

Fall, 2006
Office Hours:
Fri. 8-9, 11-1, 3-5

Dr. David M. Mills
Office: FH 316
Phone: 7986

website: <http://people.cedarville.edu/employee/millsd/>
Grading Assistants: Kate Lakomy and Dennis Lunt

BEPH 2200
Introduction to Philosophy

Purpose and Objectives:

This course is designed to introduce you to the subject and methodology of philosophy by exploring three main divisions of philosophical problems: Epistemology, Metaphysics and Axiology. We will discuss specific issues within each of these three realms and we will trace the development of the treatment of those issues through the history of Western thought (and through the writings of some of its critics). Through this process, you should develop a better grasp of philosophical terminology, and should come to a better understanding of the nature and importance of philosophy, philosophical questions, and philosophical methodology as these relate to the question of what it means to be human.

Overarching this pursuit is a second, more general goal – the development of critical thinking skills. My hope is that you will develop stronger reasoning skills through the analysis of both philosophical texts and your own beliefs.

As a result of philosophical inquiry and the proper application of critical thinking skills, my hope is that you will leave this course with a more enriched Christian worldview, a better understanding of how that worldview compares to other worldviews, and the skills necessary to continue to process of enriching, comparing, and communicating your worldview throughout your life.

Course Requirements:

There will be three non-cumulative exams. You will be informed in advance as to the specific structure and expectations for each of the exams. Together, the exams will be worth 75% of the final course grade (the exam receiving the highest score will be weighted as 30% of the final grade, the next highest exam will be worth 25%, and the lowest grade will count as 20%).

Each student will also be required to participate in a threaded discussion list on the web. Topics will be assigned in class and posted on the list, in conjunction with the readings in the text. Additional assignments may be given in conjunction with the textbook and the website which accompanies it. Together, all of these assignments will make up 15% of the final course grade.

Class participation will count for 10% of the final course grade. This category includes attendance, quality of participation, and any assignments given in class that are not described above.

Components of Final Course Grade:

Highest Exam 30%
Next Highest 25%
Lowest Exam 20%
Discussion List 15%
Participation 10%
TOTAL: 100%

Text:

The Philosophical Journey, 3rd ed., by William F. Lawhead. Published in 2006 by Mayfield Press. ISBN 0072963557 (This text is required.)

Grading Scale and Course Policies:

		B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	F	59
A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66		
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62		

Discussion List assignments not posted by 2:00 p.m. on the specified due date cannot be turned in for credit.

Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a zero for the assignment.

If you believe you may need support in managing the impact of a disability, please contact Marilyn Meyer, Coordinator of Disability Services, by phone at 3843 or email at meyerm@cedarville.edu. Her office is located in CAL 164. Examples of disability categories are AD/HD, specific learning disabilities, hearing, vision, health impairment, psychological, orthopedic, and traumatic brain injury. Faculty rely on Disability Services to verify the need for accommodation and to assist in developing reasonable and appropriate accommodation strategies. The Disability Services website can be found at www.cedarville.edu/DisabilityServices.

Important Dates:

Monday, Sept 4	Labor Day – No Class
Monday, Sept 25	Exam #1 (Introduction & Epistemology)
Friday, Oct 20	Fall Break – No Class
Monday, Oct 30	Exam #2 (Metaphysics/Phil. of Religion)
Nov 22 - 27	Thanksgiving Break – No Class
Friday, Dec 15, 1:00 p.m.	Exam #3 (Axiology)

Please consider the test dates to be approximations that may change slightly, depending upon the pace of the course.

Course Schedule:

Introduction & Epistemology (August 23 - September 25)

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings (all from PJ unless otherwise noted)</u>	<u>Pages</u>
I. An Overview of the Philosophical Journey	1.0 Overview of the Journey 1.3 Argument and Evidence	4-15 37-45
II. The Presocratics: The One and the Many		
III. The Life and Death of Socrates	1.1 Socrates and the Search for Wisdom	15-30
IV. Plato's Reflections on Socrates	1.2 Plato's Allegory of the Cave 2.2 Rationalism (Socrates & Plato)	30-37 74-82
V. Philosophy, Faith & Reason	Bertrand Russell's 10 Commandments 4.4 Pragmatic & Subjective Justifications of Religious Belief 7.0 Philosophy and the Meaning of Life (Existentialism and the Meaning of Life)	Website Handout 342-355 650-657
VI. Doubt, Belief, & the Foundations of Knowledge	2.0 Overview of the Problem of Knowledge 2.1 Skepticism 2.2 Rationalism 2.3 Empiricism 2.4 Kantian Constructivism 2.5 Epistemological Relativism 2.7 Pragmatism 2.8 Feminism	50-58 58-71 71-74, 82-87 88-118 118-133 133-152 153-167 167-180

Metaphysics/Philosophy of Religion (September 27 - October 30)

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings (all from PJ unless otherwise noted)</u>	<u>Pages</u>
VII. Metaphysics	3.0 Overview of Metaphysics 4.0 Overview of Philosophy of Religion	190-200 306-312
VIII. Arguments for God's Existence	4.1 The Cosmological Argument 4.2 The Design Argument	312-322 322-337
IX. Freedom & Determinism	3.5 Overview: Freedom & Determinism 3.6 Hard Determinism 3.7 Libertarianism 3.8 Compatibilism	250-261 261-275 276-290 290-299
X. The Problem of Evil	4.5 The Problem of Evil	355-372

Axiology (November 1 - December 11)

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings (all from PJ unless otherwise noted)</u>	<u>Pages</u>
XI. Ethics	5.0 Overview of Ethics 5.1 Ethical Relativism vs. Objectivism 5.2 Ethical Egoism 5.3 Utilitarianism 5.4 Kantian Ethics 5.6 Feminist Ethics	400-415 415-437 437-454 454-472 472-490 510-532
XII. Social/Political Philosophy	6.0 Overview of Political Philosophy 6.1 The Justification of Government 6.2 The Question of Justice (Rawls, Nozick) 6.3 The Individual and the State (Marx)	542-546 547-564 578-586 598-610