

McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts
 Duquesne University

Basic Philosophical Questions

MWF 10:00–10:50am

PHIL 132-03

Fisher 713

Fall 2006

Teachers

Texts

Dr. P. L. Miller.....College 332	Epicurus, <i>The Epicurus Reader</i>
Office Phone.....412-396-1291	Epictetus, <i>The Handbook</i>
Office Hours.....MWF 2–3pm	Sextus Empiricus, <i>Selections from the Major</i>
Email Address..... millerp2212@duq.edu	<i>Writings on Scepticism, Man, & God</i>
Website..... www.unc.edu/~plmiller	Plato, <i>Republic</i>
	Augustine, <i>On Free Choice of the Will</i>
Mr. J. O’Connor.....College 352	Karl Marx, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i>
Office Hours.....TBA and by appointment	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>Twilight of the Idols</i>
Email Address.....oconnor.jamie@gmail.com	Sigmund Freud, <i>Outline of Psychoanalysis, The</i>
	<i>Future of an Illusion</i>
	C. S. Lewis, <i>The Problem of Pain</i>
	Warburton, <i>Thinking from A to Z</i>
	Weston, <i>A Rulebook for Arguments</i>

Evaluation

Important Dates

Reading Quizzes.....5%	Logic Assignment.....09/06
Logic Assignment.....5%	Argument Schema.....9/25
Logical Term Assignments.....5%	First Paper.....10/09
Argument Schema.....5%	Midterm Exam.....11/03
First Paper.....15%	Second Paper.....12/06
Midterm Exam.....15%	Comprehensive Final Exam.....12/15
Second Paper.....20%	
Comprehensive Final Exam.....30%	

Course Description

How should we live? Why do we suffer? How may we achieve peace of mind? What is it to fall in love? Are there differences between men and women? If so, are they natural or nurtured? What is the difference between reason, emotion, and mere desire? Do dreams mean anything? Is there a soul? Does it survive bodily death? Or is matter all there is to the universe? What is God like, if there is a God? Can we know whether God exists? Can we know anything? Are we free to choose our fate, or does Fate determine us to act as we do? What is justice? Who should have political power to enforce it? Should the powerful also censor art? What is art? Does it lead us toward the truth or away from it? And what is truth? Is there such a thing? Or is it merely illusion in fancy clothes?

These are some of the questions we shall examine in this course, focusing in the first half on philosophers of Greek and Roman antiquity, in the second half on philosophers of more recent times. We shall begin by considering exponents of the three philosophical schools that dominated the Roman period (a period rather like our own): Stoicism, Epicureanism, and Skepticism. With this brief exposure to philosophy behind us, we shall then read the greatest single introduction to the subject: Plato's *Republic*. Next comes St. Augustine's treatise on free-will, after which we shall turn to three Germans: Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Sigmund Freud. Since the question of God and suffering will run throughout our course, we shall conclude with a treatment of it by the Christian apologist C. S. Lewis.

Course Requirements

As with any college course, every hour in class requires at least two hours of preparation beforehand. When papers or exams are due, needless to say, still more time will be needed. Precise expectations for these tasks will be made clearer when they are imminent. In the meantime, recognize that the course demands steady work throughout the semester. Keep up with the reading assignments, attend class, participate in discussions. In general, cultivate an *active* approach to the material: think of the teacher as a guide rather than a general. Seek help when you meet concepts you do not understand or skills you have trouble mastering. Beyond these universal suggestions, finally, there are two components of the course to which you should turn your immediate attention:

Reading Quizzes: In order to ensure that you are not only reading the selections but actively assimilating their content, there will be unannounced reading quizzes whose average will be worth 5% of your final grade.

Logical Terms: In order to understand the intricate arguments presented in this course, you will learn dozens of logical terms from Warburton and Weston. In the syllabus below, these terms have been paired with reading selections. Before we meet for class, first master the logical terms listed for that day, then read the appropriate selections of substantive philosophy, keeping these terms in mind. Next, choose three of the terms and find an instance of each from the readings. In sum, prepare one page that: (i) lists each term, (ii) explains it in your own words, (iii) quotes a short passage from the philosophical reading that exemplifies it, and (iv) explains precisely how the passage exemplifies it. On some unannounced days I will collect and grade these pages. Their average grade will be worth 5% of your final grade. These assignments will not begin until 09.11, but before that time a longer, announced logic assignment will be due, on 09.06. This longer assignment resembles the shorter ones that will follow, but instead of three terms, you must comb all of Epictetus's *Handbook* and find an instance of each term that was assigned from Warburton during the first week of the course (08.30 and 09.01). This assignment will ensure that you understand the basics of logic and philosophical reading. It should be no longer than 5 type-written pages.

