

Philosophy 110W-03: Introduction to Philosophy  
Fall 2007  
Tues, Thurs: 9:00am - 10:15am  
Root 203

Hamilton College  
Russell Marcus  
Office: 210 College Hill Road, Room 201  
Email: rmarcus1@hamilton.edu

## Syllabus

### Objectives:

This course will survey a range of topics of interest to philosophers and prepare the student for further work in several areas of philosophy. We will examine some perennial philosophical questions and their treatments by both classical thinkers and more contemporary philosophers. Topics to be discussed include the existence of God, the possibility of knowledge, the problem of induction, identity and material constitution, the nature of mind, the nature of the good, and the relationship between the individual and the state.

### Texts:

Steven M. Cahn, ed., *Philosophy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Oxford University Press, 2003. (Required)  
Additional articles may be posted on the course website, and will be indicated in class.  
My lecture notes will be posted on the course website after class.

### Overview of Requirements

Successful study of philosophy requires both quiet study and active engagement. Students in this course will be expected to complete readings before class and participate in class discussions and activities. Students will be asked to prepare written assignments at home (papers) and in class (the final exam). Additionally, each student will be asked to prepare a short in-class presentation in the second half of the course.

For each topic below, I will prepare reading guides, which are lists of questions corresponding to each reading. You can use the reading guides to help you determine your comprehension of the assignments. In addition, the final exam will be based directly on the reading guides. I will distribute detailed instructions for each paper assignment at least two weeks before its due date. I will also prepare specific guidelines for your in-class presentations.

### On-Line Resources

The website for this course is: [thatmarcusfamily.org/philosophy/Intro\\_F07/Course\\_Home.htm](http://thatmarcusfamily.org/philosophy/Intro_F07/Course_Home.htm)  
Only very limited material will be available on the Blackboard course pages, though I will use Blackboard to post grades. The Blackboard page does include a link to the course website.

The course website includes, or will include, an html syllabus, all handouts, lecture notes, all assignments, and links to good philosophy websites.

### Tentative Schedule:

The following list of readings is ambitious. We may drop or add some topics on the basis of time and/or class interest. The on-line syllabus will be kept up-to-date. Page numbers below refer to the Cahn reader. In addition to the readings listed here, each section of the Cahn reader contains brief introductions which may be helpful.

I. Philosophy of Religion: August 28 - September 4

- Saint Anselm, "The Ontological Argument," pp 24-5.
- Gaunilo, "In Behalf of the Fool," pp 26-7.
- Immanuel Kant, "Critique of the Ontological Argument," pp 27-8.
- G. E. Moore, "Is Existence a Predicate?" pp 28-31.
- William L. Rowe, "Why the Ontological Argument Fails," pp 32-5.
- Saint Thomas Aquinas, "Five Ways to Prove the Existence of God," pp 35-6.
- Michael Martin, "The Cosmological Argument," pp 37-9.
- David Hume, "Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion," pp 39-72.

II. Epistemology: September 6 - 20

- René Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy," pp 101-9.
- John Locke, "An Essay Concerning Human Understanding," pp 110-5.
- George Berkeley "Three Dialogues Between Hylas and Philonous," pp 115-137.
- G. E. Moore, "Proof of an External World," pp 137-9.
- Ludwig Wittgenstein, "On Certainty," pp 140-51.
- Roderick M. Chisholm, "The Problem of the Criterion," pp 152-160.

III. Philosophy of Science: September 25 - October 4

- David Hume, "An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding," pp 241-5.
- Brian Skyrms, "The Traditional Problem of Induction," pp 245-9.
- Gilbert Harman, "The Inference to the Best Explanation," pp 249-253.
- Rudolf Carnap, "The Experimental Method," pp 254-7.
- Carl Hempel, "Aspects of Scientific Explanation," pp 257-64.
- Nancy Cartwright, "The Truth Doesn't Explain Much," pp 265-9.
- Nelson Goodman, "The New Riddle of Induction," pp 269-273.

