

PHIL-110: Introduction to Philosophy – Great Works.

Summer Session 1 2015
John Lawless, Caldwell Hall 210B
lawlessj@live.unc.edu

Course summary. Philosophy is an ongoing conversation about what exists and about what matters, one that has lasted thousands of years. In this course, we will dive into several texts that are important parts of that conversation, but that also tell us a great deal about what it means to have a conversation in the first place – about what it means to communicate, to listen, and to progress.

As you progress through the course readings, bear in mind three interrelated questions about reality, language, and perception: What exists? What can we name? What can we see or hear? Think about what the texts tell us about each of these questions, and about the ways in which these questions relate to one another.

Course requirements. It is essential that you keep up with the readings, attend each class, and participate actively in class discussions. You must complete each assignment in a timely fashion. In order to pass the course, you must at least satisfy each of these requirements.

Four papers (each worth 15% of the final grade). Over the course of the semester, you will submit four short (2-3 page) papers explaining and responding to a crucial passage from the readings. (I will assign the passage, but if you find another one on which you would like to write, speak with me.)

One final paper (20%). You will submit one longer (5 to 7 page) paper at the time of the final exam, in which you will apply some of the lessons of the class to our final reading, Ralph Ellison's novel *Invisible Man*.

Final exam (10%). In the exam, I will ask you to define the key terms and foundational principles with which our authors understand the world around them. We will see practice questions for the final exam throughout the semester.

Participation (10%). This course will depend on your active engagement with the material in class. You will need to be prepared to contribute actively each day, and to help make the environment one conducive to everyone's participation – one that is open, respectful, and positive.

Attendance. Each student gets one free absence per session. Beyond that, you must speak to me about any absence, preferably beforehand. Be aware that I will be unlikely to excuse any absence that the university does not require me to excuse. For each unexcused absence, you will be docked 3 points off of your final grade. For each failure to speak with me, you will lose an *extra* 2 points off of your final grade.

The Honor System. The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill has had a student-led honor system for over 100 years. Academic integrity is at the heart of Carolina and we all are responsible for upholding the ideals of honor and integrity. The student-led Honor System is responsible for adjudicating any suspected violations of the Honor Code and all suspected instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the honor system. Information, including your responsibilities as a student is outlined in the Instrument of Student Judicial Governance. Your full participation and observance of the Honor Code is expected.

Required texts. You must have available copies of Rene Descartes' *Meditations*, Marilyn Frye's *The Politics of Reality*, and Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*. Copies are available at the bookstore (and elsewhere). All other readings will be available through the course site.

Tentative Schedule

Unit 1. Thomas Aquinas

- May 13* Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (ST) I 2.3 (prima via), 65.1; IaIIae 1.1, 1.2, 90.1, 91.1
May 14 Aquinas, ST 90, 91.3, 91.6
May 15 Aquinas, ST IaIIae 1.5, 6.1, 6.2, 13.3

Unit 2. René Descartes

- May 18* Descartes, First Meditation
May 19 Descartes, Second Meditation
May 20 *First paper due.*
Descartes, Third Meditation
May 21 Descartes, Third Meditation (continued)
May 22 Descartes, Fourth Meditation
May 25 *Memorial Day.*
May 26 Descartes, Fifth Meditation
May 27 Descartes, Sixth Meditation

Unit 3. Thomas Hobbes

- May 28* *Second paper due.*
Hobbes, *Leviathan* (selections)
May 29 Hobbes, *Leviathan* (selections)
June 1 Hobbes, *Leviathan* (selections)

Unit 4. Marilyn Frye

- June 2* *Third paper due.*
Frye, "Sexism"
June 3 Frye, "The Problem That Has No Name"
Fricker, "Hermeneutic Injustice" (excerpt)
June 4 Frye, "A Note on Anger," "On Being White"
June 5 Frye, "Some Reflections on Separatism and Power"
June 8 Frye, "In and Out of Harm's Way"

Unit 5. Ralph Ellison

- June 9* *Fourth paper due.*
Mills, "On White Ignorance"
June 10 Ellison, *Invisible Man*
June 11 Ellison, *Invisible Man*
June 12 Ellison, *Invisible Man*

June 15 *Conclusion.* No new reading.