

Philosophy 1: Introduction to Philosophy

Summer Session 2, 2016

Instructor: Rebecca Harrison

rebecca.harrison@email.ucr.edu

Office: HMNSS 3214, hours TBA

This course will introduce students to philosophy through a thematic and historical exploration of **Human Experience: Perception and the World**. Since at least the time



of the Ancient Greeks, people have been wondering about *experience*: what is the nature of the world we encounter in our everyday experience? What is it that we perceive, and what is its relation to “reality”? How can we be sure that we are actually experiencing the “real world,” and not just dreaming or hallucinating? How should we think of *ourselves*, as perceivers,

or as those who inhabit the world of our experience? Are we primarily “thinking things,” or are we importantly emotional, embodied, active, and social creatures?

In this course, we will look at how a variety of major figures of western philosophical history have approached these questions, from Plato to the 20th (and 21st!) century Phenomenological tradition. We will also discuss some famous philosophical problems, such as the Argument from Illusion and Molyneux’s Problem. In the process, students will gain an understanding of the basic historical canon surrounding our theme, as well as a grasp of what it is to do philosophical inquiry in general. There will also be a significant writing component. The general **goals** of the course are:

- Become familiar with ideas from some of the “greats” of philosophical history,
- Learn how to read “theory”: closely, charitably, and critically,
- Learn how to write a solid interpretive and argumentative paper, and
- Think more creatively about your experience in the world!

Required Texts

Brian Mogck, *Writing to Reason: A Companion for Philosophy Students and Instructors*

Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*

J.L. Austin, *Sense and Sensibilia*

Other selections will be made available through iLearn as needed.

Assignments / Grading:

30% – 3 take-home writing exercises, 10% each

25% – 4 to 5 page paper, due at beginning of class on Monday, 8/24

25% – Final exam, Friday 8/28

20% – Attendance & participation in discussion sections

Course Schedule:*

Week 1		Mogck, Chapter 7 (79-92)
7/25	Plato	<i>Republic</i> : Allegory of the Cave
7/26	Plato	<i>Phaedo</i> 64a-68c, 78d-88c
7/27	Descartes	Meditations I & II
7/28	Descartes	Meditation III & V
Week 2	{First HW Due}	Mogck, 2.1: Consuming Arguments (16-28)
	(sick day)	
8/2	Descartes; Elisabeth of Bohemia	Meditation VI; <i>Correspondence between Princess Elisabeth and Descartes</i> (Selections TBA)
8/3	Locke	<i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> : Book II Chapters I, II, IX
8/4	Locke	Book IV Chapter XI
Week 3	{Second HW Due}	Mock 2.2: Producing Arguments (28-39)

8/8	Berkeley Hume	Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous: First Dialogue; <i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> : “The Origin of Ideas”
8/9	Hume	<i>An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> : “Sceptical Doubts” Part I, “Sceptical Solution” Part I
8/10	Reid	<i>Essays on the Intellectual Powers of Man</i> : Chapters 5, 14
8/11	Nietzsche	<i>Twilight of the Idols</i> : “‘Reason’ in Philosophy” <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> : Third Essay, Sections 1, 5-7, 9-13, 28
Week 4	{Third HW Due}	Mogck, 3: The Rudiments of Academic Writing (pp. 40-60) and 4: Explaining Philosophical Texts (pp. 60-66)
8/15	Ayer; G.E. Moore	<i>Foundations of Empirical Knowledge</i> , 1-28; “Sense-Data”
8/16	Austin	<i>Sense and Sensibilia</i> , pp. 1-32
8/17	Austin	<i>Sense and Sensibilia</i> , pp. 33-61
8/18	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Primacy of Perception</i> , pp. 12-27; <i>Phenomenology of Perception</i> (trans. D. Landes), pp. 69-74
Week 5	{Paper Due}	
8/22	Merleau-Ponty	<i>Phenomenology of Perception</i> pp. 139-148, 209-213, 308-311
8/23	Iris Marion Young	“Throwing Like a Girl: A Phenomenology of Feminine Body Comportment, Motility, and Spatiality”
8/24	Shaun Gallagher	“Intersubjectivity in Perception”
8/25	—	[Review]
8/26	EXAM	

*The assigned readings or the schedule may be adjusted at any time during the course. Check your email regularly and keep an eye on announcements in iLearn for any changes.

