AMERICAN PHILOSOPHY
Phil 3327.001        Spring 2016
Time: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:15   Location: EN-108

Instructor: Dr. Glenn Tiller
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Phone: 825-6008
Office hours: Monday and Wednesday 12:30-3:00 and by appointment.

Course Description
This course is an introduction to American philosophy and the influential movement known as ‘Pragmatism’. We will focus on three major philosophers from the classical period: Charles Sanders Peirce (1839-1914), William James (1842-1910), and George Santayana (1863-1952). Our primary concern will be with epistemological and metaphysical issues: scepticism, the rejection of foundationalism, the role of belief in inquiry, verification and meaning, the nature of truth, and the idea that the habits of human conduct must provide the basis for philosophical analysis. No familiarity with the material will be presupposed but familiarity with the history of modern philosophy is definitely an asset.

Course Objectives
Successful completion of the course provides you with both a historical and a philosophical understanding of classic American philosophy. You will know the origins and the significance of the pragmatist movement. You will deepen your understanding of perennial philosophical issues in the areas of epistemology and metaphysics. By the end of the course you will be conversant with the nature and origins of pragmatism; and you will be able to write philosophical essays on the major figures in American philosophy. 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. These outcomes will be measured through in-class quizzes and tests and take-home essay assignments.

Readings & Online Resources
All readings will be posted on Blackboard. Additional online material (syllabus, announcements, test review, etc.) will also be posted to Blackboard.

Attendance
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. Attendance will be taken. Students who repeatedly miss 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.
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<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Percentage of Final Mark</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Ten reading quizzes</td>
<td>Worth 10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Description: Short quizzes held at the start of class based on assigned readings.</td>
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<td>2. In class test, March 10</td>
<td>Worth 25%</td>
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<td>Description: General test. Format TBA. The test will cover all materials up to and including March 8.</td>
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<td>3. Essay (1000 words max.), April 5</td>
<td>Worth 30%</td>
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<td>Description: Essay topic and specific instructions to be distributed in class no later than March 22.</td>
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<td>4. Essay (1500 words max.), End of Exam Period</td>
<td>Worth 35%</td>
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<td>Description: Topic TBA (a few weeks before the end of class) but it will concern the philosophy of Santayana.</td>
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**Grading Scale**
All grades will be assigned on the standard grading 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.

Academic Advising

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466 or log onto [http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac](http://www.tamucc.edu/~aac).

Disability Services

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall, Room #116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Grade Appeal Process

Students who feel that they have not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in this class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website: [http://cla.tamucc.edu студентов/studentinfo.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu студентов/studentinfo.html)

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s Office.
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/.

Important Dates
January 20  Wednesday Classes begin
January 27  Wednesday Last day to register or add a class
March 14-18  Monday-Friday Spring Break
March 21  Monday First Day of Classes 2nd 7-week session
March 23  Wednesday Grades Due for 1st 7-Week Session
April 8  Friday Last day to drop a class
May 2  Monday Last day to withdraw from the University
May 3  Tuesday Last day of classes
May 4  Wednesday Reading Day
May 5-6  Thursday-Friday; Final examinations

SCHEDULE OF READINGS
Reading assignments will be posted approximately a week in advance on the course website. The following list of readings is tentative and subject to change. However each of the readings listed below is relevant to this course and therefore recommended.

January 21 – February 18  Charles Sanders Peirce
Some Consequences of Four Incapacities
The Fixation of Belief
How to Make Our Ideas Clear
What Is a Sign?
The Categories and the Study of Signs
A Neglected Argument for the Reality of God
Selections from Misak Truth and the End of Inquiry

February 23 – March 24  William James
Pragmatism
The Tigers in India
Humanism and Truth
The Stream of Consciousness
The Will to Believe
Is Life Worth Living?
On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings
A World of Pure Experience

March 29 – May 3  George Santayana
Selections from *Scepticism and Animal Faith*
Selections from *Realms of Being*
Selections from *The Life of Reason*
Some Meanings of the Word “Is”
Normal Madness