Some Course Policies

Like all forms of lying, plagiarism and cheating are grave offences. This is especially true in a university, whose goal is the pursuit of truth. Since these offences threaten the very foundation of collegiate life, they will be prosecuted to the full extent afforded by this university's policies. The maximum penalty is expulsion. Any doubts about the natures of these offences or the punishments they will incur can be dispelled by consulting the following website:

<http://www.studentlife.duq.edu/handbooksec5.html>

Attendance is expected at all lectures, and occasionally the teacher will call roll. In light of this expectation, necessary absences should be explained to the teacher, preferably with documentation. Any absence of more than one week requires the student to contact an advisor. There is no intrinsic penalty for missing class, but because of the steady workload required by this course, the unannounced collection of assignments, and the unannounced quizzes, students who miss more than a class or two will suffer poor grades, often to the point of failing.

In order to receive full consideration, all assignments (including papers) must be submitted at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Once class has begun, submitted work will be penalized by a 'minus' for each 24 hours that it is late. Thus, when a paper is due on a Monday, for example, if a certain paper is of superior quality and is submitted at the beginning of class on Monday, it will receive an A. Submitted a few minutes after the beginning of class on Monday, however, the same paper will receive an A-. Submitted 24 hours later, it will receive a B+, and so on until the graded papers are returned to the rest of the class, after which time it will receive no consideration.

Exams missed for any reason beyond those excused by the university's administration (travel for a university sponsored activity, death in the family, serious illness or accident, etc.) will not be readministered. In order to receive a make-up exam, a student will need to supply the teacher with advance notice of the absence (when possible). Both the College of Liberal Arts and the teacher must receive documentation of the excuse (in all cases).

Graded work will receive numerical scores. Since the percentages of evaluation have been made explicit above, the teacher will not calculate interim grades for students; students can easily do so for themselves. The meanings of these numerical scores are:

93-100.....	A.....	superior
90-92.....	A-.....	excellent
88-89.....	B+.....	very good
83-87.....	B.....	good
80-82.....	B-.....	above average
78-79.....	C+.....	satisfactory
70-77.....	C.....	average
60-69.....	D.....	poor
0-59.....	F.....	failure

About grades, two general points should be remembered. Properly speaking, first, grades are earned by the student, not given by the teacher. Second, these meanings are taken quite literally, so that grades in the A range will be very rare, a B grade (or higher) will be something of which to be proud, and the grade of C will very likely be the class average at the end of the semester. Students who receive D grades or lower should consult with the teachers immediately in order to diagnose and remedy the problem(s).

Students with documented disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodations, if needed. If you need accommodations, please contact the Office of Freshman Development and Special Student Services in 309 Duquesne Union (412-396-6657) as soon as possible. Accommodations will not be granted retrospectively.

