

PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN BEING SYLLABUS



SECTION ONE COURSE INFORMATION

Course: Philosophy of Human Being; PHIL121

Fall 2018, Carroll College

Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 9:00am-9:50, Rm 106 O'Connell; 3 credit hours

Instructor: Dr. Wm Mark Smillie, Professor, Philosophy Department
Office ~ 142 St Charles Hall; Email ~ msmillie@carroll.edu; Ph ~ 447-5416

Communications and availability

Fall 2018 Office Hours: MWTh, 2:30-4:30; Fri, 2:00-3:30; & by appointment.

For issues about this course, students can contact me before/after class, at my office hours (posted above), by phone or email (either Carroll email or through moodle email). I will respond to email and phone inquiries within one business day (Saturdays and Sundays are not business days). I will post notifications about the course in the Moodle News Forum. Students should also be aware of the Moodle Calendar that announces assignment deadlines.

Reading Materials

The following materials must be mastered for this course:

Davies, Julian A. *A Philosophy of the Human Being*. University of America Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0-7638-4516-4. \$25.00. Available in Saints Shoppe. Required Text. *This text provides an introduction to the philosophical study of human being, looking at five essential or defining traits of human beings: sociability, human intelligence, freedom, duality, and individuality. The text defends the view that these human traits provide evidence for the existence of a spiritual aspect to human nature (the soul), but it presents the opposite views, and responds to the points they raise, so students can learn what exactly is at issue, and make up their minds for themselves. The text includes passages from original texts. Past students have liked this book and found it easy to read and follow.*

Other reading materials available FOC on Moodle

- *Apology* by Plato.
- "Writing (in Philosophy)"
- "Writing Philosophical Arguments"
- "Aristotle on Forming Friendships."
- *Euthyphro* by Plato
- "What is it Like to be a Bot?"
- "Writing Philosophical Essays"
- "Philosophical Thought and an Illustration of an Objection"
- "Why the freewill debate doesn't end."

- "You are not your brain: Why a head transplant is not what you think it is" by Charles Camosy.
- "When Armchair philosophy becomes Reality".
- "Life after Death"
- "Is there evidence for a trans-material soul?" by Robert J Spitzer
- "The Near Death Experience as Evidence for Life After Death"
- "What Kind of Next World" by H.H. Price

Course Description

Philosophy of Human Being studies essential human traits—traits that distinguish us from other living things, and make us what we are. These traits include: human intelligence, freedom, individuality. The course also considers their logical implications for the question about the existence of the soul and the possibility of life after death. Key themes in the course will be the difference between humans and animals, and the transcendent aspects of the human soul. This course makes an excellent introduction to philosophy, and, in addition to its content, promises to develop student skills in reading, analysis, and reasoning, promote student respect for facts, evidence, and argument, and foster appreciation for opposing points of view and of those who hold them.

Course Procedure

This course will identify six general topics relevant to the philosophy of human being (or human experience); examine and analyze different philosophical positions in these topics; and encourage students to formulate their own ideas and responses to these views. Class meetings will address more difficult or interesting points in the readings, and have students integrate and synthesize these ideas into their own thinking. Exams will cover all assigned readings.

SECTION TWO COURSE ELEMENTS

Learning Objectives

As a result of reading course texts, participating in lecture presentations and class discussions, students will formulate and evaluate philosophical ideas about human life and existence (such things as intelligence, free will, and the soul), by completing course activities, by writing essays, completing exams, and producing a "philosophy of human being" movie.

Readings

After purchasing the required course texts or accessing them on Moodle, students will identify and summarize philosophical positions relevant to fundamental areas of human being, though mindful reading of assigned material prior to class.

Activities

After studying assigned readings, students will summarize, analyze and critically evaluate philosophical ideas by participating in class discussions, completing in-class activities, and diverse on-line activities.

Tests

After participating in class discussions, reading assigned texts and completing course activities, students will synthesize and express their knowledge and understanding of philosophers and philosophical ideas about human being, by completing tests consisting of matching, true/false, and essay questions.

Written papers

Having mastered techniques of philosophical argumentation and reviewed course material and assigned question prompts, students will analyze and defend/criticize philosophical arguments in written form.

