

Syllabus: Phil 198, Fall 2011
Substance Abuse: Monism/Dualism

Instructor: Richard Fry

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Office Hours: Monday, 4:30-5:30PM in the
Philosophy Department (2nd Floor of New North),
and by appointment

Class meeting time: MW, 6:30-7:45PM
Meeting place: ICC 213

Course Description: Is the mind a different kind of thing than the body? When you mold clay into a statue, does something new come into existence? Is a living organism anything more than the atoms and quarks that make it up?

Taking a stand on these issues is taking a stand on how many kinds of things there are. For example, if you think that there is only one sort of thing, then you might think that there are only thoughts and no bodies. This is just one of many ways of being a monist. If you think that there are two sorts of things—say, that the animal is different from the atoms and molecules that make it up—then you are a type of dualist.

In this course, we will critically assess our presuppositions about what there is by looking at different philosophers' answers to the question of what 'substance' is and how many there are. We will read Spinoza (a monist), Descartes (a dualist) and Aristotle, who thought that there were at least as many kinds of thing as there are kinds of animal! We will also consider challenges to these views from Parmenides, Leibniz and Locke. We will think about whether the reasons that each gives for their views are good reasons.

Students will write two short papers, each examining the view of a different author, and a final, longer paper. Students will be equipped to offer a position on what there is and arguments in favor of and against that position.

Required Text:

Steven Cahn, *Classics of Western Philosophy*, 7th Edition, Hackett Publishing, 2007
ISBN: 0-87220-859-9

The Honor Code and Plagiarism:

You are expected and required to uphold standards of academic honesty in this course. Plagiarism of ideas or words is unacceptable. Familiarize yourself with what counts as plagiarism:

<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/system/53377.html>

The Honor Council (<http://gervaseprograms.georgetown.edu/honor/>) adjudicates cases of suspected academic dishonesty. In effort to uphold this university's high standards, I will submit any and all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Honor Council, who will investigate. Confirmed academic dishonesty will result in automatic failure of the course.

Policies:

Preparedness: You are responsible for being prepared for class. This includes reading assigned material, thinking about it so that you can ask questions and arriving on time.

Attendance: Only one unexcused absence will be allowed, after this I will deduct points from your participation grade. Please contact me if you're going to be absent for any reason.

Attitude: You are responsible for comporting yourself in an appropriate manner. This includes both actively participating in discussion as well as treating other members of the class with respect and courtesy. Laptop use is prohibited.

Due Dates: You are responsible for turning in your work on time. Each 24 hours or portion thereof that a piece of written work is late will result in the subtraction of 1/3 letter grade. All work more than a week late will receive an F.

Under some circumstances, it is possible to get an extension for written work because of illness, injury or family emergency. If you need an extension or reassignment, email me *as soon as possible* with a brief description of your situation and how long you think it will take you to resolve the issue. We will then work out a timeframe for the extension/reassignment. Extensions must be requested before the assignment is due.

Grades: if you believe the work you submitted deserves a different grade than it received, you may ask *in writing* for reconsideration. Your request must be submitted *within one week*, but no sooner than *two days after* the assignment is returned. Your written request *must explain why* you believe the work deserves a different grade. Most appeals will not result in a change of grade, but if a change is made please note that the grade may be either higher or lower.

Assignments and Assessment

More details and dates for these assignments will be distributed during the term.

