

Montgomery County Community College
 PHI 100
 Introduction to Philosophy
 3-3-0

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

A general introduction to philosophical issues and the methods of philosophical investigation. The course may be essentially historical in its approach or essentially problem-focused. Readings may be drawn from 'big names' in the history of philosophy (e.g., Aristotle, Plato, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, Locke, Hume, Mill, and others) or from contemporary 'state-of-the-discipline' sources, or from both. Issues will include some from the following, among others: freewill and determinism; ethical relativism v ethical objectivism; the existence and rationality of belief in the existence of a god; the mind and body problem and the problem of other minds; the nature of persons and the possibility of artificial persons (thinking computers); applied philosophy issues such as the problem of abortion, the problem of same-sex marriage, the problem of death penalty.

REQUISITES:

Previous Course Requirements

None

Concurrent Course Requirements

None

LEARNING OUTCOMES Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
1. Explain the Five Proofs for the existence of God of Thomas Aquinas and state the standard objections to each of these proofs.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
2. Explain the difference between faith and grounded belief and the relationship between the two.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
3. Explain the "problem of evil" as it is employed as an argument against the existence of God.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
4. Explain the difference between the following views of the nature of morality: Ethical Relativism, Ethical Objectivism, Ethical Skepticism, Ethical Subjectivism, Ethical Nihilism and explain the standard objections to each of these views.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
5. Explain the 'Divine Command' attempt to provide an objective foundation for morality, and explain the standard objections to this view.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
6. Explain the non-self-refuting meaning of the relativist's claim that it is wrong to make moral judgments about members of groups that do not share one's moral principles.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
7. Explain the mind-body problem, and describe the major attempts that have been offered to resolve the problem, and state the standard objections to each of these attempts.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
8. Explain the difference between the thesis of "Strong Artificial Intelligence" and "Weak Artificial Intelligence."	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers

LEARNING OUTCOMES	LEARNING ACTIVITIES	EVALUATION METHODS
9. Explain the difference between the concept "genetic human" and the concept "moral human" (or "person") and explain the importance of this distinction in the context of discussions of the abortion controversy.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
10. Explain the difference between rationalism and empiricism.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
11. Explain various views of the justification for state imposed punishment.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
12. Explain the following terms: Ethics; epistemology; metaphysics; aesthetics; philosophical theology; philosophical anthropology; theodicy.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
13. Explain the difference between the determinist position, the libertarian position, and the compatibilist position in the context of the "freewill" debate.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers
14. Explain the relevance of the following "philosophical" problems to everyday life: the mind-body problem; the freewill-determinism problem; the knowledge-skepticism problem; the justified belief-faith problem; the relativism-objectivism problem.	Reading Lecture Class Discussion	Exams Quizzes Short Papers

At the conclusion of each semester/session, assessment of the learning outcomes will be completed by course faculty using the listed evaluation method(s). Aggregated results will be submitted to the Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs. The benchmark for each learning outcome is that *70% of students will meet or exceed outcome criteria.*

SEQUENCE OF TOPICS:

1. Very Elementary Logic
2. The Nature of Morality
3. The Existence of God
4. The Permissibility of Abortion
5. The Nature of Persons
6. Artificial persons

LEARNING MATERIALS:

Problems From Philosophy, 3rd edition, by James Rachels and Stuart Rachels.
McGraw-Hill, 2011

Other learning materials may be required and made available directly to the student and/or via the College's Libraries and/or course management system.

COURSE APPROVAL:

Prepared by: Benjamin F. Armstrong, Jr.	Date: 4/2004
Revised by: Benjamin F. Armstrong, Jr.	Date: 2/2013
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification: Victoria L. Bastecki-Perez, Ed.D.	Date: 6/13/2013
Revised by: Benjamin F. Armstrong, Jr.	Date: 12/16/2017
VPAA/Provost or designee Compliance Verification:	Date: 12/18/2017



This course is consistent with Montgomery County Community College's mission. It was developed, approved and will be delivered in full compliance with the policies and procedures established by the College.