Debates

Having reviewed techniques of argumentation and received an assigned topic, students (in teams) will defend one alternative of the question, in an oral debate presented to the entire class.

Video project

After completing course readings and activities, students working together in small groups will demonstrate their understanding of some philosophical position in philosophy of human being, and their understanding of the principles of philosophical conversation by constructing a philosophical conversation in a short film that will be shown to the rest of the class on the assigned date.

Disclaimer regarding these objectives:

- 1) Students may vary in their competency levels on these abilities.
- 2) Students can expect to acquire these abilities only if they honor all course policies, attend class regularly, complete all assigned work on time and in good faith, and meet all other course requirements and expectations.

Fulfillment and Assessment of the Learning Objectives

Course Activities 10%. Students will receive credit for these activities based on their responses to the particular questions and assignments. These will include reading summaries, reflective questions, quizzes. Two lowest scored activities will be dropped prior to calculation of the final grade.

Written Analyses 25%. Students will write one argument analysis (arguments will be assigned; worth 10%) and one argumentative essay (15%) during the semester. Due dates are identified on the course calendar. Grades assigned using a rubric made available on Moodle in advance of the assignment.

Staged Debates 10%. This activity occurs during class, on the days assigned in the course calendar. Students will be assigned to teams randomly during the second week of class. Students will receive a grade using rubrics made available on Moodle in advance of the assignment.

Tests 35%. There is two semester tests, plus a final comprehensive exam. Semester tests are each worth 10% of the final grade; the final is worth 15% of the final grade. Students will receive credit for correct answers on "objective" questions (questions with predetermined answers; I typically employ matching questions and T/F questions); on written (essay) questions, students will receive a grade based on a rubric made available in advance of the test. The final exam is scheduled for this course by the College registrar.

Semester Video Project (20%). Students will receive a grade using rubrics made available in advance of the assignment. Students will be graded as a group.

Final Grade Calculation

Letter grades for the course assigned as follows. (Check your grade throughout the semester on moodle.)

<u>Percentage pts</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage pts</u>	<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage pts</u>	<u>Grade</u>
93-100.....	A	80-82	B-	60-69	D
90-92.....	A-	77-79	C+	Below 60	F
87-89.....	B+	73-76	C	P/F Grade	D (60)
83-86.....	B	70-72	C-		

Typical Course Routine and Participant Expectations

This class works on a three-week cycle. There are five iterations of this cycle during the semester. The three-week cycle takes precedence over holidays, etc, so the number of class meetings may vary. The general planning structure for the cycles is as follows:

W	DAT	TOPIC
1	M	Debate. See course calendar for topics. Teams will be determined after first class meeting.
	W	Complete Reading and Activity 1 by 8:00am Monday. Attend Class.
	F	Complete Reading and Activity 2 by 8:00am Wednesday. Attend Class
2	M	Complete Reading and Activity 3 by 8:00am Friday. Attend Class
	W	Complete Reading and Activity 4 by 8:00am Monday. Attend Class.
	F	Complete Reading and Activity 5 by 8:00am Wednesday. Attend Class
3	M	Complete Reading and attend Class
	W	Review for test (cycle 2 and 4 only) or topic from schedule
	F	Test during Class Period (Cycle 2 and 4 only). Writing assigned Cycles 1 and 3.

