

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE
Department of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus
PHIL 101 Introduction to Philosophy (Section 003 CRN 30985)
TR 12:30-1:45 SS 120 1/27 – 5/12
Spring 2015

Instructor Information

Assistant Professor Daniel G. Jenkins, MA
Philosophy Coordinator, Takoma Park/Silver Spring

Cell Phone: 443-690-2557

Office Phone: 240-567-1395

Email: Daniel.Jenkins2@montgomerycollege.edu

Alt email: jenkins.philosophy@gmail.com

Website: <http://danjenkins.strangiato.com>

Office: CM 202-H

Office Hours: Thursday 2:00 PM – 5:00 PM, and by appointment.

Course Description

Course or Program Description: (from most current catalog) Introduction to philosophical analysis of the problem of knowledge, the problem of reality, and the problem of the good. Major philosophical attitudes of Western civilization are introduced. Special attention is paid to some of the philosophical implications of contemporary natural and social science. The basic themes of the course are that the major questions philosophy deals with are present in the lives of all persons; that we must clarify the questions, if possible, before we try to answer them; and that the basic questions are always concerned with the nature and meaning of human existence. (HUMD)
PREREQUISITES: Completion of at least 12 college credits, a 3.2 grade point average or higher, and a grade of A or B in EN 101 or EN 101A. Assessment level: MA 100. Three hours each week.

Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course/program a student will be able to:

1. Describe humankind's perennial issues and questions in a thematic way: what is real, true and good.
2. Begin comprehending basic questions or metaphysics: such as, questions of "God", personal identity, and being in the world.
3. Identify historical and current interpretations of truth and knowledge.
4. Analyze ethical concepts such as: what is good, what is right in a multicultural society.
5. Distinguish between aesthetic and non-aesthetic experiences.
6. Critically evaluate different schools of philosophical thinking.

Required Textbooks

John Perry, Michael Bratman, and John Martin Fischer. *Introduction to Philosophy: Classical and Contemporary Readings, Fifth Edition*. ISBN: 978-0-19-539036-0

Grades

There are a total of 1000 possible points to earn in the class.

Grades will be rendered according to the following scale:

90-100% of total possible points	–	A
80-89% of total possible points	–	B
70-79% of total possible points	–	C
60-69% of total possible points	–	D
Below 60% of total possible points	–	F

Final Grades will be determined as follows:

Attendance and Participation	10% of Final Grade (100 points)
Philosophy Journal	10% of Final Grade (100 points)
Test 1	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Test 2	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Midterm	20% of Final Grade (200 points)
Final Exam	20% of Final Grade (200 points)

Grading Policy

Attendance and Participation

Your attendance and participation grade is a grade like any other, and will be based on merit. If you come to every class, arrive on time to class, and routinely make relevant, insightful contributions to class discussion, you will receive 100/100 points for attending and participating. If your attendance and punctuality are perfect but your participation is average, you can expect 75-85 points. If your participation is excellent and your attendance and punctuality are average, you can expect 75-85 points. Your grade will be lower if you fail to come to class, fail to arrive on time, fail to make relevant contributions to class discussion, are engaged in other activities (cell phone use, internet browsing, side conversations), or are disruptive.

If you miss more than 2 classes for any reason, you will fail your attendance and participation grade. If you are late or leave early more than 4 times for any reason, you will fail your attendance and participation grade.

Questions during class discussion are welcomed and encouraged. Be aware that much of the course material can be controversial, and that discussions are discussions of ideas, never attacks on those who hold ideas. You are expected to maintain an attitude of respect to all during class discussions.

Homework

You will keep a Philosophy Journal, worth 100 points. You will write 10 entries over the duration of the course (worth 10 points each), and in 1-2 pages (or 300-600 words) per entry, you will address the journal entry topic. Journal entries are designed to get you thinking about the course when you're not in the classroom, and to give you the opportunity to express ideas you may not have had a chance to bring up in class discussion. So, read the journal entry topic, think about the question, and use this occasion to be an original, creative thinker! Please type your journal entries. Although you will write journal entries throughout the course, I will only collect the journal entries twice during the semester; at the time of the midterm exam and during the last week of class. Details will follow on an assignment sheet.

Tests

There will be 2 tests in which you will be required to respond in short answer and essay format. Each test is worth 200 points.

Midterm Exam

There is a comprehensive, cumulative midterm examination, worth 200 points. It will consist of short answer and essay questions.

Final Exam

There is a comprehensive, cumulative final examination, worth 200 points. It will consist of short answer and essay questions.

General Expectations

All students are expected to complete all of the assignments required for this course. Failure to complete all assignments can be considered wasted opportunities. These assignments are merely opportunities for you to showcase your individual abilities as a scholar and lover of wisdom. Make certain you take advantage of all of these opportunities!

Other Course Policies

Attendance, Participation, Lateness, and Exam Policies

Attendance is mandatory. In order to gain as much as possible from this class it is imperative that you come to every class and arrive on time to class. Once here, you will demonstrate that you completed assigned readings through your informed contributions to class discussion. However, philosophy is more than remembering the ideas of others; it is using critical thinking skills in combination with your own interest to bring novel approaches to bear

on understanding and interpreting the subject matter. If you miss class you are responsible for getting notes and assignments from a classmate. Please come to every class, and come prepared to participate.

