

PHI 2011 (07) Philosophical Analysis
Monday/Wednesday: 11-12:15, GC288

Dr. Sean Allen-Hermanson

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday, 2:30-3:30 or by appointment, room DM 343A

Email: hermanso@fiu.edu

This course is an introduction to the problems and practice of philosophy, in two parts: 1) Ethics and Logical Argument; 2) God, Mind, and Free Will (Epistemology and Metaphysics). Throughout the course we will be guided by both classical and contemporary sources.

We will begin by reading and discussing selected chapters of Peter Singer's book *Practical Ethics*. Lectures will focus on such questions as: What is equality? How should we treat animals? What is wrong with killing? Is the value of a human being's life sacred? Do we have obligations to the environment? We shall also look at arguments more formally, drawing inspiration from examples discussed in Singer's book, as well as from some of the apparent absurdities to which "commonsense" thinking sometimes leads.

The second part of the course is devoted to questions about the nature of the world and human knowledge, especially as addressed by two seminal philosophers: Rene Descartes and David Hume. Topics here will include: What are we to make of attempts to prove God's existence? Is the existence of God compatible with the existence of evil? What is the mind, and how does it relate to the body? How does experience yield knowledge? Do we have free will? How can we know anything in the first place?

Texts:

Singer, Peter. (1993). *Practical Ethics* (2nd Edition). Cambridge University Press.

Sober, Elliot. (2001). *Core Questions in Philosophy: A text with readings* (3rd Edition). Prentice Hall.

Grading and Requirements:

Weekly exercises: 10%

Quiz: 20%

First essay: 20%

Second essay: 20%

Final Exam: 30%

Essays are always due **in class**. Late essays will not be accepted and will be given a grade of zero.

Schedule

Week	Topic and Assigned Reading	Assignment
1 Aug. 25/27	Singer (1) & Sober (1) & Sober Box 11	#1
2 Sept. 1/3	Singer (2) & Sober (2)	#2
3 Sept. 8/10	Singer (3)	#3
4 Sept. 15/17	Singer (4)	#4
5 Sept. 22/24	Singer (6)	#5
6 Sept. 29/Oct.1	Singer (10)	1 st essay due Oct.1
7 Oct. 6/8	Critique of utilitarianism & Kant's ethical theory: Sober (31-32)	#6
8 Oct. 13/15	Plato on knowledge: (in Sober, pp.201-7) & Sober (12)	Quiz Oct.13
9 Oct. 20/22	Descartes <i>Meds.</i> 1&2 (in Sober, pp.208-20)	#7
10 Oct. 27/29	Descartes <i>Meds.</i> 3&4 (in Sober, pp.220-35)	#8
11 Nov. 3/5	Descartes <i>Med.</i> 5 (in Sober, pp.235-9) & Sober (8) & Nagel in Sober pp.139-46)	#9
12 Nov. 10/12	Descartes <i>Med.</i> 6 (in Sober, pp.239-49) & Sober (13)	#10
13 Nov. 17/19	Hume on Ideas and Induction (in Sober pp.250-8) & Sober (15)	#11
14 Nov. 24/26	Hume on Induction (in Sober, pp.250-8) & Sober (16)	2 nd essay due Nov.26
15 Dec. 1/3	Hume on Freewill (in Sober, pp.364-77) & Sober (23-24)	No assignments
16 Dec. 8/10	Wed., Dec.10, 9:30-12:15, room TBA	Exam Week

Important dates:

October 1: first paper due

October 13: quiz

October 18: last day to drop with a DR grade

November 26: second paper due

December 10: final exam