Course Calendar

C	DATE	TOPIC
1	Aug 22	First class day: Introduction to the course
	Aug 24	What is philosophy? Reading assignment: Davies, Ch 1. Complete Activity #1.1 before class.
	Aug 27	What is philosophy? Plato's View. Read the <i>Apology</i> (see link on moodle). Complete Activity #1.2 before class.
	Aug 29	The Method of Philosophy: analysis and argumentation. Reading assignment: Davies, Ch 1 (especially pages 5-10); also "Writing (in Philosophy)" and "Writing Philosophical Arguments" (links on moodle). Complete Activity #1.3 before class.
	Aug 31	What is philosophy of Human Being? Viewing of video: "What is Human Nature?" <i>Debate schedule handed out!</i>
	Sep 3	Labor Day—No Classes
	Sep 5	Sociability: Are human beings essentially social? Reading assignment: Davies, Ch 2, pp 13-23. Complete Activity #1.4 before class.
	Sep 7	Sociability: Is Human Sociability distinct from animal sociability? Thomas Hobbes and two meanings of "natural." Read Davies, Ch 2, esp. pp 13-23. Complete Activity #1.5 before class.
2	Sep 10	DEBATE #1: Everyone needs friends. Teams TBA. Everyone read: "Aristotle on Forming Friendships." (Link on Moodle)
	Sep 12	Philosophical Films: Plato's <i>Euthyphro</i> and the structure of philosophical conversations. Assignment: read <i>Euthyphro</i> , (link on moodle); review the assignment directions for the Film Project (on moodle). Complete Activity #2.1 before class.
	Sep 14	No Class Meeting! Assignment #1 due by Sunday Night
	Sep 17	Human Intelligence: Rationalism. Reading assignment: Davies Ch 3, pp 31-45. (Plato on human intelligence) Complete Activity #2.2 before class.
	Sep 19	Human Intelligence: Moderate Realism: Reading assignment: Davies Ch 3, pp 31-45. Rationalism versus moderate realism? Complete Activity #2.3 before class.
	Sep 21	Human Intelligence: Sensism. Is abstract knowledge real? The case for immateriality. Reading assignment: Davies Ch 3, pp 31-45. Complete Activity #2.4 before class. Film project group membership due.
	Sep 24	Human Intelligence: Can machines be intelligent? Reading assignment: "On Artificial Intelligence and College Presidents" in Davies, pp 47-52. Complete Activity #2.5 before class.
	Sep 26	Review session for Test One
	Sep 28	Test one: Covers Davies Chs 1-3, Plato's Apology, Euthyphro, "Aristotle on Forming Friendships," Videos "What is Philosophy?" and "What is Human Nature?"
3	Oct 1	DEBATE #2: Its not possible to know whether robots have minds. Teams TBA. Everyone read: "What is it Like to be a Bot?" (Link on Moodle)
	Oct 3	Method/Philosophical Writing. Assessing the strength of your premises and writing objections. Read "Writing Philosophical Arguments," "Writing Philosophical Essays," and "Philosophical Thought and an Illustration of an Objection." (Links on Moodle) Complete Activity #3.1 before class
	Oct 5	Human Freedom. Viewing of video: "Do we have free will?"
	Oct 8	Human Freedom: Voluntarism versus determinism. Reading assignment: Read Ch 4, pp 55-71. Complete Activity #3.2 before class.
	Oct 10	Human Freedom: Voluntarism versus determinism. Complete Activity #3.3 before class
	Oct 12	Midsemester Break!
	Oct 15	Midsemester Break! Midterm grades due October 18
	Oct 17	Human Freedom: Exaggerated Voluntarism vs. Voluntarism. Complete Activity #3.4 before class.
	Oct 19	Human Freedom and Determinism. Read "Why the freewill debate doesn't end." Complete Activity #3.5 before class Film project synopsis/visions due
4	Oct 22	DEBATE #3: You can't love anyone you want. Teams TBA. Everyone read: "Love" Davies, Ch 4, pages 70-71

