

Course Required Materials / Text:

Rauhut, Nils Ch. *Ultimate Questions: Thinking About Philosophy*. Second Edition..
Pearson Longman, 2007.

Class Meeting Time and Location

11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. MTWThF, Building A Room 207

Class Dynamics:

Assigned text readings for class meetings should be read in advance for the day assigned.

There will be a **Readings Quiz** for each assignment at the beginning of the class designated for a reading assignment. There will be 23 readings quizzes in the Summer 2010 Mini-May class. ***No make-ups on readings quizzes will be given***, but you may drop your THREE lowest quiz grades. True / False questions from readings quizzes will supply material for questions on examinations, so you will want to keep the quizzes to prepare for examinations.

Lectures will be the foundation of class discussion and examination contents. Lectures will seek to inform and to challenge the student to critical consideration and knowledge of the course subject matter.

Class discussion of lectures and readings is welcomed and encouraged. Such discussion should be informed, thoughtful, respectful of the views of others, and open to new (or old) ideas and perspectives. ***Students are not required to endorse any of the personal views of the instructor or of the course text.***

Examinations

Study Guides will be provided prior to each major examination. ***If you have no absences since the previous exam and you fill out the study guide completely***, you may turn in the study guide prior to the examination and a grade of (at least) '60' on the examination is assured. The use of the study guide can greatly assist you in making a grade higher than 'D' on the examination! (It is acceptable to collaborate with another student(s) in filling out the study guide, but *please do not simply copy someone's study guide or allow someone simply to copy your study guide.*)

Major Examinations will evidence the student's mastery of the course material.
Three non-comprehensive examinations will be given.

Make-up examinations **MAY** be given at the instructor's discretion for **emergency** (not discretionary) reasons and when supported by suitable documentation of need.

*Unless prior arrangements have been made, all make-up examinations should be made up in the Testing Center **prior to the next class** meeting after the missed exam.

*If you know in advance that you will not be able to be in class on the day of an exam, **inform me in advance** so that arrangements can be discussed.

*If you miss an exam without making prior arrangements, **be sure to contact me the day of the missed exam** concerning the reasons and justification for a make-up examination. *Failure to do so will result in a grade of '0.'*

Course Essay:

Each student will turn in a (3-5 Page, double-spaced, 12 font) essay in response to the topic: **“My Personal Philosophy of Life.”** This essay will be worth 20% of your course grade. This is not a research paper and does not require documentation unless you utilize sources or cite material that are not your own creative material / words. Essays will be evaluated on the basis of the thoughtfulness and course-interaction evidenced by the essay.
(Due June 3)

Attendance Policy !!! :

There are **14 Classes** in the Mini-May 2010 term. Each class date will be divided into two Class Sessions, for a total of **28 Class Sessions**. The **First Session** will begin promptly at 11:30 a.m. and last until 12:45 p.m. Following a **15 minute break**. Then **Session Two** will begin at 1:00 p.m. and last until 2:30 p.m.

You are required to attend at least 10 complete Class Days = 20 complete Class Sessions . More than 4 Class Absences (or missing more than eight Class Sessions) ordinarily requires that you drop the course (if occurring before the official Drop / Withdrawal Deadline) or receive an ‘F’ for the course.

There is no special penalty for Class Absences #1 & #2, but FOUR points will be deducted from your final course average for each of Class Absences #3 & #4.
(Or, two points for each Session absences beyond four session absences.)

*Students should be on time for class and attentive-participative during each class session.

*Unless there is a special need that the student communicates to the instructor, all cell phones, electronic devices, etc. should be silenced and unused during class. Laptop computers may be used for note-taking purposes only! *Unauthorized use of electronic devices in class will result in the student being accorded a Session Absence.*

*If you arrive late for a Class Session (= after readings quiz has been taken up) inform me of your presence at the end of the Class Session - otherwise you may be counted absent.

*Students ‘sleeping’ (head down on desk, etc.) during class *or using class time for any purpose other than philosophy education* will be counted absent.

*Students arriving more than 20 minutes late to class will be accorded ½ Session Absence.

*Please tell me prior to class if you will need to leave any class early. Leaving class early *for any reason* will count as 1/2 Session Absence.