- (1) **Short Paper 1:** You will write one short paper in the early part of the course. The focus of this paper will be to motivate and explain an argument found in one of the early writers. This paper will be **3 pages** and will need to have an introduction that situates the argument in its philosophical context. This paper will be **worth 20%** of your grade.
- (2) **Short Paper 2:** This assignment is much like (1) above and will cover the middle portion of the class. In it you will not only explain the argument, its context and consequences but also develop a criticism of that argument (or the attendant view). This **3-4 page assignment** will be **worth 25%** of your grade.
- (3) **Longer Paper:** A **5-6 page paper** dealing with issues from the span of the entire course. More details will be given on this later. Part of your grade for this paper will be determined by a conference with me. In this conference, we will discuss your previous work and plan for this paper. This paper (with the conference) is **worth 35%** of your grade.
- (4) **Participation:** Your participation in class, both its quantity and quality, will be **worth 10%** of your grade. This includes submitting questions for discussion days before the assigned deadline.
- (5) **Discussion Leader:** For one class meeting, you and your group will serve as discussion leaders. Students will submit questions via Blackboard and you and your group will be responsible for answering textual questions and facilitating discussions about textual interpretation. Your goal should be to guide our discussion to the appropriate passages and arguments to make sense of the view and the points at issue. This is **worth 10%** of your final grade.

Class Schedule: Phil 198, Fall 2011
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Monday		Wednesday
		Aug 31 Introduction / Arguments
Sept 5 - Labor Day		7 - Descartes <i>Meditations 1&2, Principles to #12</i>
12 - Descartes <i>Meditations 2</i>		14 - Descartes <i>Meditations 3, Principles to #20</i>
19 - Descartes Discussion		21 - Locke (Paper 1 Assigned) <i>Essay II.xxiii (all)</i>
26 - Locke <i>Essay Bk.III (excerpts)</i>		28 - Locke Discussion
Oct 3 - Berkeley (Paper 1 Due) <i>Three Dialogues, First Dialogue</i>		5 - Leibniz <i>Monadology to #50</i>
10 - Columbus Day		12 - Leibniz (Paper 1 Returned) <i>Monadology (all)</i>
17 - Spinoza <i>Ethics through Prop. 11</i>		19 - Spinoza <i>Ethics through Prop. 18</i>
24 - Spinoza (Paper 2 Assigned)		26 - Berkeley/Leibniz/Spinoza Discussion
31 - Aristotle <i>Categories</i>		Nov 2 - Aristotle <i>Metaphysics VII, VIII, XII</i>
7 - Aristotle (Paper 2 Due)		9 - Aristotle Discussion
14 - Parmenides <i>Handouts</i>		16 - Parmenides / Melissus <i>Handouts</i>
21 - Parmenides Discussion (P2 returned, FP assigned)		23 - CONFERENCES
28 - CONFERENCES		30 - Contemporary Views
Dec 5 - Contemporary Views		7 - Wrap Up

Resources: Phil 198, Fall 2011
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Philosophical Resources

The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://plato.stanford.edu>

Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.iep.utm.edu>

The Philosopher's Index: accessible at library.georgetown.edu, through "Articles and Databases."

Philpapers.org: <http://philpapers.org>

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Academic Resources

Academic Resource Center: Leavey center Suit 335

<http://ldss.georgetown.edu> and arc@georgetown.edu

The Academic Resource Center arranges accommodations for students with disabilities and provides assistance with study skills.

Writing Center: 217A Lauinger Library

<http://writingcenter.georgetown.edu> and writingcenter@georgetown.edu

The Writing Center provides one-on-one assistance with academic writing skills. Their website also has many useful links for improving your writing.

Scholarly Research and Academic Integrity

Resources are available at <http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/academic-integrity/refresher-tipsheet>

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Health and Wellness Resources

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS): Eastern Side of Darnall Hall

(202)687-6985 and <http://caps.georgetown.edu>

24-hour doctor on-call: (202) 444-PAGE

CAPS is a primary mental health resource assisting students in overcoming difficulties that interfere with the attainment of their personal and educational goals.

Health Education Services: 207 Village C West

(202)687-8949 and <http://healthed.georgetown.edu>

Health Education Services is comprised of health professionals who are available to help students deal with a range of health issues, including pregnancy, alcohol and drug issues, eating disorders, sexual assault, relationship violence, stalking, and stress management. All services are individualized, confidential, and free for students.

Student Health Center: Ground Floor, Darnall Hall

Appointments: (202)687-2200; General info: (202)687-4500

<http://shc.georgetown.edu>