

# Philosophy 1204: Knowledge & Reality

Spring, 2008

**Lectures:** Mondays & Wednesdays 12:20-1:10pm in McBryde 100.

## **Professor James C. Klagge**

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Office Hrs: M 2-3, W 3-4, Th 10-11  
& by appointment

## **My TA:**

Office:  
Phone:  
E-mail:  
Office Hours:

## **Discussion Sections:**

CRN: 14490	F 8-8:50	Shultz 105	Curtis
CRN: 14484	F 9:05-9:55	Shultz 105	Curtis
CRN: 14491	F 9:05-9:55	Shultz 109	David
CRN: 14485	F 10:10-11	Hutcheson 209	David
CRN: 14492	F 10:10-11	Gym 219	Curtis
CRN: 14486	F 11:15-12:05	Squires 236	David
CRN: 14489	F 11:15-12:05	Squires 234	Ashley
CRN: 14488	F 12:20-1:10	McBryde 302	Ryan
CRN: 14496	F 12:20-1:10	Shultz 105	Ashley
CRN: 14483	F 1:25-2:15	Shultz 105	Ashley
CRN: 14487	F 1:25-2:15	McBryde 316	Ryan
CRN: 14482	F 2:30-3:20	MajWms 334	Ryan

## **TA's**

Course Description: We will read and discuss the work of some important historical and contemporary philosophers. We will focus on questions such as: What is the nature of reality and the self? What is the relationship between mind and body? How do I know what is real, and what is misleading appearance, error, or illusion? What is knowledge? Should we fear death? What is the meaning of life?

Course Requirements: Regular attendance and participation in class discussion, as judged by your TA, worth 10%. There will be two short papers, due on the days indicated, worth 10% each; two mid-terms, on the days indicated, worth 20% each; and a final exam, worth 30%. Late papers are accepted only with prior approval, and with a penalty. There is no Blackboard for this course. All course material is posted on my website—including PowerPoint slides.

*Students with disabilities needing accommodation: See me in advance of assignments, as soon as possible.*

## **Required Texts:**

Plato, *Five Dialogues*, Second Edition, Hackett  
Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, Hackett  
Thomas Nagel, *What Does It All Mean?*  
Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Third Edition, Hackett  
Quine & Ullian, *The Web of Belief*  
John Perry, *Dialogue on Personal Identity & Immortality*  
Rocco Gennaro, *Mind and Brain: A Dialogue on the Mind-Body Problem*

## **Course Outline & Reading Assignments:**

- 1/14 Introduction  
Definition & the Nature of Philosophy
- 1/16 Read: Nagel, Ch. 1; and Plato, Meno (p. 58-p. 70 at 80d)
- 1/21 **No Classes (MLK Day)**
- 1/23 Read: Plato, Meno (pp. 70-92)
- Knowledge & the Method of Philosophy
- 1/28 Read: Nagel, Ch. 2; and Descartes, pp. vii-ix & 1-10.
- 1/30 Read: Descartes, 1<sup>st</sup> Meditation (pp. 13-17)
- 2/4 Read: Descartes, 2<sup>nd</sup> Meditation (pp. 17-24)
- 2/6 Read: Descartes, 3<sup>rd</sup> Meditation (pp. 24-35)
- \* 2/8 **Paper due** in Discussion section

## Minds & Bodies

- 2/11 Read: Descartes, 5<sup>th</sup> Meditation (pp. 42-47) (Skip 4<sup>th</sup> Meditation.)  
2/13 Read: Descartes, 6<sup>th</sup> Meditation (pp. 47-59); Nagel, Chs. 3 & 4
- 2/18 Read: Gennaro, The First Night (pp. 1-21)  
2/20 Read: Gennaro, The Second Night (pp. 22-45)
- 2/25 Catch-up & Review  
\* 2/27 **Mid-term**  
2/29 *Discussion Sections Cancelled*

## \*\*\* SPRING BREAK \*\*\*

## Another Approach to Knowledge

- 3/10 Read: Quine & Ullian, Chs. 1-3  
3/12 Read: Quine & Ullian, Chs. 5, 6 & 8
- World, Self, Death & the Meaning of Life
- 3/17 Read: Plato, Apology (pp. 21-44)  
3/19 Read: Plato, Phaedo (pp. 93-126 at 88d)
- 3/24 Read: Plato, Phaedo (pp. 126-145 at 107d)  
3/26 Read: Plato, Phaedo (pp. 145-154)  
\* 3/28 **Paper Due** in Discussion section
- 3/31 Read: Lucretius, Book I (pp. 1-33)  
4/2 Catch-up & Review
- \* 4/7 **Mid-Term**  
4/9 Read: Lucretius, Book II (pp. 34-65) and Nagel, Ch. 6
- 4/14 Read: Lucretius, Book III (pp. 66-98); p. 139 (line 110)-p. 144 (line 246)  
of Book V; and Nagel, Ch. 9
- 4/16 **No Classes (4/16 Memorial)**
- 4/21 Read: Perry, The First & Second Night (pp. 1-36)  
4/23 Read: Perry, The Third Night (pp. 37-49)
- 4/28 Read: Nagel, Ch. 10  
4/30 Catch-up, Review & Conclusion
- \* 5/6 **Final Exam** (Tuesday) 10:05am-12:05pm.

**When you entered VA Tech you signed an honor pledge: The Virginia Tech Honor Code:**  
The Honor Code will be strictly enforced in this course. All assignments submitted shall be considered graded work. All aspects of your coursework are covered by the Honor System. Any suspected violations of the Honor Code will be promptly reported to the Honor System. Honesty in your academic work will develop into professional integrity. The faculty and students of Virginia Tech will not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty.

***All material taken from books or the internet must be properly cited in papers.***