On Dropping the Course:

Students who consider dropping the course due to excessive absences or low grades should consult with the instructor first! Mitigating circumstances and potential *may* be considered if the student is having difficulty fulfilling attendance and grade requirements of the course. ***If the student does need to drop the course, it is the STUDENT 'S responsibility to do so officially.***

Determination of Course Grade:

Grades will be assigned on a scale of:

90 to 100	A
80 to 89	B
70 to 79	C
60 to 69	D
Below 60	F

Your course grade will be determined according to the following:

Readings Quizzes:	20%
Examination #1:	20%
Examination #2:	20%
Examination #3:	20%
Semester Essay:	20%

Plagiarism and Cheating

In the case of plagiarism (claiming that words and ideas of others are your own and/or not indicating the source of ideas), the instructor reserves the right to give the student a zero for the assignment. In the case of cheating in the course of a quiz/exam, the instructor reserves the right to give the student or students a zero for the quiz/exam.

Your Instructor:

Mark Weldon Whitten, 'Professor' of Philosophy and Religion

B.A. Baylor University (*magna cum laude*, Phi Beta Kappa)
M.Div. Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary
Ph.D. Baylor University

My office is located in Building A Suite 200 #K, my office phone number is 936.273.7492,
my email is mark.w.whitten@lonestar.edu.
and my web-page is www.lonestar.edu/blogs/mwhitten

Office Hours: You may 'drop by' without an appointment during official office hours:

MTWThF: 10:30 to 11:15 a.m. and 2:30 to 2:45 p.m.

If you wish, you may also call or email to set up an appointment
during these hours.

Counseling

If you find yourself in any kind of academic or personal ‘distress’ during the semester, please see BELS Division counselors Rachel Phelps (936-271-6157, Building A office 220A) or Andrea Martin (936-273-7070, Building E, office 209D). They offer personal, academic, and career counseling and can put you in touch with other helpful campus resources.

Some Observations on Student Success:

1. Lone Star - Montgomery College your professor are committed to doing our best to facilitate your academic success. There are many sources of aid in your educational quest, beginning with your professor and also available through the Learning Center and other Montgomery College programs. If you need help in your learning, seek and ask!
2. *But YOU*, the student, are fundamentally and ultimately responsible for your own learning.
It is vitally important that you take responsibility for your learning!
Not only will this promote your success now as a student, but it will serve to develop the personal responsibility and self-discipline that is necessary for success in your future career and in every aspect of life.
3. Becoming educated / learning is work -- *often hard work* -- and it may be helpful to regard being a student as your ‘job’ (or another job in addition to your ‘real job’), requiring all of the commitment, effort, and discipline that it takes to be successful in a job.
4. So, attend class whenever possible and as required. Pay attention, be an ‘active listener,’ and participate in class. Take good class notes and study adequately for examinations. Collaborate with your fellow students in studying for examinations (study groups can be very helpful!). Take good care of yourself physically and psychologically-emotionally (get adequate rest, especially the night before an examination!). Give yourself time to do your best work on papers and projects (don’t procrastinate!) Keep up with your work – don’t start ‘sliding’ through the semester and find yourself at the end of the semester not having the materials, information, or time to do well on final exams, papers, and projects.
5. Finally, *believe in yourself* – that you can succeed and even excel as a student – and do your best. Then take satisfaction in whatever you accomplish, for it will be your best (and YOUR BEST is all anyone can expect).

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

“At the root of the fundamental acts of human life lies the making of intelligent decisions. The ancient name for making such decisions well is wisdom. Philosophy is love of wisdom. It is the study of intelligent subjectivity.” (Michael Novak)

Class 1: May 17

Session One / “Welcome Philosophers!” and Course Introduction
“What is ‘Philosophy’?”
(We will view a video of philosophers’ personal testimonials)

Session Two / ‘The Dynamics and Demands of Philosophical Understanding’
“Some Benefits of Philosophy Education”

Class 2: May 18

Session One / “Socrates: A Reason-Able Person and Paradigm of the Philosophical Life”

(We will view the short video: “The Cave”)

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 1-7

Readings Quiz #1

Session Two / “Rene Descartes and Methodological Doubt”

“Francis Bacon and ‘Mental Idols’”

Reading Assignment: Rauhut **26-32**

Readings Quiz #2

Class 3: May 19

Session One / “Reason-Able Thinking: Elements and Functions of Philosophical Arguments”

Reading Assignment: Rauhut **32-42**

AND “The Constitutional Convention and ‘Christian America’”

at www.lonestar.edu/blogs/mwhitten

(click on tab: ‘Religion Resources,’ then click on link)

Readings Quiz #3

Session Two / “Reason-Able Thinking: A Brief Introduction to Logic”

Reading Assignment: Rauhut **16-25**

Readings Quiz #4

Class 4: May 20

Session One / Epistemology:

“‘Knowledge’ – What is it and How do we attain it?”