IV. Metaphysics: October 9 - 25

- David Hume, "Of the Idea of Necessary Connection," pp 369-77.
- David Lewis, "Causation," pp 377-84.
- Bertrand Russell, "On the Relations of Universals and Particulars," pp 290-300.
- D. M. Armstrong, "Properties," pp 300-8.
- John Locke, "Of Identity and Diversity," pp 330-7.
- Sydney Shoemaker, "Personal Identity and Memory," pp 337-45.
- Derek Parfit, "Personal Identity," 345-58.
- Aristotle, "Of Motion," 358-61.
- Max Black, "Achilles and the Tortoise," 362-8.

V. Philosophy of Mind: October 30 - November 8

- René Descartes, "Meditations on First Philosophy," pp 432-38.
- B. F. Skinner, "The Causes of Behavior," pp 438-43.
- J. J. C. Smart, "Sensations and Brain Processes," pp 443-50.
- Jerry A. Fodor, "The Mind-Body Problem," pp 451-9.
- Alan Turing, "Computing Machinery and Intelligence," pp 460-75.
- John Searle, "Can Computers Think?" pp 475-81.
- Zenon Pylyshyn, "The 'Causal Power' of Machines," pp 482-5.
- Terrance Horgan, "Functionalism, Qualia, and the Inverted Spectrum," pp 485-9.

VI. Ethics: November 15 - 29

- J. L. Mackie, "The Subjectivity of Values," pp 561-8.
- Ronald Dworkin, "A Critique of Mackie," pp 568-70.
- Renford Bambrough, "A Proof of the Objectivity of Morals," pp 570-4.
- John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism," pp 575-80.
- Robert Nozick, "The Experience Machine," pp 580-1.
- Immanuel Kant, "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals," pp 582-6.
- Onora O'Neill, "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics," pp 587-9.
- W. D. Ross, "The Right and the Good," pp 589-93.

VII. Political Philosophy: November 29 - December 6

- Thomas Hobbes, "Leviathan," pp 705-12.
- John Locke, "Second Treatise of Government," pp 713-9.
- John Rawls, "A Theory of Justice," pp 720-30.
- Robert Nozick, "Anarchy, State, and Utopia," pp 731-41.
- G.A. Cohen, "Illusions About Private Property and Freedom," pp 741-50.

**Assignments, Grading, and Some Tentative Due Dates**

1. All the readings listed above, plus any others announced in class, and on the course website
2. In-class participation (10%)
3. One ten-to-fifteen minute in-class presentation (10%)  
A sign-up schedule will be distributed in class.
4. Four three-to-five page (750-1500 words) essays (60% total, 15% each)  
Paper 1 due: September 11  
Paper 2 due: October 9  
Paper 3 due: November 13  
Paper 4 due: December 6
5. Final exam (20%)  
December 14, 2pm - 5pm

**Important Notes:**

- Late papers may be accepted, but if they are, they will be penalized. Please do not make me penalize your paper for lateness.
- You may re-write one short paper, for a possible improved grade, during the term. You may not re-write the last paper.
- All rewrites must be completed by December 4.

**The Hamilton College Honor Code will be enforced.**

### **Some General Notes on Writing and the Oral Presentation**

This course is designated as writing-intensive, which means that you will write often, and have the opportunity to re-write in response to comments. You are always welcome to receive my comments on a paper, **in advance of the due date**. I do not have strict guidelines about how much time you must give me before the due date, but you must not expect me to provide comments in less than two full days. You may re-write one graded assignment, with the possibility of an improved grade, during the term.

Many Hamilton students take advantage of the excellent writers and tutors at the writing center, located in K-J 209. I do not require that you use the writing center, but I may make a strong suggestion that you do so after the first paper. You may approach them with early drafts of a paper, or even earlier in the writing process. You must make appointments, which you can do easily at their website: [my.hamilton.edu/writing/index.html](http://my.hamilton.edu/writing/index.html)

Similarly, the Oral Communication Center, in K-J 152, can help you prepare an effective presentation. If you wish, you can practice your presentation, and have it recorded and analyzed. If you wish to do use the OCC, you should make an appointment early. See their website [academics.hamilton.edu/occ/labhours.pdf](http://academics.hamilton.edu/occ/labhours.pdf) for more information

Both the Writing Center and the Oral Communications Center have an astoundingly wonderful set of resources to help you write and speak more effectively.