

Introduction to Philosophy

Philosophy 103

Dr. Stephen Hicks

Scarborough 119 Phone: 815 226 4078

SHicks@Rockford.edu

Website: www.StephenHicks.org

Philosophy deals with the big questions of human existence: What is it to be a fully developed human being? What kind of world are we living in—for example, does a God exist? What difference does it make—what is the best kind of life to live? And how do we know and decide these things? We will grapple with fundamental philosophical problems and discuss the views of major thinkers in the Western intellectual tradition.

Books

René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy* (Hackett)

Sigmund Freud, *Civilization and Its Discontents* (W. W. Norton)

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (HarperCollins)

Plato, *Four Texts on Socrates* (Cornell)

Ayn Rand, *The Fountainhead* (NAL/Signet)

Stephen Hicks, editor, *Readings in Philosophy*. Available online at <http://www.stephenhicks.org>

Assignments and Grading

Test on Rand, Plato, and Galileo	20%
Test on Descartes, Locke, and Lewis	20
Essay (Monday, November 1)	20
Participation	10
Final Exam (Monday, December 13, 8 a.m.)	<u>30</u>
	100%

On the Essay

Topic: Socrates was executed for refusing to compromise his philosophical quest. Galileo was forced to recant his scientific hypothesis. Roark achieved his goals only after a long struggle. Reflecting upon their cases, address this question: “Is integrity practical?”

Length: 1,500 words

Due: Monday, November 1, 10 a.m.

Note: Center for Ethics and Entrepreneurship prizes for the best essays in Philosophy 103: \$300 for First Place. \$100 each for two Honorable Mentions.

Recommended Supplemental Reading

James Fieser, editor. *The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Edward N. Zalta, editor. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

Schedule and Readings

<i>Week</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Reading</i>
1 (Aug 25)	What philosophy is and why it matters	
2 (Aug 30)	Howard Roark and Peter Keating Independence of mind: Asch's and Milgram's experiments	Rand, <i>The Fountainhead</i> , Part 1
3 (Sep 8)	Gail Wynand and Dominique Francon Independence and integrity in action	Rand, <i>The Fountainhead</i> , Parts 2 and 3
4 (Sep 13)	The trial of Socrates Greek philosophy and Greek religion Greek virtue: justice, courage, wisdom, piety (or temperance)	Plato, <i>Apology</i>
5 (Sep 20)	Socrates and civil disobedience Individuals, communities, and the state	Plato, <i>Crito</i>
6 (Sep 27)	Philosophy, religion and science in the Renaissance and the Reformation	
7 (Oct 4)	Philosophy, religion and science in the Renaissance and the Reformation	Galileo, <i>Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina</i> [SH reader]
8 (Oct 11)	First test on Rand, Socrates, and Galileo René Descartes: The challenge of skepticism	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> I-II
9 (Oct 18)	Descartes: Can God's existence be proven?	Descartes, <i>Meditations</i> III
10 (Oct 25)	John Locke on toleration, politics, and religion	Locke, <i>Letter concerning Toleration</i> [SH reader]
11 (Nov 1)	Essay due C. S. Lewis and the religious philosophical tradition	Lewis, <i>Mere Christianity</i> , Book 1
12 (Nov 8)	Lewis on Christian ethics	Lewis, <i>Mere Christianity</i> , Book 3
13 (Nov 15)	Sigmund Freud on religion and psychology	Freud, <i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i> , Chapters 1 to 3

- | | | |
|----------------|--|--|
| 14
(Nov 22) | Second test (on Descartes, Locke, and Lewis) | |
| 15
(Nov 29) | Freud on human nature and its challenge for civilization | Freud, <i>Civilization and Its Discontents</i> , Chapters 4 and 5 |
| 16
(Dec 6) | What is the meaning of life? | Rupert Brooke, "The Great Lover" [SH reader]
Psalm 103
Andrew Marvell, "To His Coy Mistress"
John Steinbeck excerpt
Pseudo-Vonnegut, "Advice"
Shakespeare excerpt from <i>Macbeth</i>
<i>Optional:</i> Stephen Hicks, "Would Immortality Be Worth It?" |
| 17
(Dec 13) | Final exam on Monday at 8 a.m. (Yikes!) | |

* * *

A copy of the syllabus and schedule can be found online at <http://www.StephenHicks.org>.

For Honor Code and Disability issues, consult the College's website.