	Oct 24	Human Duality. Video: "Is the mind distinct from body?"
	Oct 26	Human Duality: Dualism. Reading Assignment: read Davies, Ch 5, pp 77-90, especially extreme and moderate dualism and the evidence for moderate dualism. Complete Activity #4.1 before class. Assignment #2 due by Sunday Night
	Oct 29	Human Duality: Materialism. Reading Assignment: reread/review Davies, Ch 5, pp 77-90. Complete Activity #4.2 before class.
	Oct 31	Human Duality: Idealism. Reading Assignment: reread/review Davies, Ch 5, pp 77-90. Complete Activity #4.3 before class.
	Nov 2	Human Individuality. Defining person: are humans just very advanced animals? Read Davies Ch 6, pp 97-106. Complete Activity #4.4 before class. Film Scripts (draft) due
	Nov 5	Human Individuality. Are we the same person were we yesterday? View video: "Is there an enduring self." Complete Activity #4.5 before class
	Nov 7	Review session for Test Two
	Nov 9	No Class Meeting!
5	Nov 12	TEST TWO: Covers Davies Chs 4-6; "What is it Like to be a Bot?" "Why the freewill debate doesn't end." Videos "Do we Have free will" "Is the mind distinct from body," "Is there an enduring self?"
	Nov 14	DEBATE #4: It is not possible to survive a brain transplant. Teams TBA. Everyone read: "You are not your brain: Why a head transplant is not what you think it is" by Charles Camosy and "When Armchair philosophy becomes Reality". (Links on Moodle)
	Nov 16	Human Immortality and Life After Death. Reading assignment: Davies Ch 7, pp 113-126. Is it possible to prove that there is life after death? Complete Activity #5.1 before class
	Nov 19	Human Immortality and Life After Death. Read "Life after Death" (on moodle). Complete Activity #5.2 before class
	Nov21/23	Thanksgiving Break!
	Nov 26	Evidence for Human Immortality. Near Death Experiences. Video presentation in class: "Between Life and Death."
	Nov 28	DEBATE #5: Near Death Experiences are good evidence for Life After Death. Teams TBA. Everyone read: "Is there evidence for a trans-material soul?" by Robert J Spitzer and "The Near Death Experience as Evidence for Life After Death" by Stafford Betty. Film project due—uploaded to YouTube.
	Nov 30	Reading: "What Kind of Next World" by H.H. Price. Complete Activity #5.3 before class
	Dec 3	Evidence for Human Immortality: Reincarnation? Video presentation in class on Reincarnation.
	Dec 5	STUDENT VIDEOS VIEWED IN CLASS.
	Dec 7	(Last class day). Group assessments for film projects due.
6	Dec 13	Final Exam 8:00-9:45 pm Davies Ch 9, pp 133-143 assigned for Exam

**SECTION THREE
COURSE INFORMATION AND POLICIES**

WHAT IS A PHILOSOPHY CLASS?

What philosophers do?

Philosophers examine concepts and study arguments. In class and in your assignments and tests, you will examine fundamental concepts, and study arguments philosophers and others, including yourselves, have presented to defend various positions. Studying arguments includes identifying their parts, figuring out how they work, and judging how strong they are.

How much work will this class involve?

The workload is typical for any 3-credit college class workload. Our accreditation organization defines one college credit as one hour per week (of a semester) spent in class, plus two accompanying hours of outside work. (This is a typical definition.) Now you know why three credit classes meet close to three hours a week! And you also know that Carroll expects me to assign, on average, roughly 9 hours of outside class

work per week. With seventeen weeks in a typical semester, that is 48 hours of class, and 144 hours of work outside of class. (wow: 192 hours total! Which is a little more than one week of out of your life.) I say “on average 9 hours a week” because the 9 hours a week includes time to read the assignments and complete reading assignments, but also the time to write the essays and complete the semester project, and time to study for exams; these times can vary through the semester as assignment and test deadlines approach. (So now you know how to assess workload; if you think my class has “too much” work, I am willing to sit down and discuss this with you in a data-informed way. I encourage you to do the same with your other classes!)

How does your class work?

Typically, I assign a reading for each class which is meant to introduce you to the topic for the class. In the reading you will see the concepts involved examined, positions clarified and staked out, and arguments presented for or against these positions. Class presentations and activities move from there; my plan isn't to represent or go over all the material you read, but to focus in on aspects of the topic that I believe are more difficult (so you require more help understanding), or are more interesting (at least to me), or to make connections between this topic and other topics we've studied, etc. My tests cover all the reading material, whether I've looked at it in class with you or not; so you do have a good reason to keep up with the readings. As you read, I encourage you to note the fuzzy areas for you, and raise questions in class (or with me at other times), particularly if we don't look at it in class.

Does it really matter if I do the readings?

