

QINGDAO UNIVERSITY
ONPS INTERNATIONAL SUMMER SCHOOL

Introduction to Philosophy

instructor: *Marcello Di Bello*
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time: July 1st, 2013 – August 2st, 2013
Monday through Friday
45 class hours
4 credit units



Philosophers ask questions about the essence of reality, the limits of knowledge, the path to happiness and a good life, the relationship between mind and body, free will and determinism, etc. Over five weeks, this course will investigate a representative sample of philosophical questions.

OBJECTIVES AND FORMAT

The course will provide students with the opportunity to experience the pleasure of asking deep and fundamental questions—questions which have no easy answer or maybe have no answer at all. In addition, the course will help students develop analytical reasoning skills and expose them to the diversity of philosophical argumentation. As far as the format is concerned, there will be lectures from Monday through Thursday, and discussion sections every Friday.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

Students are expected to fulfill the following requirements:

- (1) Four weekly response papers [60 % of the grade]
- (2) A final in-class exam [40 % of the grade]

COURSE MATERIALS

We will approach philosophy by reading the works of great philosophers. Excerpts from books and copies of select articles will be made available electronically.

SCHEDULE READINGS	
Week 1: Change and Time	
Mon: Introduction Tue: The impossibility of change Wed: Zeno’s paradoxes of change Thu: The mystery of time Fri: Question for discussion	Parmedines, <i>On Nature</i> [excerpts]. Aristotle, <i>Physics</i> , Book 6 [excerpts]. St. Augustine (398), <i>Confessions</i> , Book 11 <i>Are change and time illusions?</i>
Week 2: God and the problem of evil	
Mon: The ontological argument Tue : St. Thomas’s five proofs Wed: God and natural disasters Thu: God and human evil Friday: Question for discussion	St. Anselm (1078), <i>Proslogion</i> , Chapter 2 . St. Thomas (1274), <i>Summa Th.</i> , Ia, q. 2, a. 3. Voltaire (1756), “Poem on the Lisbon disaster” Jonas (1987), “Concept of God after Auschwitz.” <i>If God exists, why is there evil in this world?</i>

Week 3: Knowledge and its limits	
Mon: The limits of the senses Tue: The fallibility of science Wed: The problem of induction Thu: The problem of deduction Friday: Question for discussion	Descartes (1641), <i>Meditations</i> , 1 & 2. Roush, "Fallibility and Authority in Science." Hume (1739), <i>Treatise</i> , Book I, Part III, sec. VI. Carroll (1895), "What the Tortoise Said to Achilles." <i>Are we brains in a vat?</i>
Week 4: Thoughts, feelings, and words	
Mon: Chinese Room argument Tue: Replies Wed: On what it is like to see red Thu: Radical translation Fri: Question for discussion	Searle (1980) , "Minds, Brains, and Programs." no assigned reading Jackson (1986), "What Mary didn't Know." Quine (1960), <i>Word and Object</i> , Chapter 2. <i>Can a machine think and feel pain?</i>
Week 5: Freedom, the right, and the wrong	
Mon: What should we do? Tue: Trolley problems Wed: Free will and determinism Thu: Neuroscience and free will Fri: Question for discussion	<i>Antigone</i> [excerpts]. handout van Inwagen (1974), "The Incompatibility of Free Will and Determinism." Libet (1999), "Do We Have Free Will?" <i>Is freedom an illusion?</i>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic dishonesty, such as cheating, plagiarism, falsifying identity and academic records, will not be tolerated. Students who are found to have committed any act of academic dishonesty will fail the class.