All assignments are due on the date indicated in class. If you hand in an assignment late, 1 letter grade will be deducted from your grade on the assignment per class period of lateness, up to a maximum of two class periods. For example, if you hand in a homework assignment on which you receive 90%, but you hand it in one class period late, you will not get a 90 but instead an 80. If you hand it in 2 class periods late, you will get a 70 instead of a 90. After two class periods of lateness an assignment will not be accepted. Please hand in all assignments on time.

You may not submit your work to me electronically unless I indicate that you may do so. When you do submit your work to me electronically, you must cut and paste your work into the body of the email; I will not open attached coursework. If you attach your work instead of including it in the body of an email, you will receive a late grade and must resubmit your work in the body of an email.

If you miss an exam, quiz, or test you must be able to provide evidence of serious illness or tragedy in order to make up the exam, quiz, or test. If possible, you must contact me prior to missing the exam, quiz, or test. In the absence of a Dr.'s note or similar item, you will not be able to make-up missed exams, quizzes, or tests. Vacations do not excuse you from taking exams, quizzes, or tests on their scheduled dates. Please arrive on time and prepared for every exam, quiz, and test.

Classroom Conduct Policy

Please respect the views of all students. Classroom discussions are discussions of ideas, and should never be attacks on the people who express those ideas. Please do not hold side conversations. You may absolutely never employ cell phones or other electronic devices in class. You may use a laptop to take notes unless it is discovered that you are using the laptop for other purposes. No eating or drinking in the classroom. Disruptive behavior can result in being dropped from the course.

Writing Assignment Policy

Grades for all written assignments (homework, in-class assignments, papers, essays) will reflect the length, grammar, spelling, quality of content, and relevance (whether you understood and performed what was assigned, whether you addressed the issue at hand, and whether you answered the question posed) of your writing.

An "A" paper is substantial, well developed and effectively organized and presented. It demonstrates original or thoughtful engagement with content and sensitivity to diction, tone and style. Its sentences are clear, precise, and well-structured. The paper is appropriately and formatted and virtually error-free.

A "B" paper contains a number of the strengths of an A paper, but it typically lacks the thoughtfulness, originality, and sensitivity of the superior paper. It is also virtually error-free.

A "C" paper fulfills the assignment and is adequately organized. The writer communicates ideas and develops thesis, although supporting evidence may be minimal and organization rather mechanical. The writing is not marred by habitual or serious grammatical errors. Thought and expression are competent.

A "D" paper typically is marked by failure to focus on a thesis, poor organization, lack of development, or recurrent mechanical errors.

A "F" paper may ignore the terms of the assignment, or it may be devoid of thesis, support, or organizing principle. Typically it contains numerous mechanical errors that seriously interfere with comprehension; it may also be marred by serious errors in documentation.

Computer Access and Literacy Policy

Successful completion of this course requires you to access a computer and to be computer literate. You may be expected to sometimes read course material online, retrieve assignments from a website, complete them on a computer, and submit them to me via email or via Blackboard.

I do not provide technical support for your computer, your programs, your email, or your ISP. If you need technical support, you may contact the helpdesk by phone at 240-567-7222, or by email at ithelpdesk@montgomerycollege.edu.

If you need access to a computer, visit the Social Sciences Computer Center in the new Commons Building, or the general purpose/open access computer lab in ST 304. If you have a laptop, connecting to the internet on campus is possible via Montgomery College's wifi network. For details on connecting to the network, click the following link: <http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/oit/NetworkAndComputing.aspx?id=152>

When indicated, you may submit assignments online by emailing them to jenkins.philosophy@gmail.com.

Timely completion and submission of assignments is your responsibility. Inability to access a computer does not excuse you from the late-submission grade reductions.

Disability Support

Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. In order to receive accommodations, a letter from Disability Support Services (R-CB122; G-SA175; or TP-ST120) will be needed. Any student who may need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation must identify to the Disability Support Services Office; guidelines for emergency evacuations for individuals with disabilities are found at: www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/evacprocedures.htm.

The Takoma Park/Silver Spring DSS office is located on the first floor of the ST building. Here is contact information for the DSS office, as taken from the DSS website:

- Dr. Cathy Wilson, Counselor: Cathy.Wilson@montgomerycollege.edu Room ST137 240-567-1475 (VOICE or TTY).
- Edward Muchene, Counselor: Edward.Muchene@montgomerycollege.edu Room ST138 240-567-1477 (VOICE).
- Renee Gisriel, Student Services Specialist: Renee.Gisriel@montgomerycollege.edu Room ST227 240-567-1610 (VOICE).
- <http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/>

Please note that even if you are entitled to take tests in the testing center, **deadlines still apply**. If you do not take a test by the due date, you will receive a zero for that test. It is your responsibility to schedule appointments at the testing center in a timely fashion. Test dates are available in the course calendar at the end of this syllabus; please schedule your test appointments now.