Good question! A philosophy class is also a humanities class. So you can expect much of the outside work to involve reading and studying texts (as opposed to completing problems and labs in the sciences). I cannot verify that you did the reading, nor do I plan to do this. You should read because it keeps you informed about the course material, because it develops your thinking about the course material, because it helps you write more informed (better) essays for this class, and because the more you know about the material, the more interested you will be in it, and the more you will enjoy it. (Yes, people actually enjoy thinking about and trying to answer philosophical questions!) But remember that you are playing the long game here: You will often not get immediate feedback about your reading, no one will know if you really did the reading, and the immediate effect of reading is often not something that you will feel. (You will probably feel bad, because being confused makes us feel bad; however, it isn't necessarily something to feel bad about!) So that's my plug that you keep up with the reading as diligently as possible.

Do you have any advice for reading philosophy?

Yes! If you know what to expect, you'll do better at it. Here are the common suggestions that you will see if you searched this on google.

- Keep the general problem in your mind throughout the passage.
- Identify specific theses (or conclusions)
- Look for arguments offered to support the theses
- Remember that philosophers usually consider objections (opposition or challenges) to their arguments: be conscious of this fact and differentiate between the reasons offered to support a view and the objections (and replies) raised [this is often most difficult for beginners]
- Keep an inquisitive attitude while you are reading; don't accept things too easily. Try to work out what convinces you and why, and where you aren't convinced.

POLICIES

Basic Etiquette

Please be on time for class! All students should practice good manners in class and show civility to all. A positive attitude is appreciated and a professional demeanor is expected. This includes such things as remaining alert (and awake!) in class, respecting and never interrupting others, limiting private conversations, turning cell phones off, and controlling your urges to text or use your electronic devices. Please, no eating or using tobacco products in class (a small beverage is allowed).

In team or group situations, students should cooperate with their team members and obtain their input when working on group exercises and projects. Most group work involves a required peer assessment of each individual's contribution to the group.

Absolutely no electronic devices are allowed during exams, and this includes cell phones, laptops, and mp3 players/devices. Laptops are allowed at other times during class, with the expectation that you are using them to participate in the class and not as a distraction.

Attendance And Tardiness

"Eighty percent of success is showing up." Attributed to Woody Allen

Regular attendance is a college policy (see College Catalogue). I keep attendance regularly and expect to be informed if some legitimate excuse keeps you from attending class.

Tardiness is disruptive to other members of the class, but I would rather you came to class late than not at all; so please slip into class quietly if you are late!

Page | 7

Please note: I will not grade assignments of students who do not regularly attend class. You have become such a student once you miss more than two class sessions during this term without informing me of a valid excuse.

Late exams/assignments: All assignments can be submitted electronically on moodle, observing the deadlines posted there. Students having good reasons for missing a deadline or test should contact me in advance of the deadline. Good reasons include documented medical reasons, documented court obligations, and athletic team commitments, family emergencies. Deadlines will be reset to mutually agreed times in these situations.

I do accept late assignments (turn them in by email or hand if you cannot submit them on moodle); I reserve the right to penalize them one letter grade, more if they are egregiously late (now there's a new word for you!) Missed exams should be retaken at the ARC within one week of the exam date (Students must make their own arrangements with the director of the ARC, and then inform me of their scheduled makeup date).

Institutional And Course Policies On Academic Honesty

Carroll College's policy on Academic Integrity is stated in both the CC Catalogue and in the Student Handbook. The policy reads: "Students at Carroll College are expected to have high standards of integrity. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes on examinations or assignments, falsifies college records, or fails to give requested academic information on admission documents is subject to dismissal or other appropriate disciplinary action by the College." Students violating the policy will be referred to the Vice President for Academic Affairs. Please see these publications for the correct procedures to follow if you have questions concerning the conduct of this class or the grading procedures (other than a final grade).

I expect all my students to have the high standards of integrity expected by the college. A college classroom is a social environment and honesty, responsibility, respect, and even honor are key components for its success. Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, deception, and complicity undermine our ability to enjoy and profit from this class.

Plagiarism is a particular act of fraud that merits more attention. Plagiarism is both stealing someone else's work and lying about it. It includes the following

- Turning anyone else's work (including other students') as your own
- Copying without giving credit (including copying from the internet)
- Not putting quotations in quotation marks
- Incorrectly identifying the source of a quotation

Plagiarism also includes copying the sentence structure of a source, even if you changed words, and copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not.

