



PH 505: PHILOSOPHICAL ANTHROPOLOGY

MON/THURS 12:45 – 2:00PM

3 Credits

(FALL 2019)

Classroom I

“The unexamined life is not worth living.”

~ Socrates

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Jeremy W. Blackwood

Office: Room 196 (1:00-2:00pm Tuesdays, 10:30-11:45am Fridays, & by appointment)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a philosophical examination of the human person. Its particular topics include: the mind-body problem, personal identity, free will, and the human search for meaning. Special attention is given to contemporary challenges to Christian views on these issues.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. describe the basic dimensions of human existence: language, historicity, intersubjectivity, and physicality;
2. assess the varied philosophical accounts of the human mind and personal identity through time;
3. explore the several common philosophical views regarding human free will;
4. articulate a Christian response to the philosophical question of life's meaning;
5. communicate the ways in which philosophical understandings of the human person are relevant to Catholic thought; and
6. explore differing cultural understandings of human existence.

READINGS

The following texts are required:

Steven J. Jensen, *The Human Person: A Beginner's Thomistic Psychology* (Washington, DC: CUA Press, 2018). ISBN: 9780813231525

Mark D. Morelli, *Self-Possession: Being at Home in Conscious Performance* (Chestnut Hill, MA: Lonergan Institute, Boston College, 2015). ISBN: 9780970086266

Other materials will be linked through Populi, as needed.

POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Using another person's words or unique ideas without citing the source in a submitted assignment for a course is plagiarism. As intellectual theft and academic dishonesty, it signifies a lack of the moral integrity required of theology students and seminarians. The School Handbook (Chapter VII, Section H) details the academic and institutional consequences for plagiarism, which can include dismissal from the school. All students are required to be familiar with and abide by this policy. In all cases of plagiarism by a seminarian, the incident will be reported to the sponsoring diocese or religious institute.

Learning Accommodations (ADA & ESL Bridging Students)

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities.

If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please know that we welcome students with disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations to assist you. The first step is to contact the Registrar, participate in an interview, and begin the process to provide documentation about the accommodations you will need. We can advise and assist you during the process, and upon completion provide you with an accommodation letter. This letter must be shared with your instructors as early as possible, each semester that you request accommodations.

Accommodations are also offered for ESL students. The SHSST School Handbook (pp. 59-62) describes those who qualify and the process. Students need to make an appointment with their professor and discuss accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

Attendance

Regular attendance is expected. You are allowed one free missed class. Every class missed after that will reduce your final grade by one half-letter. *Habitual absenteeism or tardiness may be considered a formation issue that needs to be reported to your Formation Advisor.*

Missed Exams/Late Assignments

Unless there are serious circumstances, I do not accept late assignments without penalty: half a letter grade per day late.

Electronic Devices

You may use laptop computers and tablets in class. However, if I discover that they are being used for other purposes, this privilege will be revoked.

Recording

You may record course lecture and discussion for your personal use, and you may share it with anyone currently registered for the [Fall 2019](#) edition of this course. You may not share the recording with anyone not registered for this edition of the course, nor may you post it in any form that is publicly accessible.

Course Evaluations Requirement

Toward the end of the semester the student will complete the official school on-line course evaluation form. *The completion of this assessment is a course requirement.*

Writing Consultation Services

If you need writing help, please consult the Writing Skills Specialist. Information on his services is available at http://leodehonlibrary.libguides.com/Writing_Services. Writing Consultation Services will be imbedded in this course, principally in the Phenomenological Reflection on Human Life and Activity assignment (see below).

ASSIGNMENTS

The following chart outlines the assignments for this course. Details on the assignments are available on the assignment descriptions available on Populi.

| Due Date | Assignment | Portion |
|----------|--------------------------|---------|
| Varies | Reading Response(s) | 20% |
| 10/14 | Exam 1 | 25% |
| 10/28 | Consciousness Reflection | 20% |
| 12/9 | Exam 2 | 25% |
| N/A | Participation | 10% |

Reading Response

Each student will be responsible for several reading responses throughout the semester. Full instructions for the assignment are available in a separate sheet on Populi.

Exams

There will be two take-home essay exams offering a choice of questions to answer. They will cover weeks 1-6 on the Jensen book (Exam 1) and weeks 9-14 on the Morelli book (Exam 2), respectively.

Consciousness Reflection

You will write a small reflection paper, between 850 and 900 words long, reflecting on your own experience of being a conscious being.