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<p>08.28.06</p> <p>Introduction to Philosophy</p>	<p>08.30.06</p> <p>Logic</p> <p>Weston: 1–9</p> <p>Warburton</p> <p>assertion argument premise conclusion validity deduction sound argument consistency contradiction contraries conditional statements antecedent consequent necessary and sufficient conditions iff affirming the antecedent denying the consequent denying the antecedent affirming the consequent</p>	<p>09.01.06</p> <p>Epictetus</p> <p>Stoicism</p> <p><i>The Handbook</i>: 11–19</p> <p>Weston: 10–23</p> <p>Warburton</p> <p>paradox analogy, arguments from disanalogy</p>
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<p>09.04.06</p> <p>LABOR DAY</p>	<p>09.06.06</p> <p>Epictetus</p> <p>Stoicism</p> <p><i>The Handbook</i>: 19–29</p> <p>Logic Assignment Due</p>	<p>09.08.06</p> <p>Epicurus</p> <p>Physics</p> <p><i>Letter to Herodotus</i>: 5–19</p> <p>Weston: 24–39</p>
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<p>09.11.06</p> <p>Epicurus</p> <p>Ethics</p> <p><i>Letter to Menoeceus</i>: 28–31 <i>Maxims</i>: 32–40</p> <p>Warburton counterexample rash generalisation black-and-white thinking false dichotomy</p>	<p>09.13.06</p> <p>Sextus Empiricus</p> <p>Skepticism</p> <p><i>Selected Writings</i>: 31–44</p> <p>Warburton formal fallacy <i>non sequitur</i> spurious ‘therefore’</p>	<p>09.15.06</p> <p>Sextus Empiricus</p> <p>The Modes</p> <p><i>Selected Writings</i>: 44–76</p>
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<p>09.18.06</p> <p>Sextus Empiricus</p> <p>Physics</p> <p><i>Selected Writings</i>: 113–28</p> <p>Warburton genetic fallacy correlation=cause confusion <i>post hoc ergo propter hoc</i> some/all confusion alternative explanations</p>	<p>09.20.06</p> <p>Sextus Empiricus</p> <p>God</p> <p><i>Selected Writings</i>: 175–95</p> <p>Warburton <i>reductio ad absurdum</i> absurd consequences move empirical anecdotal evidence induction</p>	<p>09.22.06</p> <p>Deductive Logic Forms</p> <p>Weston: 40–52</p>
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<p>09.25.06</p> <p>Plato</p> <p>Introduction to the <i>Republic</i></p> <p>Schema Due</p>	<p>09.27.06</p> <p>Plato</p> <p><i>Republic</i>, 1 1–35</p> <p>Weston, 79–85</p> <p>Warburton hypothesis dictionary definition truth by adage exception that proves the rule <i>ad hoc</i> clauses humptydumptying stipulative definitions Socratic fallacy family resemblance term</p>	<p>09.29.06</p> <p>Plato</p> <p><i>Republic</i>, 2 36–66</p> <p>Warburton assumption supposition imply/infer enthymeme</p>
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10.02.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 3 66–102	10.04.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 4 103–35	10.06.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 5 136–75
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10.09.06 Weston: 53–70 First Paper Due	10.11.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 6 176–207	10.13.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 7 208–37
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10.15.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 8 238–69 Warburton democratic fallacy 'everyone does it' truth by consensus truth by authority kowtowing universal expertise	10.17.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 9 269–96 Warburton rhetoric persuader words persuasive definition devil's advocate pseudo-profundity rhetorical questions	10.19.06 Plato <i>Republic</i> , 10 297–326 Warburton smokescreen sophistry straw man shifting the goalposts vagueness red-herrings irrelevance
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10.22.06 Augustine <i>On Free Choice of the Will</i> 1–28 Warburton pedantry newspeak jargon 'that's a value judgement'	10.24.06 Augustine <i>On Free Choice of the Will</i> 29–59 Warburton zig-zagging devil's advocate drawing a line slippery slope arguments	10.26.06 Augustine <i>On Free Choice of the Will</i> 60–90 Warburton vested interest Ockham's razor rationalisation knock-down argument
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10.29.06 Augustine <i>On Free Choice of the Will</i> 91–123	11.01.06 ALL SAINTS DAY	11.03.06 Midterm Exam
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11.06.06 Marx <i>Communist Manifesto</i> Short Introduction Section 1 Weston: 71–78	11.08.06 Marx <i>Communist Manifesto</i> Section 2 Warburton 'that's a fallacy' companions in guilt move <i>tu quoque</i> bad company fallacy wishful thinking gambler's fallacy bad reasons fallacy proof by ignorance	11.10.06 Nietzsche <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> 3–24 Warburton <i>ad hominem</i> move getting personal irrelevance emotive language complex questions prejudice biting the bullet
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11.13.06 Nietzsche <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> 25–42	11.15.06 Nietzsche <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> 68–91	11.17.06 Freud <i>Outline of Psychoanalysis</i> Part 1
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THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

11.27.06 Freud <i>Outline of Psychoanalysis</i> Part 2	11.29.06 Freud <i>Outline of Psychoanalysis</i> Part 3	12.01.06 Freud <i>The Future of an Illusion</i> Chapters 1–5
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12.04.06 Freud <i>The Future of an Illusion</i> Chapters 6–10	12.06.06 Second Paper Due	12.08.06 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
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12.11.06 C. S. Lewis <i>The Problem of Pain</i> Chapters 1–3	12.12.06 (Tuesday) C. S. Lewis <i>The Problem of Pain</i> Chapters 4, 6–7	12.13.06 (Wednesday) Conclusions
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Comprehensive Final Exam: 8:45–10:45am, Friday, 12.15.06