“The unexamined life is not worth living.”
WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY?

Wittgenstein, *Tractatus*,

4.112 Philosophy aims at the logical clarification of thoughts. Philosophy is not a body of doctrine but an activity. A philosophical work consists essentially of elucidations. Philosophy does not result in 'philosophical propositions', but rather in the clarification of propositions. Without philosophy thoughts are, as it were, cloudy and indistinct: its task is to make them clear and to give them sharp boundaries.

William James

"Philosophy is the unusually stubborn attempt to think clearly."

Georges Sorel, *Reflections on Violence*, p. 6:

But philosophy is after all perhaps only the recognition of the abysses which lie on each side of the footpath that the vulgar follow with the serenity of somnambulists

Heraclitus:

Philosophy is a sacred disease.

From Ambrose Beirce's *Devil's Dictionary*:

PHILOSOPHY, n. A route of many roads leading from nowhere to nothing.

Edie Brickell, "What I Am" from the album shooting rubberbands at the stars, 1986 Geffen Music, ASCAP:

Philosophy is the talk on a cereal box, religion is the smile on a dog; Philosophy is a walk on the slippery rocks, religion is a light in the fog.

Wilfrid Sellars:

The aim of philosophy, abstractly formulated, is to understand how things in the broadest possible sense of the term hang together in the broadest possible sense of the term.

Heidegger: An extraordinary enquiry into the extraordinary.

Adapted from Andy Stoble’s University of Hawaii, Webpage.
INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY
PHILOSOPHY 1301.8245

SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES, FINE AND PERFORMING ARTS
RICHLAND COLLEGE
MAY TERM 2011
Robert C. Bennett, Instructor

Philosophy, if rightly understood, is no more than the love of wisdom. - Cicero

What is the college catalogue description for this course?

PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy (3)
This is a common course number. Former course prefix/number PHI 101.
Prerequisite: None
An introduction to the ideas about such things as the good life, reality, God, the acquisition and characteristics of knowledge, and the nature of humans. Students will evaluate both ancient and modern theories about these issues in terms of their logic, historical significance, and meaning in everyday life, as they practice the methods for doing philosophy, (3 Lec.)

Coordinating Board Academic Approval Number 3801015135

Where and when does the class meet?

9:00-12:20 MTWRF in (Del Rio) D147.

When do they begin and end?

It starts May 16 and ends June 2.

Who is the teacher?

He is Robert Bennett, originally from the small island of Vinalhaven in Penobscot Bay on the Coast of Maine. He has taught philosophy for forty four years. He was educated at St. Lawrence University, University of Colorado at Boulder, and the University of Toronto with additional work at Middlebury College and The University of Maine at Orono. He has taught at Colorado State University, El Centro College, and Richland College.
How do I contact him?

Office:  L229 (Lavaca Hall) (2nd floor of the Library)
Home:  214-521-5084 (but before 9 p.m. because I go to bed early)
School:  972-761-6738
Division Office:  972-238-6250 (Leave message with secretary)
Fax:  972-238-3799
School e-mail:  rbennett@dcccd.edu

What are his office hours?

8:00-9:00 daily. I may be in the classroom during this time.

What textbook do I buy?

It is *The Big Questions: A Short Introduction to Philosophy* by Robert C. Solomon and Kathleen M. Higgins 8th edition, published by Wadsworth, 2010. The ISBN number is 13-978-0-405-59515-1. It costs $81.50 used Follett also has rental copies available for $50.94 and digital editions for $62.00. It may be less expensive elsewhere. It is a simple, straightforward book with an excellent glossary. Unlike some philosophy books on the market, it deals with contemporary as well as classical issues and has non-Western units.

Is there another text you could recommend for additional study?

I am still very fond the book which I have used in Introduction to Philosophy classes for over five years. It is *Does the Center Hold?* 2nd edition by Donald Palmer, published by Mayfield Press: Mountain View, California, 1991. This book takes a less formal and probably more fun than *The Big Questions*, and is a good source for the student who wants more detail and a different perspective on an issue. It has some nice cartoons in it; it tends to be a little hippy in its style, but it has a good glossary in the back and is fun to read.

Will this course transfer?

Yes, this course will transfer easily to any college in the country. In addition, it may be used under the old Core Curriculum to meet the Humanities, Category III requirement an Associate Degree at DCCCD colleges. It will also meet the Tier 2 requirement in the New Core Curriculum that went into effect Fall 2010.

What will I learn in Introduction to Philosophy that will help me?
(1) You will learn to be more critical (although hopefully not cynical) about your own ideas and the ideas of others concerning basic ideas about such things as God, reality, ethics, justice, and knowledge. This critical ability will help you in other courses and in your work by asking the right, pointed questions, at the right time, about the right things, to the right people.

(2) You will learn to look at the world as a whole rather than in fragments. You will learn to see “the big picture.” Many “miss the forest for the trees.” Philosophy will help you not to do that and to see the world as a whole, somehow tied together.