Participation

Come to class having read or watched the assigned material, be prepared to talk about it, and *do* talk about it. **You do not need to have a clear grasp of everything you read, but you need to have read all of the assigned pages.** I desire for every student to engage in the conversation, raise questions, note difficulties, express their insights, and say what you think.

Grading Scale

The following chart provides the grading scale for the course, together with descriptions of the approximate meaning of each letter grade.

| | | |
|----------|----|---|
| 100 – 96 | A | Exceeds expectations. Professional, polished composition. Zero or nearly zero grammatical errors. Displays exceptional insight and judgment. |
| 95 – 91 | AB | Composition and/or insight exceeds a sufficient level, but is not exceptional. |
| 90 – 86 | B | Meets expectations. All elements of assignment fully satisfied, but the assignment is merely sufficiently completed. |
| 85 – 81 | BC | One or more elements is weakly satisfied. |
| 80 – 76 | C | Satisfies some expectations. Several elements weakly satisfied, and/or composition, grammar, and/or understanding are deficient. |
| 75 – 71 | CD | Despite serious flaws, the assignment achieves minimal success. |
| 70 – 66 | D | Does not satisfy expectations. More than one element missing, and/or composition, grammar, and/or understanding are seriously insufficient. |
| 65 – 00 | F | Fails to meet expectations. Many elements missing, and/or the assignment reveals a gross inadequacy in composition, grammar, and/or understanding. |

Schedule of Probabilities

This calendar may be revised, with notice.

| | Date | Topic(s) | Reading(s) |
|---|-------|--|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | 8/26 | Introduction to the Course and Topic | -- |
| | 8/29 | Making Sense of Things | Jensen Ch. 1 & 2 |
| 2 | 9/2 | No Class – Labor Day | -- |
| | 9/5 | What Is Real? | Jensen Ch. 3 & 4 |
| 3 | 9/9 | How Do I Feel? | Jensen Ch. 5 |
| | 9/12 | How Are Things Built? | Jensen Ch. 6 |
| 4 | 9/16 | How Am I Built? | Jensen Ch. 7 & 8 |
| | 9/19 | How Do I Know? | Jensen Ch. 9 & 10 |
| 5 | 9/23 | Will I Die? | Jensen Ch. 11 |
| | 9/26 | What Is Freedom? | Jensen Ch. 12 |
| 6 | 9/30 | Am I Free? | Jensen Ch. 13 & 14 |
| | 10/3 | Why Am I Here? | Jensen Ch. 15 |
| 7 | 10/7 | Is There An "I"? | Video links on Populi |
| | 10/10 | What Is "I"? | Video links on Populi |
| Exam 1 Due 10/14 at 5:00PM | | | |
| 8 | 10/14 | How Does "I" Relate to "My" Body? | Video links on Populi; guest speaker |
| | 10/17 | No Class – Fall Break | -- |
| 9 | 10/21 | What Am I Seeking? | Morelli Preface, Prologue, & Ch. 1 |
| | 10/24 | How Should I Seek It? | Morelli Ch. 2 |
| Consciousness Reflection Paper Due 10/28 at 5:00PM | | | |
| 10 | 10/28 | How Should I Think About It? | Morelli Ch. 3 |
| | 10/31 | What Is "I?" (Redux) | Morelli Ch. 4 |
| 11 | 11/4 | How Do I Do "I?" (Part I) | Morelli Ch. 5 (beginning to 132) |
| | 11/7 | How Do I Do "I?" (Part II) | Morelli Ch. 5 (from 132 to end) |
| 12 | 11/11 | Am "I" Always the Same? (Part I) | Morelli Ch. 6 & 7 |
| | 11/14 | Am "I" Always the Same? (Part II) | Morelli Ch. 8, 9, & 10 |
| 13 | 11/18 | Am "I" Always the Same? (Part III) | Morelli Ch. 11 & 12 |
| | 11/21 | The Difficulty of Being You | Morelli Ch. 13 |
| 14 | 11/25 | Becoming Your Own Driver | Morelli Ch. 14 |
| | 11/28 | No Class – Thanksgiving Break | -- |
| 15 | 12/2 | Do We All See This the Same Way? (Part I) | TBD |
| | 12/5 | Do We All See This the Same Way? (Part II) | TBD |
| Exam 2 Due 12/9 at 5:00pm | | | |