

SEMESTER AT SEA COURSE SYLLABUS

Voyage: Fall 2013

Discipline: Philosophy

PHIL 1510: Philosophy of Human Nature

Division: Lower Division

Faculty Name: Brian R. Clack

Pre-requisites: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this lower division class we will consider some crucial questions about human nature. What is a human being? Are we entirely physical creatures, or do we have a spiritual component? What happens to us when we die? Are human beings essentially good or fundamentally wicked? What motivates us? Is there such a thing as 'human nature' at all, or are we entirely malleable reflections of culturally specific forces? These are just a few of the questions that will be considered. We will first consider the ontology of the human person, and then move on to examine various (and conflicting) conceptions of human nature (religious, philosophical, psychological and biological).

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. understand, articulate and analyze at least two of the historically dominant and/or contemporary views of human nature, including accounts of the mind/body relationship (e.g. substance dualism, behaviorism and physicalism);
2. understand, articulate and analyze accounts of personal identity and/or the possibility of post-mortem survival (e.g. resurrection and/or reincarnation);
3. understand, articulate and analyze contrasting cultural, philosophical and religious positions regarding the nature of human beings, their capabilities and place in the universe.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

AUTHOR: Leslie Stevenson, David Haberman and Peter Matthews Wright

TITLE: Twelve Theories of Human Nature

PUBLISHER: Oxford University Press

ISBN #: 978-0-19-985903-0

DATE/EDITION: 2013 / Sixth Edition

AUTHOR: Sigmund Freud

TITLE: Civilization and its Discontents

PUBLISHER: Norton

ISBN #: 978-0-393-30158-8

DATE: 1989

AUTHOR: Paul Edwards

TITLE: Immortality

PUBLISHER: Prometheus Books

ISBN #: 978-1573921305

DATE: 1997

TOPICAL OUTLINE OF COURSE

The course falls into two parts: *Theories of Mind, Death and Immortality* (days A1 – A12; and *Philosophical Theories of Human Nature* (days A13 – A24).

A1- August 27: Dualism: (I) Plato

READING: Edwards, chapter 1.

A2-August 29: Dualism (II): Descartes

READING: Edwards, chapter 5.

August 30-September 1: St. Petersburg

A3- September 3: Logical Behaviorism: Ryle and Wittgenstein

READING: Selections from *The Concept of Mind*, by Gilbert Ryle and *Philosophical Investigations* by Ludwig Wittgenstein (in electronic course material folder)

September 4-7: Hamburg

A4- September 9: Monism: Idealism and Classical Materialism: Berkeley, Epicurus and Lucretius

READING: Epicurus, *Principal Doctrines*, 'George Berkeley', by R. S. Woolhouse (both in electronic course materials folder) and Edwards, chapter 2.

September 10-12: Antwerp

September 13-15: Le Havre

A5- September 17: Contemporary Materialism

September 18: Arrive & Depart Galway

September 19: In Transit

September 20-21: Dublin

A6- September 23: Religious Views of Human Nature: (I) The Bible

READING: Stevenson, chapter 6.

ASSIGNMENT DUE: Reflection on Dublin, Berkeley and/or Wittgenstein

September 25-27: Lisbon

September 28-30: Cadiz

A7- October 1: Religious Views of Human Nature: (II) Islam

READING: Stevenson, chapter 7.

October 3-6: Casablanca

A8- October 7: Religious View of Human Nature: (III) Hinduism and Buddhism

READING: Stevenson, chapters 1-3.

A9- October 9: Life after Death: (I) Immortality of the Disembodied Soul

READING: Edwards, chapters 1, 5, 21-23; H. H. Price, 'Two Conceptions of the Next World' (in electronic course material folder)

A10- October 12: Life after Death: (II) Resurrection and Reincarnation

READING: Edwards, chapters 4, 18-20, 24, 25.

October 13-16: Tema

A11- October 18: Life after Death: (III) Evidence and Challenges

READING: Edwards, chapters 27-31.

A12- October 21: In-class **MID-TERM TEST** on issues in Mind, Death and Immortality.

October 23-27: Cape Town

A13- October 28: Plato

READING: Stevenson, chapter 4.

A14- October 31: Aristotle

READING: Stevenson, chapter 5.