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 44-53, **53-61**

Readings Quiz # 5

Session Two / Theories of Knowledge: Rationalism

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 53-61, **73-77**,

Readings Quiz #6

Class 5: May 21

Session One / Theories of Knowledge: Empiricism

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 61-73

Readings Quiz #7

Session Two / Kant’s ‘Synthesis’ Epistemology

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 79-81

AND “ Basic Elements of Kant’s Epistemology

at www.lonestar.edu/blogs/mwhitten

(click on tab: ‘Metaphysics / Epistemology Resources’ - then click on link)

Readings Quiz #8

Class 6: May 24

Session One: EXAMINATION #1

Session Two / Theories of Personal Identity

We will cover Rauhut 113-117, 122-125 in class
at the end of Session Two WE will take Readings Quiz #9

Class 7: May 25

Session One / Self-Identity: Mind and Body

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 137-154

Readings Quiz #10

Session Two / Body and Mind

Readings Assignment: Rauhut, 154-171

Readings Quiz #11

Class 8: May 26

Session One / Self-Identity: Human Freedom – ‘Hard’ and ‘Soft Determinism’

Reading Assignment: Rauhut **84-99**

Readings Quiz #12

Session Two: Self-Identity: Human Freedom – ‘Deep Self-Compatibilism’
and ‘Libertarian Freedom’

Reading Assignment: Rauhut, **100-111**

Readings Quiz #13

Class 9: May 27

Session One / Metaphysics: Basic Issues and Alternatives

Reading Assignment: “Pre Socratic philosophy / ‘History’”

at www.wikipedia.org

AND “Ontology Options”

at www.lonestar.edu/blogs/mwhitten

(click on tab: ‘Metaphysics / Epistemology Resources,’ then click on link)

Readings Quiz #14

Session Two / ‘Religion’ and ‘God’

‘Faith and Reason’

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 173-177

Readings Quiz #15

[Session Two Material will be covered on Examination #3]

Class 10: May 28

Session One / EXAMINATION #2

Session Two / Arguments FOR the Existence of God –

Class 10: May 28, Second Session, continued

Cosmological, and Teleological Arguments

Reading Assignment: We will cover Rauhut 182-194 in class

WE will take Readings Quiz #16 at the end of class

No Class Monday / May 31= Memorial Day Holiday

Class 11: June 1

Session One: / Arguments AGAINST the Existence of God –

Evidentialism and The Problem of Evil

The Significance of Religious Experience(?)

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 204-212, **178-181**

Readings Quiz #17

Session Two: / ‘Morality’ and ‘Ethics’: Types of Moral-Ethical Judgments

A Refutation of the Claim: “All of our actions are ‘selfish’!”

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 178-181, 214-216

AND “Psychological Egoism”

at www.lonestar.edu/blogs/mwhitten

(click on ‘Ethics Resources,’ then click on link)

Readings Quiz # 18

Class 12: June 2

Session One / The Claims of ‘Subjective Relativism’ and ‘Cultural Relativism’

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 216-227

Readings Quiz # 19

Session Two / ‘Moral Egoism’ and

‘Divine Command Theory of Ethics’

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 227-231

AND “Ethical Egoism

at www.nationmaster.com/encyclopedia/Ethical-egoism

Readings Quiz #20

Class 13: June 3

COURSE ESSAYS DUE

Session One / Utilitarian Ethical Theory

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 231-240

Readings Quiz #21

Session Two / Kantian Ethical Theory

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 240-248

Readings Quiz #22

Class 14: June 4

Session One / Character-Virtue Ethics (11:30 to 12:30)

Reading Assignment: Rauhut 248-256

Readings Quiz #23

(will also count as 15% of examination #3)

Study Period (12:30 to 1:00)

Session Two: EXAMINATION #3 (1:00 to 2:30)