Syllabus

Summer Session 2010

June 1 to July 7

There are many clickable links to websites in the online version of this syllabus, which is linked on the course home page.

For Your Immediate Attention

- The following are required assignments to be completed before the next class
  - Read this syllabus. If there is anything in it or missing from it that you don’t understand, ask about it in the next class.
  - Read the course description (linked on the course home web page).
  - Read the calendar and explanation of tests (linked on the course home web page).
  - Go to Assignments and Announcements for PHIL 1301 on the course home web page and do whatever is assigned there. Check that page frequently.

Professor Dechene’s summer 2010 sections of Introduction to Philosophy (PHIL 1301)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Synonym: 11156</th>
<th>Campus: Pinnacle</th>
<th>Days: M-Tu-W-Th</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Section: 006</td>
<td>Room: 409</td>
<td>Time: 10:00-11:50am (110 minutes)</td>
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Contact Information

- Email the professor: adechene@austincc.edu.
- Home page of the course Web site: http://www.austincc.edu/adechene/.
- If you are having a problem related to this course or related to me as your professor your first step generally should be to speak with me. If I cannot resolve the problem or satisfy your concern, or, if for some reason you would prefer not to address the issue with me, you can appeal to the Chair of the Department for help.

Office Hours/Consultations with the Professor

- Before or after class most class days. Make appointment in class or by email.

Course Description

- From the ACC catalogue: “Students will be introduced to various significant philosophical issues and thinkers and to the practice of philosophical analysis.”
- Professor Dechene’s sections of Introduction to Philosophy will take an historical (history of philosophy) and comparative approach, and will focus on these questions and issues:
  - What is real? How does a person discover what is real? Why is knowing the truth important?
  - Is reality one thing or many separate things? Why is it important for you to answer that question correctly?
  - Once you realize what is true and real, how can you live realistically?
  - The difference between authentic philosophy, the love of wisdom that leads to healing of the
soul, and speculative philosophies.

- How some of the major philosophers have handled these issues throughout history.
- A more extensive description of the course is linked on the course homepage.

**Prerequisites**

- There are no course prerequisites, other than:
  - A passing score or the equivalent on the reading portion of the TASP is required.
  - Basic computer skills.
  - The ability to find textual materials for the course on the Internet and print them.
    - I will upload files to my course website in PDF format. You will need to have a PDF reader installed on your computer to read them.
    - PDF readers are available to download for free. I recommend Foxit Reader.
  - The ability to play and listen to audio materials. I recommend the free Media Player Classic for Windows (which is used at ACC), or the Google Chrome browser, which has a built-in media player.
  - The ability to email the professor if necessary.
  - The ability to look up your grade information on Blackboard.

- Note: This course requires serious study and the ability to read well (it is a college level course).
- As with most courses, you can expect you will need to study about two hours for every class hour.
- If you need help improving your reading and studying methods:
  - Read Professor Dechene’s how to study guide, linked on the course home page.
  - Visit the Learning Lab on your campus and speak with one of the staff.
  - ACC offers courses on reading and study skills. See “Reading Skills” and “Study Skills” in the course schedule booklet.
  - You can also find help at several Websites, for example, How-To-Study.com. Google “how to study effectively” to find many websites on improving study skills.

**Required Readings**

- Textbook: Donald Palmer, *Looking at Philosophy*, fifth edition (ISBN 0072828951). This will be available at the campus bookstore and other bookstores. For information on this book go to the Barnes and Noble site.
  - If you are purchasing a used copy of the textbook, be sure to get the fifth edition. It has a blue cover.
- Various readings on the Internet that are to be printed and brought to class.

**Instructional Methodology**

- Lecture and discussion in class, and homework.
- Audio and video presentations (some may be homework).
- Required readings (textbook and other).
- Tests.

**Course Rationale**

- Philosophy is one of the principal forces that have shaped Western civilization and history, so a basic understanding of the methods and subject matter of philosophy affords a deeper understanding of ourselves and an informed grasp of the present. In addition, critical thinking skills are so central to the methods of philosophy that the study of philosophy provides an excellent opportunity to learn and
practice those skills in a focused way.

