Administrative Unit: History and Social Sciences Department

Course Prefix and Number: PHIL 201

Course Title: Introduction to Western Philosophy

Number of Credit Hours: 3  Lecture Hours: 3  Laboratory Hours: 0

Catalog Description: Exploration of problems and methods of philosophical inquiry, including such topics as belief systems, values and meaning; theories of nature, God and humankind; the nature of knowledge and its acquisition. Offered Fall.

Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): None.

Text(s): Most current editions of the following:

Historical Approach:
Baird, Forrest and Walter Kaufmann. *From Plato to Derrida*.

Topical Approach:

Course Objectives:
- To be familiar with the matter and method of western philosophy.
- To understand fundamental questions in philosophy, some classic answers, and reasons for believing these answers.

Measurable Learning Outcomes:
- Read classic philosophical prose for critical understanding.
- Understand the classic issues and problems in western philosophy.
- Formalize sophisticated philosophical arguments.
- Analyze and provide criticisms of sophisticated philosophical arguments.
- Understand the method of western philosophy.

Topical Outline (major areas of coverage):
- Mythos kai logos: Philosophy as adventure (ancient thought)
- The Birth of Reason (presocratics)
- Socrates and Plato
- Aristotle
- Hellenism
- Reason in the Service of Faith (Medieval philosophy from Augustine to William of Occam)
- Revolution in Science
- The Rationalists (Descartes, Spinoza, Locke)
- David Hume
The Limits of Pure Reason (Kant)
The Last System (Hegel, Kierkegaard)
Philosophy changing the world (Feuerbach, Marx, Lenin)
Positivism and Analytic Philosophy
Wittgenstein
Nietzsche and Zarathustra
Existentialism
Phenomenology (Husserl to Heidegger)

Topical Outline:
- Existence of God
- Mind and body
- Thinking and knowing
- Reality and Illusion

Recommended maximum class size for this course: 35

Library Resources: Online databases are available at http://www.ccis.edu/offices/library/resources.asp. You may access them from off-campus using your eServices login and password when prompted.

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Name Signature

Date: March 8, 2006

NOTE: The intention of the master syllabus is to provide an outline of the contents of this course, as specified by the faculty of Columbia College, regardless of who teaches the course, when it is taught or where it is taught. Faculty members teaching this course for Columbia College are expected to facilitate learning pursuant to the course objectives and cover the subjects listed in the topical outline. However, instructors are also encouraged to cover additional topics of interest so long as those topics are relevant to the course’s subject. The master syllabus is, therefore, prescriptive in nature but also allows for a diversity of individual approaches to course material.

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