

**Introduction to Philosophy**  
**PHI 2010**  
**Miami Dade College, Wolfson Campus**  
**3 Credits**  
**Spring 2011 (2010-2)**  
**607216 (T/TH 9:50-11:05 am, Room 2303)**

**Instructor:** **Kristin Borgwald, M.A.**

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Office Hours: Monday 12:00PM-2:10PM

Tuesday and Thursday 7:55AM-8:25AM, 11:15AM-12:40PM

Wednesday 12:00 PM-4:00PM

**Text:**

The texts for this class are:

Soccio, Douglas J. *How to Get The Most Out of Philosophy*, Sixth Edition. Thompson Wadsworth, 2007.

Bowie, G. Lee, Meredith W. Michaels, and Robert C. Solomon, eds. *Twenty Questions: An Introduction to Philosophy*, Sixth Edition. Thompson Wadsworth, 2007.

Supplementary materials will be available online

**Course Description:**

This is a foundation course in philosophy that introduces a broad spectrum of topics in philosophy, such as: knowledge, reality, freedom, morality, and art. The emphasis is not only on what is contained in these topics, but also on how to think critically about them. The course introduces the methods of philosophy, addresses some major philosophical questions and examines the views of various philosophers from around the world.

**Prerequisites:** **ENC 1101**

**3 Credits**

**Course Competencies:**

Students will demonstrate:

1. knowledge of basic terminology associated with philosophy by identifying and/or correctly using philosophical vocabulary
2. comprehension of theories held by major philosophers by classifying them in relationship to their philosophy

3. knowledge of the criteria that can be used to evaluate the validity and cogency of philosophical arguments by identifying and assessing the premises and logical structure of arguments
4. knowledge of basic philosophical ideas by explaining the theories of important historical and contemporary philosophers
5. the ability to analyze the relationship of philosophical positions by comparing and contrasting them
6. the ability to critically evaluate a philosophical theory by presenting arguments for and/or against selected philosophical theories

### **Learning Outcomes:**

Miami Dade College prides itself on its variety of programs and degrees offered, as well as the diversity of its student population. While each student has his/her own specific major and career interests, the College faculty has identified 10 Learning Outcomes that reflect skills and knowledge that allow students not only to succeed in their chosen field, but also to enable them to be lifelong learners. These skills are attained through course completion and participation in co-curricular learning experiences offered at the College. To learn more about the Learning Outcomes, visit: <http://www.mdc.edu/learningoutcomes/>

### **Requirements and Grading:**

Writing Lab 1:	35%
Writing Lab 2:	35%
Personal Essay:	10%
In-Class Assignments:	20%

The usual grading scale will apply (0-59% F, 60-62% D-, 63-66% D, 67-69% D+, 70-72% C-, 73-76% C, 77-79% C+, 80-82% B-, 83-86% B, 87-89% B+, 90-92% A-, 93-100% A). There will be no curve.

**1.** Reading assignments must be completed before coming to class. Class lecture, small and large group discussion, and in class writing assignments will always be based on the readings. Class lectures will aim to clarify and supplement the reading assignments.

**2.** You will complete two writing labs based on philosophical questions. Responses should be no longer than five, double spaced, typed pages, using 12 point font (see lab sheet for details). You are required to come to class with a **typed draft** of each lab (see schedule for dates) in order to participate in writing workshops. If you do not come to class with your draft, then you cannot participate in the writing workshop, and you will be penalized ten percentage points for that lab grade. **\*\*Both writing labs must be submitted to an online academic plagiarism detector (details TBA). Failure to**

**submit your writing labs to the on time to the website will result in failure of the assignment.**

**3.** You will complete a short essay about your personal beliefs (see “This I Believe” instruction sheets). We will conduct a writing workshop for the personal essay as well, which requires you to bring a typed draft of that essay to class (see date below). **\*\*This assignment must also be submitted to the plagiarism website before submitting your hard copy in class. Failure to submit your essay to the website on time will result in failure of the assignment.**

**4.** You will complete 12-15 in-class writing assignments throughout the semester, on average one per week, based on the readings. You may use any notes you’ve taken on the readings, but you may not use the text. Small group discussions will also count towards this part of your grade. **You must be in class in order to complete the writing assignments.** I will drop your two lowest graded responses at the end of the semester to ensure that minimal absences will not have a huge impact on your final grade.

**5.** I expect active class participation, and this does not mean constant talking. Careful listening and thoughtful responsiveness to the comments of others is an important part of participation. Eye-rolling, name-calling, etc. are not acceptable in this classroom. All challenges to opinions and beliefs must be intellectually grounded and appropriately spoken.

**Email Policy:**

When you email me, you **MUST** email me from your MIAMI DADE COLLEGE email account. To protect student privacy and prevent fraud, I do not respond to emails from hotmail, yahoo, gmail, etc. Each email should include: a detailed and proper subject in the email, your full name (as registered in the course), the reference number for the class you are in (this is really important), a detailed and coherent explanation of the problem you are having (use proper and professional English).

**Attendance:**

**Attendance is extremely important in this course and you are expected to attend every class.** Arrive to class on time. Excessive absences may result in being dropped from the course, and even minimal absences are likely to be reflected in your grade. **If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed. If you want to discuss your absence and missed lecture notes, make an appointment or see me during office hours. Do not send me an email asking, “did we do anything important?”**

**Late Assignments:**

**You must be present in class in order to turn in all assignments and complete in-class assignments. Missed in-class assignments cannot be made-up. A missed writing lab and/or personal essay can only be turned in late within one week of the original due date when an official, documented excuse of unpredictable or protracted conditions of duress is presented.** You must provide me with

documentation of the absence as a **HARD COPY**. That means you must bring me a copy, that I can keep and file, of the documentation (i.e., doctor's note, etc.) with your full name and reference number for your section written on the copy. A photocopy of the original is completely acceptable, as is the original itself. If possible, email me to let me know what's going on, but that **WILL NOT** count as documentation.