Course Objectives

- Departmental Objectives/Outcomes
  - Students will demonstrate improved critical reading, thinking, and writing skills.
  - Students will be able to reason philosophically about issues of both personal and universal significance.
  - Students will be able to identify major divisions and concepts in philosophy.

Course Evaluation/Grading System

- The final grade for this course will be based on five tests and on attendance.
  - Tests will account for 80% of your final grade.
    - Each test will account for 20% of your final grade.
    - Five tests will be administered, and your lowest test grade will be ignored in final grading.
  - Attendance will account for 20% of your final grade.
  - The final letter grade you will receive will be based on these grade segments:
    - A = 81 to 100.
    - B = 71 to 80.
    - C = 56 to 70.
    - D = 41 to 55.
    - F = 0 to 40.
  - Tests.
    - Tests usually will be Scantron-type (true/false, multiple choice, and/or matching), but may be partly or entirely essay type.
    - Students must supply their own Scantron cards and a #2 pencil for Scantron tests. These can be purchased in the ACC Bookstore.
    - Scantron cards cannot be filled out with other media, such as pen, because our Scantron grading machines do not recognize anything other than #2 pencil.
    - Scantron cards will not grade properly if they are creased, wrinkled, or dog-eared. Use only cards that are in their original condition. If a Scantron card will not grade properly, the student will not receive a grade.
    - Each test, including the last test, will emphasize material covered since the previous test (for test 1, since the first day of class), with less emphasis on material from before that.
    - See the course calendar for dates of tests. Tests may be rescheduled to fit better with the coverage of topics in class, or for other appropriate reasons.
    - Tests will normally last 45 minutes, and will start at the beginning of the class. If you arrive late for class on the test day you will have less than 45 minutes to complete your test.
    - Students who have problems taking tests (e.g., severe test anxiety) should discuss this with the Office for Students with Disabilities, and perhaps take their tests in the OSD office.
    - Test grades will be published only on Blackboard. Numeric and final letter grades will not be given out verbally, in person, by email, or to anyone other than the student, due to ACC policy and federal law.
  - Make-up tests.
    - Normally, make-up tests will not be allowed.
• Note (see line 93) that you may miss one test without penalty.
• Under unusual circumstances a make-up privilege will be granted. The make-up test must be completed no later than the day before the next regularly scheduled test is administered.
• You must have the professor’s permission to take a make-up test.
• The make-up test may be a different test from the original.

Attendance.
• Motto: “Eighty percent of success is showing up.”—Woody Allen
• Attendance for full classes (i.e., from start time to end time) is mandatory.
• Being present for class means being present at the time roll is called or a test is administered and for the rest of the class.
• Points will be deducted from your final grade for every day you are late or absent or leave early without the professor’s permission.
• One point will be deducted from your total attendance score for each time you are recorded as absent (or late or left early without notifying the professor).
  • There are 32 75-minute classes in most fall and spring classes (16 weeks): your maximum possible score (perfect attendance) for these will be 16.
  • There are 22 110-minute classes in most summer classes (5½ weeks): your maximum possible score (perfect attendance) for these will be 11.
• Note that this means that after missing half the classes in a semester your attendance score will be zero and you will get no further points for attendance.
• Students who first start attending the course after the first class will be marked absent for the classes they missed at the beginning of the course.
• There will be no excused absences—you’re either present or absent. Thus, you need not bring excuses such as a physician’s note to justify your absence.
• If you have to leave a class before it ends, please have the courtesy to inform the professor at the beginning of the class (if possible), and sit close to the door.
• Coming in late disturbs the flow of the class, so please be on time. Students who come late four times (i.e., on four days) will be dropped from the course.
• Extra credit assignments will not be allowed, as they give an unfair advantage to the person doing the extra assignment.

ALWAYS-ALWAYS-ALWAYS! Keep a copy of any written work you hand in, in case it is inadvertently lost or in case the professor has no record of receiving it and you claim you submitted it.

• The instructor reserves the right to change various features of the testing and grading system during the course and he will give clear notice (on the Assignments and Announcements Web page, linked on the course home page) if he does so.