A15- November 2: Hobbes and Rousseau

READING: Selections from Hobbes and Rousseau (in electronic course material folder)

A16- November 5: Kant and Schopenhauer

READING: Stevenson, chapter 8, and selections from *Essays and Aphorisms*, by Schopenhauer (in electronic course material folder)

November 7-9: Buenos Aires

November 10-12: Montevideo

A17- November 13: History and Human Nature: Theories of Progress and Decline

READING: Francis Fukuyama, 'An Idea for a Universal History' (in electronic course material folder)

A18- November 15: Marx

READING: Stevenson, chapter 9.

ASSIGNMENT DUE: FIVE-PAGE PAPER (topics to be provided later)

November 16-18: Rio de Janeiro

A19- November 20: Darwin

READING: Stevenson, chapter 12.

A20- November 22: Sartre and Existentialism

READING: Stevenson, chapter 11.

A21- November 25: (enter Amazon) Freud and the Psychoanalytic Theory of Human Nature

READING: Stevenson, chapter 10.

November 27-29: Manaus

A22- December 1: (exit Amazon) Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* I

READING: Freud, chapters I - IV

A23- December 3: Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents* II

READING: Freud, chapters V-VIII

A24- December 10: A Day Finals; Journal also due this day

FIELD WORK

FIELD LAB (At least 20 percent of the contact hours for each course, to be led by the instructor.) **Attendance and participation in the Field Lab is MANDATORY.**

First Choice: Dublin: Philosophy walking tour. Starting at Trinity College, we will tour some of the great sites of the city, particularly as these are linked with the work and activity of philosophical thinkers such as Berkeley, Burke, Swift, and Wittgenstein.

Second Choice: Antwerp: Here we will visit two sites: the museum Mayer Van den Bergh and the Onze Lieve Kathedral. These sites will be used to explore aspects of the Christian view of human nature, for example, the concept of worship and the depiction of afterlife judgement (depictions such as those found in Breugel's paintings in the museum).

FIELD ASSIGNMENTS

- After completion of the field lab in Dublin, students will complete a reflection piece on either Berkeley or Wittgenstein..
- In addition to the specific field lab assignment, students will keep a voyage journal. Here, students will respond to class- and port-specific philosophical prompts that will be generated organically during the voyage and assigned before debarkation at each port.
- The journal and the field lab assignment will be graded separately. A detailed breakdown of percentages can be found below.

METHODS OF EVALUATION / GRADING RUBRIC

Grades will be based upon five assessed pieces of work:

- (1) Field lab essay on issues related to the Dublin philosophy walking tour (10%)
- (2) A mid-term test on mind, death and immortality (20%)
- (3) A five-page paper (topics to be provided later) (30%)
- (4) A journal relating to field assignments (10%)
- (5) The final examination (30%)

Class participation may also figure in the determination of grades.

RESERVE LIBRARY LIST

AUTHOR: Rene Descartes

TITLE: *Meditations and Other Metaphysical Writings*

PUBLISHER: Penguin

ISBN #: 978-0140447019

DATE/EDITION: 1999

AUTHOR: Ludwig Wittgenstein

TITLE: *Philosophical Investigations*

PUBLISHER: Blackwell

ISBN #: 978-0-631-23127-1
DATE/EDITION: 2001 / 3rd edition

AUTHOR: Plato
TITLE: *The Republic*
PUBLISHER: Penguin
ISBN #: 978-0141442433
DATE: 2012

AUTHOR: Jean-Jacques Rousseau
TITLE: *The First and Second Discourses*
PUBLISHER: St Martin's
ISBN #: 978-0312694401
DATE: 1969

ELECTRONIC COURSE MATERIALS

AUTHOR: Arthur Schopenhauer
ARTICLE/CHAPTER TITLE: 'On the Suffering of the World'
JOURNAL/BOOK TITLE: *Essays and Aphorisms*
VOLUME:
DATE: 1970 (Penguin)
PAGES: Pp. 41-50

AUTHOR: Gilbert Ryle
CHAPTER TITLE: 'Knowing How and Knowing That'
BOOK TITLE: *The Concept of Mind*
DATE: 1963 (Penguin)
PAGES: Pp. 26-60

AUTHOR: Ludwig Wittgenstein
BOOK TITLE: *Philosophical Investigations*
PAGES: 75-81 (paragraphs 243-276)
DATE: 1958 (Blackwell)

AUTHOR: H.H. Price
CHAPTER TITLE: 'Two Conceptions of the Next World'
BOOK TITLE: *Essays in the Philosophy of Religion*
EDITION: Oxford University Press, 1972
PAGES: 98-117

AUTHOR: R. S. Woolhouse
CHAPTER TITLE: 'George Berkeley'
BOOK TITLE: *The Empiricists*

DATE: Oxford University Press, 1988
PAGES: Pp. 107-132.