Also, students with disabilities are expected to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct:

http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/pnp/#Chapter_4

Academic Integrity

The maintenance of the highest standards of intellectual honesty is the concern of every student, faculty and staff member at Montgomery College. As students participating in higher level learning, plagiarism, cheating, and any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this learning environment. When an individual participates in any type of academic dishonesty she/he is simply expressing his/her lack of belief in her/his own abilities to excel in the pursuit of knowledge. In this course, plagiarism is the most severe offense. If you are not certain what qualifies as plagiarism, please discuss your questions with me, so that any problems can be avoided.

The Student Code of Conduct identifies the following as academically dishonest activities:

- 1 Cheating on assignments or examinations
- 2 Plagiarizing from written, video, or Internet resources
- 3 Using tests or other material without permission
- 4 Forgery
- 5 Submitting materials that are not the student's own
- 6 Taking examinations in the place of another student, including assessment tests
- 7 Assisting others in committing academic dishonesty
- 8 Failing to use quotation marks for directly quoted material unless using block quotes or other accepted formats.
- 9 Copying from another student during an examination

If you are found to have engaged in academic dishonesty, you will receive an "F" for the assignment or assessment in question. Make the most out of this learning opportunity by making your work your own! If you have any further questions regarding academic dishonesty please refer to the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Classes

Please consult the college website and local television and radio programs to hear of weather-related college closings and delays. A message will be placed on the front page of the website in the event of a closure or delayed opening. Do not call security for information on weather-related closings and delays. You may call the Takoma Park/Silver Spring campus main number 240-567-1501, which will be updated with an automated message.

You can register for the "Montgomery College ALERT!" program to receive email and text message notifications about school emergencies, delays, and closings. For more information about the program, including information on how to register, click on the following link: <http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/EDU/Plain2.aspx?id=4106>

In the unlikely event that I have to cancel class I will do my best to notify you via email or phone. There will also be a notice posted on the door of our classroom and/or in our classroom.

Course Calendar

Week	Date	Reading Due	Topic	Due Dates	Tests and Exams
1	1/27, 1/29	See Reading Detail	What is Philosophy?		
2	2/3, 2/5	See Reading Detail	Socrates and Plato		
3	2/10, 2/12	See Reading Detail	Logic and Argument		
4	2/17, 2/19	See Reading Detail	Epistemology		Test 1 – Thursday 2/19
5	2/24, 2/26	See Reading Detail	Epistemology		
6	3/3, 3/5	See Reading Detail	Metaphysics	5 journal entries due Thursday 3/5	
7	3/10, 3/12	See Reading Detail			Midterm Exam Thursday 3/12
8	3/17, 3/19	<i>No Class</i>	<i>College Closed</i>	<i>Spring Break</i>	
9	3/24, 3/26	See Reading Detail	Metaphysics		
10	3/31, 4/2	See Reading Detail	Metaphysics		
11	4/7, 4/9	See Reading Detail	Metaphysics		Test 2 - Thursday 4/9
12	4/14, 4/16	See Reading Detail	Metaphysics		
13	4/21, 4/23	See Reading Detail	Philosophy of Religion		
14	4/28, 4/30	See Reading Detail	Philosophy of Religion		
15	5/5, 5/7	See Reading Detail	Ethics and Political Philosophy	5 journal entries due Thursday 5/7	
16	5/12				Final Exam Tuesday 5/12, 12:30 – 2:30 in classroom

Reading Detail

All reading listed below can be found in the course text *Introduction to Philosophy* by Perry, unless otherwise indicated.

Week	Author, Selection
1	Bertrand Russell, <i>The Value of Philosophy</i>
2	Plato, <i>Apology: Defence of Socrates</i>
3	Logic Handout; Plato, <i>Theaetetus</i> ; Gettier, <i>Is Justified True Belief Knowledge</i>
4	Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> ; Grau, <i>Bad Dreams, Evil Demons</i>
5	Hume, <i>Of Scepticism with Regard to the Senses</i> ; Hume, <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>
6	Russell, <i>The Argument from Analogy for Other Minds</i> ; Armstrong, <i>The Nature of Mind</i> ; Nagel, <i>What Is It Like to Be a Bat?</i> ; Jackson, <i>What Mary Didn't Know</i>
7	No reading assigned: Midterm Exam only
8	No reading assigned: Spring Break
9	Churchland, <i>Eliminative Materialism</i> ; Lewis, <i>Knowing What It's Like</i>

10	Chisholm, <i>Human Freedom and the Self</i> ; Turing, <i>Computing Machinery</i> ; van Inwagen, <i>The Powers of Rational Beings</i>
11	Dennett, <i>Intentional Systems</i>
12	Parfit, <i>Personal Identity</i> ; Dennett, <i>Where Am I?</i>
13	Handouts
14	Handouts
15	Bentham, <i>The Principle of Utility</i> ; Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i> ; Kant, <i>Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals</i> ; Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> ; Nozick, <i>Justice and Entitlement</i> ; Mill, <i>The Subjection of Women</i> ; Appiah, <i>Racisms</i>

Due Date Summary

Test 1	Midterm	Journal	Test 2	Journal	Final Exam

Check MyMC for details on specific dates for dropping, adding, refund, and related information.