Course Policies

Attendance and Courtesy
• Students are expected to attend all classes, to be on time, and to show courtesy toward the Professor and fellow students.
• Courtesy includes not talking with other students during class, not texting or otherwise using a cell phone, not doing things that distract or might distract other students, not eating or coming and going during class, not verbally (or physically) attacking students with whom you disagree, not repeatedly
verbally advocating or representing an ideology (political, religious, other) during the class, and showing politeness toward the Professor and all students.

- If you are carrying a cell phone, turn it off in class. Should you need to keep it on (e.g., you have a sick child at home), inform the professor at the start of class.
- Eating is not appropriate in class. Neither is walking in and out during class time.
- Students are expected to print (from the course Web site) and bring to class the material to be discussed in that class. Do not attend class if you do not have the appropriate written materials.
- The professor has the right to order a student to leave the class. This could be for, but is not limited to, the following: discourtesy, disruptive behavior, or for not bringing required materials to class.

**Active Participation is Encouraged**

- Students are encouraged to actively participate in class by asking questions and entering into discussions that relate to the material being studied.
- Students are expected to ask questions in class about course materials and regulations they don’t fully understand.
- Students may ask questions about computer problems related to the course in class (this will benefit all students).

**Withdrawals**

- The professor has the right to withdraw (drop) a student from the course for excessive tardiness, absenteeism, discourteous behavior, or for other appropriate reasons.
- Students may be withdrawn from the course if they are registered but do not attend class in the first five class-hours, or if they exceed 25% absenteeism (for any reason).
- Withdrawing from a course may affect financial aid, veterans’ benefits, international student status, or academic standing. Students are urged to consult with their instructor or an advisor before making schedule changes. Per state law, students enrolling for the first time in fall 2007 or later at any Texas college or university may not withdraw (receive a W) from more than six courses during their undergraduate college career. Some exemptions for good cause could allow a student to withdraw from a course without having it count toward this limit. Students are encouraged to carefully select courses; contact an advisor or counselor for assistance. See the Student Handbook, p. 22, for additional information.

**Problem Resolution**

- If you should have any problem with the course or the instructor, please have the courtesy to discuss it first with the instructor.

**Incomplete Grades**

- Incomplete grades normally will not be issued. The only reasons accepted for granting an incomplete will be unforeseen and unforeseeable serious reasons for not being able to complete the class on time. The student will have to document, in detail, the reasons why s/he is requesting the incomplete, and why s/he could not have foreseen or avoided the problem, and her/his exact plan for completing the course (with completion date, which will not be extended). Most requests for an incomplete grade will be rejected.

**Scholastic Dishonesty**


**Academic Freedom**

- Students have the right to believe whatever they happen to believe and, within the appropriate constraints that follow from the organization of a course and its class meetings, to express those beliefs.
Grades will never be based on the beliefs that a student maintains, but only on the quality of the work performed by a student in conjunction with the course.

**Office for Students with Disabilities**

- Be sure to read the section in the Student Handbook: Services for Students with Disabilities.
- Each ACC campus offers support services for students with documented physical or psychological disabilities. Students with disabilities must request reasonable accommodations through the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) on the campus where they expect to take the majority of their classes. Students are encouraged to do this three weeks before the start of the semester.
- For students authorized by the OSD to take tests in an other-than-classroom environment, tests will be available at the Office for Students with Disabilities on the day scheduled for the test on our class calendar.
- Students with disabilities who are registered with the OSD are urged to speak with the professor immediately if they are having any problems related to their disability.
- Students who suspect they may have a disability that interferes with learning or with obtaining a fair grade should contact the OSD.

**Course Outline, Calendar, and Announcements**

- The course calendar is hyperlinked to Professor Dechene’s course home webpage.
- An announcements page is also hyperlinked there. Consult it frequently (at least once a week, more often during a condensed summer session), and always prior to tests.

**The Student Handbook and Other ACC Information is Accessible Online**

- Go to [http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/](http://www.austincc.edu/handbook/), regarding the above items (policies, disabilities, acceptable behavior, student support services, etc.)
- Also be aware there is a great deal of useful information for students that is accessible from the ACC home page at [http://www.austincc.edu/](http://www.austincc.edu/).