AUTHOR: Epicurus
CHAPTER TITLE: 'The Principal Doctrines'
BOOK TITLE: *The Epicurean Philosophers* (edited by J. C. Gaskin)
DATE: Everyman, 1995
PAGES:

AUTHOR: Thomas Hobbes
CHAPTER TITLE: 'Of the Natural Condition of Mankind, As Concerning Their Felicity, and Misery'
BOOK TITLE: *Leviathan*
DATE: Hackett, 1994
PAGES: Pp. 74-78

AUTHOR: Jean-Jacques Rousseau
CHAPTER TITLE: 'Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality Among Men' (Second Part)
BOOK TITLE: *The First and Second Discourses* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau
DATE: St Martin's Press, 1964
PAGES: Pp. 141-181

AUTHOR: Francis Fukuyama
CHAPTER TITLE: 'An Idea for a Universal History'
BOOK TITLE: *The End of History and the Last Man* by Francis Fukuyama
DATE: Penguin, 1992
PAGES: Pp. 55-70

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

No additional resources

HONOR CODE

Semester at Sea students enroll in an academic program administered by the University of Virginia, and thus bind themselves to the University's honor code. The code prohibits all acts of lying, cheating, and stealing. Please consult the Voyager's Handbook for further explanation of what constitutes an honor offense.

Each written assignment for this course must be pledged by the student as follows: "On my honor as a student, I pledge that I have neither given nor received aid on this assignment." The pledge must be signed, or, in the case of an electronic file, signed "[signed]."

Rev. ed. of: Ten theories of human nature / Leslie Stevenson, David L. Haberman. Includes bibliographical references and index.

Introduction : rival theories and critical assessments -- Confucianism : the way of the sages / David L. Haberman -- Upanishadic Hinduism : quest for ultimate knowledge / David L. Haberman -- Buddhism : in the footsteps of the Buddha / David L. Haberman -- Plato : the rule of reason -- Aristotle : the ideal of human fulfillment -- The Bible : humanity in relation to God -- Islam : submission to God / Peter Matthews Wright -- Historical Interlude -- Kant : reasons and causes, morality and religion -- Twelve Theories of Human Nature compresses into a manageable space the essence of religious traditions such as Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, the Jewish Scriptures, the Christian New Testament, and Islam, as well as the philosophical theories of Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Sartre, and the would-be scientific accounts of human nature by Marx, Freud, and Darwin and his successors.Â Aristotle: The Ideal of Human Fulfillment6. The Bible: Humanity in Relation to God7. Peter Matthews Wright: Islam: Submission to God *Historical Interlude8. Kant: Reasons and Causes, Morality and Religion9. Marx: The Economic Basis of Human Societies10. Freud: The Unconscious Basis of Mind *11. Sartre: Radical Freedom12. Different conceptions of human nature lead to different views about what we ought to do and how we can do it. If an all-powerful and supremely good God made us, then it is His purpose that defines what we can be and what we ought to be, and we must look to Him for help.Â But there are many more views of human nature than these two. The theories of the ancient Greeks, especially of their great philosophers Plato and Aristotle, still influence us today. Since the rise of modern science in the seventeenth century, a variety of thinkers has tried to apply the methods of science (as they understood them) to human natureâ€”for example, Hobbes, Hume, and the French thinkers of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Editorial Reviews. Review. "Twelve Theories of Human Nature is the exact model of what an introductory textbook should be: a student coming to the subject for the first time will be able to understand the contentions of different (and difficult) theories of human nature; at the same time, nothing here is dumbed down. The book is consistently clear, precise, deep, engaging, and accurate."--Brian R. Clack, University of San Diego. "Excellent. I have been using this book since the first edition. The inclusion of the treatment of evolutionary theories of human nature is particularly