Note: It is **extremely important** that you do the readings in a timely fashion, and that you regularly attend lecture and your discussion section. As you will discover, the texts we are going to cover are interesting and rewarding, but generally quite difficult. It is very unlikely you will be able to succeed in the course (and perhaps unlikely that you will enjoy it!) without keeping on top of the readings and coming to class with questions in hand. In order to read well, a number of things are necessary: **(1)** a place where you can concentrate, **(2)** a significant amount of time (these works are best read slowly and deliberately rather than in a short glances), **(3)** a pen or pencil so that you can read *actively* – argue with the author, struggle to understand, to question, to respond – and to do this you must underline, write in the margins, make notes. Putting in the time to prepare for class adequately will make for a more interesting and fulfilling class for everyone!

Late/Missing Assignments

It is strongly in your interest to turn in assignments on time. You will lose 1 letter grade on an assignment for every day that it is late (so, e.g., a B assignment handed in a day late will receive a C). That said, it is always better to turn in an assignment late – even if you can only hope to get a D at best – than not to turn in an assignment at all. Late assignments will *not* be accepted more than one week past their original due date. The **paper** and the **final exam** are absolutely required: failing to turn in a paper at all, or failure to take the exam, will result in automatic failure of the course.

Regrading

Your TA will handle the grading of all of your work, and you should direct all of your questions and concerns about the assignments to them. If you are dissatisfied with a grade your TA has given you, you must make an appointment to discuss it with them first. If you are still dissatisfied, you may bring a *clean copy* (i.e., no marks from you or the TAs) to me for regrading. Caveat: Whatever grade I assign you upon regrading is the grade you will receive, *even if it is lower than the original grade*. So it is only advisable to ask me to regrade an assignment if you are completely certain it really does deserve a better grade.

Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Dishonesty:

In short: **don't do it.** *Make sure you are aware of what plagiarism is.* Basically, it involves presenting someone else's ideas as your own. This includes cases in which you are clearly "ripping off" someone else's paper, or a book or website (including e.g. SparkNotes), but it also includes cases in which you repeat an idea an author, your instructor, or another student said without properly attributing it (i.e., putting quotes around it and providing a citation for it). You will be required to submit your paper to **SafeAssign**, which automatically catches copies -- even modified copies -- of other work (including the work of other students in the class). Your TAs will also be inspecting your papers and homework assignments. Students found to be plagiarizing a paper or cheating on an exam will *at least* receive a 0 for that assignment, and possibly fail the course. Any instances of plagiarism or cheating will also be reported to the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity office.

*See also: Mogck, Chapter 6: "Academic Integrity;" UCR's Academic Integrity Policies & Procedures: <http://www.conduct.ucr.edu/learnpolicies/academicintegrity.html>

General Etiquette Issues:

Do not behave in any way that distracts from or disturbs the classroom environment. This includes late arrival to and early departure from class, speaking or whispering while others are speaking, using laptops for purposes other than those related to the class (e.g. facebook), texting, cell phones ringing, etc. ***You may either be on the internet / your phone, OR you may be in my class, but not both.*** I reserve the right to ask any student engaged in distracting behaviors to leave the classroom, and repeated interruptions may result in failure of the course.

Biographical Information:

Rebecca Harrison is a PhD student in the Department of Philosophy at UC Riverside. She received her MA from Georgia State University, where she wrote an MA thesis entitled “The Failure of Desire: A Critique of Kantian Cognitive Autonomy in Hegel’s *Phenomenology of Spirit*.” She has taught several introductory level courses at GSU and at UCR, and she is currently working on a dissertation concerning Merleau-Ponty’s account of perception, perceptual ambiguity, and whether or not Merleau-Ponty should be considered a “realist.” Before coming to Riverside in 2012, she had lived in Atlanta, New York, Pittsburgh, and New Orleans. She likes coffee and craft beer, is a middling-at-best pianist, and has been vegetarian for over 15 years.