**Incompletes:**

Incompletes are only granted in **extreme** cases, when documentation of protracted conditions of duress is provided.

**Academic Integrity:**

**Lying, cheating, plagiarism, or any form of academic dishonesty in anything related to this course (attendance, writing assignments, exams) will be grounds for institutional punishment in accordance with the Student Rights and Responsibilities Manual.**

**Access:**

Students requiring special services to aid them in this course need to self-identify to the Access office, and have the Access office send me the requisite paperwork within the first three weeks of the semester. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Access office will make all arrangements necessary, but you **must** self-identify and specifically request that the Access department contact me. For more information, see the Student Rights and Responsibilities manual.

**EA/EO:**

MDC is an Equal Access/Equal Opportunity campus. As explained in the Student Rights and Responsibilities manual, MDC does not discriminate on the basis of gender, religion, race, ethnicity, disability, or national origin.

**Mobile Devices: All mobile devices MUST BE TURNED OFF during class. If you use your mobile phone, iPod, etc. in class, be aware that you may be subjecting the entire class to a pop-quiz that will be factored into the writing assignment portion of your grade.**

**SCHEDULE:**

This schedule is tentative and subject to change. **Readings must be completed prior to the lecture. Be prepared with comments, specific questions, and requests for clarification.**

**Week 1 (Jan. 4, 6)**

Introduction

“Does Religion Give My Life Meaning?” pp. 2-3

Cahn, “Religion Reconsidered,” pp. 4-7

Ramakrishna, “Many Paths to the Same Summit,” pp. 16-17

- Week 2 (Jan. 11, 13)** Nietzsche, "God is Dead," pp. 21-22  
 Nietzsche, "The Anti-Christ," pp. 22-23  
 Mencken, "Memorial Service," pp. 28-29  
 hooks, "Love as the Practice of Freedom," pp. 24-28  
 Camus, "The Absurd," pp. 30-33
- Week 3 (Jan. 18, 20)** "How do I know Whether God Exists?" pp. 39-41  
 Augustine, "Faith and Reason," pp. 42-43  
 Anselm, "The Ontological Arguments," pp. 43-45  
 Aquinas, "Whether God Exists," pp. 45-47  
 Paley, "The Teleological Argument," pp. 47-49
- Week 4 (Jan. 25, 27)** Hume, "Why Does God Let People Suffer?" pp. 50-54  
 Dostoevsky, "Rebellion," pp. 55-58  
 Wisdom, "Gods," pp. 67-68  
 "What Do I Know," pp. 202-204  
 Plato, "The Myth of the Cave," pp. 205-207
- Week 5 (Feb. 1, 3)** Descartes, "Meditation," pp. 207-210  
 Carroll, "Through the Looking Glass," pp. 211  
 Russell, "Appearance and Reality," pp. 212-213  
 Locke, "Where Our Ideas Come From," pp. 214-217  
 Berkeley, "To Be Is to Be Perceived," pp. 217-221
- Week 6 (Feb. 8, 10)** Berkeley (con't)  
**Draft of Writing Lab 1 Due Thursday, Feb. 10**
- Week 7 (Feb. 15, 17)** Film, "Jesus Camp"  
 Davis, "Should There Be a Strict Separation Between Church and State? Yes," (online)  
**Writing Lab 1 Due Thursday, Feb. 17**
- Week 8 (Feb. 22, 24)** Staver, "Separation of Church and State," (online)  
 Judis, "Crosses to Bear," (online)  
 Barnes, "Who Needs the Religious Right? We All Do," (online)  
 "How Should I Respond to War and Terrorism?"  
 pp. 407-409  
 Aquinas, "Whether It Is Always Sinful to Wage War,"  
 pp. 410-411  
 Arendt, "Power and Violence," pp. 412-416

- Week 9 (March 1, 3)** Bush, "Address to the Nation, September 11, 2001," pp. 417-418  
Dear, "The Experiments of Ghandi," pp. 418-421  
Falk, "Defining a Just War," pp. 421-426
- Week 10 (March 8, 10)** Card, "Questions Regarding a War on Terrorism," pp. 428-431  
"What is the Right Thing for Me To Do?" pp. 516-518  
Mill, "Utilitarianism," (online)  
O'Neill, "A Simplified Account of Kant's Ethics," (online)
- Week 11 (March 15, 17)** O'Neill (con't)  
Hursthouse, "On Virtue Ethics," (online)  
Gilligan, "Images of a Relationship," (online)
- Week 12 (March 22, 24)** "I Like It, But Is It Art?" pp. 557-559  
Hume, "Of The Standard of Taste," pp. 561-565  
Tolstoy, "What is Art?" pp. 565-568
- Week 13 (March 29, 31)** Danto, "The Art World," pp. 577-581  
Young, "Throwing Like a Girl," online  
McCarry, "Selling Out," pp. 513-515
- Week 14 (April 5, 7)** Frye, "Oppression," (online)  
**Draft of Writing Lab 2 Due Thursday, April 7**
- Week 15 (April 12,14)** Bartky, "On Psychological Oppression," (online)  
**Writing Lab 2 Due Thursday, April 14**
- Week 16 (April 19, 21)** **"This I Believe" Draft Due Tuesday, April 19**  
**"This I Believe" Essay Due Thursday, April 21**  
**Extra Credit Presentations of "This I Believe Essays"**