

ACP 110-01/03
Roosevelt University
Spring 2012

Michael L. Thomas
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Office Hours: Th 1:00 - 2:00pm
AUD 560

Primary Texts: “Philosophy as a Way of Life”

Section 01 – TTh 8:00am – 9:15am, AUD

Section 03 – TTh 9:30am – 10:45am, AUD

Course Description:

What does it mean to live philosophically? This course will explore the thesis that philosophy is not just an intellectual endeavor; it is a matter of the formation of character and moral and political commitments. To engage in philosophy means to treat the authors and their texts as interlocutors in interpersonal, self-critical debate. The goal of the debate is the development of principles of action. Students will be asked to use course texts as the starting point for a personal examination of their system of beliefs and to test the coherence of their views. Course essays will focus on highlighting key themes in the texts to examine their relevance for the formation of one’s conduct and behavior. These themes will include but are not limited to: defining the “good life”, the role of God and reason in human action, the problem of individual and community, the conflict of tradition and radical activity.

Course Texts:

These texts will all be available for purchase from the Roosevelt Bookstore. *These editions of the texts are required.*

- *The Bible* (on Blackboard)
- *The Bhagavad Gita*, Barbara Stoler Miller, trans. New York: Bantam, 2004. (ISBN: 0553213652)
- Plato, *Five Dialogs*, G.M.A. Grube, trans. New York: Hackett, 2002. (ISBN: 0872206335)
- Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things: De Rerum Natura*, Anthony M. Esolen, trans. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1995. (ISBN: 978-0801850554)
- Shakespeare, *Four Great Tragedies*, Signet Classics (ISBN: 0451527291)
- Rene Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, Donald A. Cress, trans. New York: Hackett, 1993. (ISBN: 0872201929)
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays*, Edited by John Gray. Oxford: Oxford World’s Classics, 2008. (ISBN-13: 978-0199535736)
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Clark and Swenson. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1998 [1887]. (ISBN-13: 978-0872202832)
- Albert Camus, *The Stranger*, Matthew Ward, trans. New York: Vintage, 1989. (ISBN: 0679720200)
- Jorge Luis Borges, *Collected Fictions*, Andrew Hurley, trans. New York: Penguin, 1999. (ISBN: 0140286802)

Course Requirements:

- 1) **Course Discussion and Participation (10%)**– Although, the primary goals of the course are centered upon writing, student attendance and active class participation are essential to developing and improving one’s grasp of the material. Therefore, student participation and discussion are mandatory. Frequent absences or failure to contribute will result in a lowered grade.
- 2) **Response Essays (40%)** – Students are required to submit four 2-3 papers over the course of the semester based upon topics received from the instructor. All papers should be typed in 12 point font, double-spaced, and have a margin of 1 inch on all sides of the page. The page limit for each paper will be strictly enforced.
- 3) **Exams (50%)** – Students will complete two larger projects for their midterm and final exams. The *midterm* will be an in class essay that builds on concepts and themes discussed in the first two responses or from class discussion. The *final* project will be a presentation on a theme or concept tracked throughout the course of the semester. Further details will be given by the instructor prior to the due date.

Late Paper Policy: Unless excused, late responses and papers will be penalized by 1/3 of a letter grade per day. However, each student may take a 24-hour extension for *one* of the papers. (If you choose to use your extension, please indicate this on the front page of your paper.)

Attendance Policy: As mentioned above, attendance to class is mandatory. More than 2 unexcused absences will result in your grade being lowered a letter. More than 4 absences will result in a failing grade for the course. In cases of illness or emergency please notify me of your circumstances so that arrangements can be made for missed assignments. Students can miss class for a religious holiday without penalty, but must inform me of their intentions during the first week of class. Work missed for religious holiday must be made up.

Grading Scale for the Course: Your final grade will be calculated by the sum of the weighted quality points for each assignment. For example, an A- response will be quantified as a 3.66, multiplied by its percentage weight (.10), and this sum will be added to the final total. The quality points for each grade are:

A: 4.00 A-: 3.67 B+: 3.33 B: 3.00 B-: 2.67 C+: 2.33
C: 2.00 C-: 1.67 D+: 1.33 D: 1.00 D-: 0.67 F: 0

Additional Information:

Plagiarism: Plagiarism in the course will not be tolerated and will be punished by a failed assignment and/or notification of university officials. For any questions, please see the University Plagiarism Policy, located here: <http://legacy.roosevelt.edu/current/judicial/academic-dishonesty.htm>

ADA policy: If you have a disability for which you are or may be requesting an accommodation, you are encouraged to contact the office of Disability Services (DS), a part of the Academic Success Center (ASC) <http://legacy.roosevelt.edu/asc>, AUD 442, Center, 312-341-3818, or SCH 125, 847-619-7978, as early as possible in the term.

Technology in the Classroom: Students are asked to turn off cell phones or other telecommunications devices during class time. Students caught texting during class will be counted as absent for the day. Laptops may be used for note-taking or reading electronic texts during class time. Students found looking at non-course related websites, checking email, etc, will be counted as absent for the day.

Reading Assignments:

Week 1	01/17	Introduction
	01/19	<i>Bible</i> , Genesis Ch. 1-11
Week 2	01/24	<i>Bible</i> , Job (all)
	01/26	<i>Bhagavad Gita</i> pp.
Week 3	01/31	<i>Bhagavad Gita</i> pp.
	02/02	Plato – “Apology” [First Response Due]
Week 4	02/07	Plato – “Phaedo”
	02/09	Lucretius, <i>De Rerum Natura</i> , Book I – II (pp. 25 – 90)
Week 5	02/14	Lucretius, <i>De Rerum Natura</i> , Book III – IV (pp. 91 – 158)
	02/16	Lucretius, <i>De Rerum Natura</i> , Book V – VI (pp. 159 – 236)
Week 6	02/21	Guest Lecture/Performance [Second Response Due]
	02/23	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> , Act I (pp. 3 – 34)
Week 7	02/28	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> , Act II (pp. 35 – 60)
	03/01	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> , Act III/IV (pp. 61 – 118)
Week 8	03/05	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i> , Act V (pp. 119 – 144)
	03/08	FIRST EXAM
Week 9	03/20	Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>
	03/22	Descartes, <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>
Week 10	03/27	Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Ch. 1-2 (pp. 5 - 61)
	03/29	Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Ch. 3-5 (pp. 62 - 128)
Week 11	04/03	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Preface and First Essay (pp. 1 - 33)
	04/05	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Second Essay (pp. 35 – 66)
Week 12	04/10	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy</i> , Third Essay (pp. 67 – 118, focus on pp. 83 – 118)
	04/12	NO CLASS [Response Paper and Online Assignment due]
Week 13	04/17	Camus – <i>The Stranger</i> , Part One (pp. 3 – 59)
	04/19	Camus, <i>The Stranger</i> , Part Two (pp. 63 – 123)
Week 14	04/24	Borges
	04/26	Borges
Week 15	05/01	Final Discussion
	05/03	FINAL ESSAY