I will investigate all suspected cases of plagiarism, and will penalize all verified instances; the penalty can be as severe as immediate failure in the course. If you are unsure about whether some actions constitute plagiarism, please ask me.

Returning Work

I believe in the value of prompt feedback. My goal is to grade and/or return all assignments within 2 weeks of their due dates, if not sooner.

Making Up Missed Work

Tests and exams should be taken on the dates and place assigned. Tests missed for legitimate reasons will be retaken at the ARC, within one week of the exam date. Students must make their own arrangements with the director of the ARC, and then inform me of their scheduled makeup date prior to making up the exam. Final exams are scheduled and conducted according to the policies set in the College Catalogue (see pg 24).

Students having good reasons for missing a deadline or test should contact me in advance of the deadline. Good reasons include documented medical reasons, documented court obligations, and athletic team or other Carroll College commitments, family emergencies. Deadlines will be reset to mutually agreed times in these situations.

Grade Challenges And Appeal Policy

Page | 8

If you do not understand a grade you received, please seek clarification! Under no condition will a grade review result in a lowered grade. If you want to appeal a grade, please submit your appeal first in writing, explaining your question, or if you think your answer was correct, documenting that belief with evidence from the text. In the case where there is a rubric, please identify the assessments of the rubric that you believe are incorrect and why. After receiving your written request, I will review your documentation and the assignment and decide if a grade change is warranted, and return the test with some written comments. If your concern remains after that, then I will meet with you.

Office Hours

Office hours are not just for those in trouble. My office hours are a time for you to come talk to me informally, to ask questions about the material or assignments, to review graded work, to get suggestions for further reading, to discuss other topics related to the course. And if you are having trouble with the course work, we can talk about that too, of course. Make an appointment if you wish, or drop by during the posted times!

Campus Support Services

If you believe that you may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability, please contact Kevin Haddock, in order to discuss your specific needs and to determine a reasonable accommodation plan. You may contact Kevin Haddock in the Academic Success and Disability Services Office, Borromeo Hall, Room 118 (phone: x4504; email: khaddock@carroll.edu).

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About Your Professor

I am a full professor in the Philosophy Department. I received a B.A. from Thomas Aquinas College (CA) in 1983; a Ph.D. in 1992, from the University of Notre Dame, where I studied Medieval Philosophy and the Philosophy of Human Being. I have taught at over a half-dozen institutions before I came to Carroll College in 1995.

I teach many philosophy courses here at Carroll, and I regularly teach Philosophy of Human Nature, Business Ethics, Bioethics, Environmental Ethics, and Medieval Philosophy. Recently I taught a course on the Philosophy of Artificial Intelligence, which would make a great second class if you are interested in the material in this class. My research interests are in Medieval Philosophy, especially the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, and applied ethics. I have given papers/presentations on: Thomas Aquinas, Catholic Identity, God's Omnipotence, End of Life Decision-Making, using technology in the classroom.

I've been married 32 years and have eight kids (one Carroll grad!). I am involved in various community organizations in Helena and enjoy visiting historical sites, hiking, photography, building things from time to time (and even house remodeling).

Concluding Disclaimer

The above schedule, policies, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances or by mutual agreement between the instructor and the students.

PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN BEING: GRAPHIC TOPICAL DIAGRAM

(CLASS WEEK)

1 WHAT IS PHILOSOPHICAL INQUIRY?

PHILOSOPHY OF HUMAN BEING

Page | 9

2 HUMAN SOCIABILITY

3 DEBATE ONE

4/5 HUMAN INTELLIGENCE

Artificial Intelligence

6 TEST ONE / DEBATE TWO

7/8 HUMAN FREEDOM

Criticism of Determinism

9 DEBATE THREE

10 HUMAN DUALITY

Criticism of Materialism

11 HUMAN INDIVIDUALITY

12 TEST TWO/DEBATE FOUR

13

14

15

16 DEBATE FIVE/STUDENT VIDEOS

17 Final Exam (Sat, Dec 16, 8:00-9:45)

