a test for a *medical reason* must provide a doctor’s note. If a student is unable to write a test for a similarly serious reason, documentation may be required. Make-up tests will be written at an arranged time under my supervision.

**Freedom of Speech and Classroom Etiquette**
You are free to ask any question you please about the material. In many cases if you did not understand something, this is because it was not explained clearly to you, so you will be doing your colleagues and yourself a service if you request clarification. You are also free to argue for any philosophical position you find compelling, *as long as you provide reasons for your point of view*. It is inevitable that during discussions individual points of view will differ. When they do, our reaction will *always* be to patiently listen to the reasons offered for a particular conclusion and cooperatively evaluate those reasons.

**E-etiquette**
*Turn off all cell phones before entering the classroom.* If your cell phone rings during class, I will stop the lecture. Any student who disrupts a lecture by using a personal electronic device will be asked to leave.

**Advisement**
Academic advisors are available to assist students with course selection, degree plans, and other academic matters. Each college has an academic advising center, staffed by full-time, professional advisors. For the College of Liberal Arts the undergraduate advisor is Linda Miller (825-3466; linda.miller@tamucc.edu). The graduate advisor is Rachelle Stanley (825-5896; Rachelle.stanley@tamucc.edu). Both are located on the second floor of Driftwood. Students who have yet to declare a major are advised by the Academic Advising Transition Center. For more information please call (361) 825-5931 or log on to http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac.

**Notice to Students with Disabilities**
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.
Grade Appeal Process
As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. If the problem cannot be resolved at this level, the student may take the steps below.

1. Presentation of grievance to instructor. (This step must be taken within fourteen calendar days after the beginning of the next term.)
2. Appeal to department chair or area coordinator.
3. Written appeal to the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
4. Preliminary review and advising by an ombudsman appointed by the Provost.
5. Submission of file by department chair to the chair of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee.
6. Review of file by committee chair and submission of case to committee.
7. Proceedings of the University Academic Standards Grievance Committee. (Committee holds hearing, reviews data, presents findings to all parties, and makes recommendation to Provost.)
8. Decision by Provost.
9. Final appeal in writing to the Provost if student or instructor thinks appropriate procedures have not been followed.

For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at: http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.htm. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.

Important Dates
September 4, Wednesday Classes begin
September 11, Wednesday Last day to register or add a class
November 15, Friday Last day to drop a class
November 28-29, Thursday-Friday Thanksgiving Holidays
December 9, Monday Last day to withdraw from the University
December 10, Tuesday Last day of classes
Last day to apply for May 2014 graduation
December 11, Wednesday Reading Day
December 12-13, Thursday-Friday Final examinations
December 16-18, Monday-Wednesday

The Fine Print
For all other matters concerning course withdrawal, appeal of grades, academic misconduct, etc, students are strongly advised to consult the rules outlined in the Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi Student Handbook and on the web at: http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/.

TOPICS AND READINGS
*Readings and schedule subject to change

Week 1 (Sept. 4): Introduction & Course Mechanics
*No Readings*

Week 2 (Sept. 9, 11,): Why Study Philosophy? & Logic I
Readings: (1) Think, “Introduction”; (2) Spinoza, “Treatise on the Emendation of the Intellect”.

Week 3 (Sept. 16, 18): Why Study Philosophy? Logic II
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 6 “Reasoning”; (2) Russell, “The Value of Philosophy”.

Week 4 (Sept. 23, 25): Epistemology & Logic III
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 6 “Reasoning”; (2) chpt. 1 “Knowledge”; (3) Descartes, “Meditations” I & II

Week 5 (Sept. 30, Oct.2): Epistemology & Logic IV
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 6 “Reasoning”; (2) chpt. 1 “Knowledge”; (3) Descartes, “Meditations” I & II
Week 6 (Oct. 7, 9): Mind & Body
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 2 “Mind”; (2) Churchland, “A Critique of Dualism”; (3) Nagel, “What is it like to be a bat?” (3) Jackson, “Epiphenomenal Qualia”.

Week 7 (Oct. 14, 16): Mind & Body
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 2 “Mind”; (2) Churchland, “A Critique of Dualism”; (3) Nagel, “What is it like to be a bat?” (3) Jackson, “Epiphenomenal Qualia”.

Week 8 (Oct. 21, 23): General Review & Test 1
No Readings

Week 9 (Oct. 28, 30): Free Will
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 3 “Free Will”; (2) Shopenhauer, “Essay on the Freedom of the Will”; (3) Stace, “Compatibilism”.

Week 10 (Nov. 4, 6): Free Will

Week 11 (Nov. 11, 13): Personal Identity
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 4 “The Self”.

Week 12 (Nov. 18, 20): The Existence of God
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 5 “God”; (2) Aquinas, “The Five Ways”; (3) Richard Taylor, “The Cosmological Argument”.

Week 13 (Nov. 25, 27): The Existence of God
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 5 “God”; (2) Behe, “Molecular Machines: Experimental Support for the Design Inference”; (3) Kitcher, “Born-Again Creationism”.

Week 14 (Dec. 2, 4): The Existence of God
Readings: (1) Think, chpt. 5 “God”; (2) Mackie, “Evil and Omnipotence”; (3) Swinburne, “Why God Allows Evil”.

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Week 16 (Dec. 9): TEST 2
Readings: No Readings