St. Francis Xavier University
Department of Philosophy
PHIL 100 Introduction to Philosophy II
Course Outline

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PLEASE NOTE: LAPTOP COMPUTERS AND PHONES ARE STILL NOT ALLOWED IN CLASS.

Course Description:
       A continuation of the first semester's introduction to the field of philosophy. We shall examine classic texts from the modern period forward that draw together deep insights into recurring philosophical topics such as human nature, metaphysics, knowledge, logic, value, art, ethics, and politics. The course aims to continue the work done at familiarizing students with logical ways of thinking, appreciating the value of philosophical enquiry in their own lives, and providing a basic understanding of some fundamental philosophical questions (and answers). Most of our texts were chosen in order to emphasize the on-going nature of the philosophical project: philosophy is a grand discussion about all aspects of reality that you are invited to join in. All of the texts used in this course have an ability to marry literary distinctiveness with profundity, and we shall investigate how both of these aspects work together.

Assignments:
       Students will be required to complete in-class assignments, two short essays responding to the ideas presented in the texts and a final exam. The in-class work will be worth 30% of the semester's final grade, each response will be worth 20% of the semester's final grade. The final exam will be worth 30%.
       The short essays will consist in an answer to the question provided below. We shall be looking for slightly longer analyses than in the first semester, and each response should be no less than 1500 words in length. Any shorter and your response will seem superficial; any longer and I might question the conciseness of your response.

Schedule:

Week	Topic	Readings
1 Jan 4	Ethics of Childrearing	Smilansky, "Is There A Moral Obligation to Have Children?"
2 Jan 11	Epistemology, Certainty	Descartes, *Meditations* 1-2
3 Jan 18	Dualism	Descartes, *Meditations* 3-4
4 Jan 25	Proof for God's Existence	Descartes, *Meditations* 5-6
5 Feb 1	Ethics of Violence	Norman, "The Case for Pacifism"
6 Feb 8	Perception (1st outline due)	Berkeley, *Dialogues,* 1st Dialogue
7 Feb 15	Idealism (2nd outline due)	Berkeley, *Dialogues* 1st & 2nd Dialogue
8 Feb 22	Skepticism (1st essay due)	Berkeley, *Dialogues* 2nd Dialogue
9 Feb 29	Ethics of Giving	Arthur, "Famine Relief and the Ideal Moral Code"
10 Mar 7	Atomism (1st outline due)	Leibniz, *Monadology* (1-30)
11 Mar 14	Perception (2nd outline due)	Leibniz, *Monadology* (31-60)
12 Mar 21	Possible Worlds (2nd essay due)	Leibniz, *Monadology* (61-90)

Short Assignments:
#1: due Feb 22nd (1st Outline due Feb 8th; 2nd Outline due Feb 15th)
In Meditation III Descartes gives a proof for the existence of God that reaches its climax in section 22. Provide your best argument against Descartes' reasoning. In this assignment your first outline must give your best understanding of Descartes' argument, and your second outline is to take issue with some premise you stated in the first outline.

#2: due Mar 21st (1st Outline due Mar 7th; 2nd Outline due Mar 14th)
In the *Meditations*, Descartes uses the example of a wax block to support his position of not trusting the senses. What would Berkeley make of Descartes' reasoning here? In this assignment your first outline must provide an explanation of how Descartes' argument concerning the wax works, and in the second outline you must tackle that argument from Berkeley's perspective. Again, referencing of the two primary texts plus an explication of those references is expected in the essay.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS SEMESTER, OUTLINES WILL BE MARKED WHOLISTICALLY FOR THEIR CONCEPTUAL CONTENT, AND NOT FOR THEIR VALIDITY, AS THEY WERE LAST SEMESTER.

Technical Considerations for Written Assignments:
1) All written assignments must be typed (black ink, please) and double-spaced in Times New Roman 12 pt. font on pages with at most 1 inch margins. No extra line spaces between paragraphs. Indent the first line of a paragraph. Printing on both sides of a sheet of paper is quite acceptable.
2) Please no title pages. Also no "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" pages referring to one work; do bibliographic references in a footnote if you must. Please no enormously large-fonted things like titles, names, dates, course numbers, student numbers, phone numbers, or due dates that take up half a page of space. Your title, name, and student number at the top of the first page is quite sufficient. Please visibly number any multiple-page assignments. If for some reason you must hand in the assignment to the office, please include my name at the top of the assignment as well.
3) No duo-tangs, folders, binders, or paperclips. Loose sheets are acceptable, but do remember to number them.
4) Under no circumstances will emailed assignments be accepted. Please hand in your assignments at the start of class on the day they are due.
5) The late policy is a deduction of 3% per day that the assignment is handed in late. This course outline lets you know when assignments are due, and you have been given plenty of time to complete them. Consequently last minute excuses for not completing assignments on time will be met with skepticism.
6) Many of the above requirements are arbitrary demands on my part, but they really do facilitate the assessment of your work. If you do not follow them, your "Organization" mark will suffer.
7) Plagiarism is completely unacceptable. If you make use of an idea that is not of your own devising, you must cite the source of that idea. Failure to properly cite sources may result from removal from the course and expulsion from the university.
8) You are responsible for keeping an extra copy of your essay accessible in your files. It is possible that something might happen to your essay once it is handed in, and the best way to deal with that is to have another copy printed off which can be marked in the original's place.