(3) You will learn from history how an idea developed and from looking at it from different perspectives, through different sets of goggles, to appreciate differences in beliefs of different people and cultures and to be more tolerant of these differences.

(4) You will learn the names of people and theories in philosophy, which will be useful to you in such subjects as history, English, psychology, sociology, and the humanities.

(5) You will learn how to construct, deconstruct, and evaluate arguments for various philosophic positions.

You **WILL NOT** learn how to be good or moral, whether or not God actually exists, whether communism is right or wrong, or whether our DNA determines our behavior. This course is neither prescriptive nor didactic. It is not aimed, particularly, at changing your mind about issues. It may give you good reasons and arguments for holding the beliefs that you already hold. A smorgasbord of philosophic options will be laid out for you and “you’se pays you’se money and takes you’se choice.”

**What are the rules about attendance?**

Philosophy is architectonic. One day’s discussions and lectures build on the last day’s work. Therefore it is important that you attend very regularly. An attendance will be taken twice each day, once at the beginning of class (the first fifteen minutes) and again at the end of class (the last fifteen minutes). It will be taken by handing around a roster with your encoded name on it. It is very important that you sign this. You are allowed **SIX clock hours** absences (times you did not sign the roster). After that, one (1) point will be deducted from your final average for each absence in excess of the six..
**What if I have to come late or leave early?**

You should plan to arrive on time and stay for the entire class and not to leave it, except in an emergency. You should not schedule doctor’s appointments, counseling meetings, or work time during the class period. If you have a change in work hours or other commitments that cause you to miss a large number of classes, I suggest you drop the course. Unfortunately, the class is not designed to be a self-paced, self-study, or distance learning course. An important part of the course (perhaps the most important part) is participation. You cannot participate if you are not present. The instructor has a pet peeve about starting on time, and he likes to set the stage for the day’s activities in the first few minutes of the class. If you miss this stage setting, the rest of the class may make little sense to you. If you must leave class early, please let the instructor know in advance, so he doesn’t think you are leaving in a huff. If you do wish to leave in a huff, let him call you a cab. They are more comfortable!

**What will a typical class day be like?**

Typically, the instructor likes to spend a minute or so telling students about things which happened on this date, holidays being celebrated around the world and other trivia. Then he likes to make class announcements, return papers, etc. He then spends a few minutes reviewing what was said in the last class to put the day’s work in context. Next he will outline the work for the day.

The methods of instruction will be varied. The instructor believes students best learn philosophy by doing philosophy. There will be some lecture, but the instructor prefers to have students work in groups and to discuss the issues as a group so everyone’s ideas can be included. The worst type of teaching is “the sage on stage” and I encourage you to treat me, the instructor, as a student and a classmate rather than a machine-like robot, spouting out information, which may or may not be relevant. There will also be some films, simulations, role-playing, etc.
How will I be graded?

(1) Five quizzes, each worth 12% of your grade, for a total of 60%. The quizzes will each have ten questions (some with multiple parts) worth 10 points each. The questions will be a combination of short answer (three or four sentences), multiple choice, and fill-in-the blank. They will come from both the classroom discussion and lecture and the textbook. The dates of the quizzes are: MAY 19, 21, 26, 28 and JUNE 2.

(2) Class participation – 20%

(3) Final Exam. 20% two short essays, to be written at home.

What if I miss a quiz?

Come to school the following day at 8 a.m. and go to the instructor’s office (L229) or, if he is not there, to the classroom to make up the quiz before class. No quizzes can be made up after graded quizzes are handed back to students.

How can I make a better grade in this class?

Ask yourself every couple of days the answers to the below questions. If you answer “No” to any of them, then these are the areas in which you can improve.

- Does the instructor know your name?
- Do you come to class on time?
- Do you remain for the whole class?
- Do you participate by asking questions and making comments?
- Do you refrain from rest your head on your desk or sleeping during class?
- Do you refrain from talking with others during class while the instructor or a classmate is speaking?
- Do you not read a newspaper or a book during class?
- Do you not put your cell phone away during class and not play with it or text during class?
- Are you courteous to others in your remarks?
How am I expected to act in Philosophy class?

“The sage on stage,” the Great Guru dispensing information, as if he is Moses just down from Mount Sinai, is the very worst way to teach philosophy. For a teacher to sit with students, himself a student who honestly does not know but is seeking, saying his doesn’t know, seeking students’ opinions, helping them with disappointing still births of ideas and celebrating with them the birth of viable lively ideas—that is the best teaching. That is the kind of teaching I want to do.

Philosophy is best learned by doing. Therefore the student who benefits the most and earns the best grade is the student who participates the most in class discussions, who asks the instructor questions, who discusses opinions in a courteous and respectful way with classmates, and who is involved in the class. Such a student is almost assured of an “A” or a “B”. In philosophy, no question is too simple to ask. If you are wondering about something, chances are several of your classmates are wondering about the same thing, so ask.

In the South, students were raised to respect the teacher and not to challenge what he says. In ethics class, I hope I can earn your respect, but I definitely want your challenges, because many of the issues we will discuss are as fuzzy and unclear to me as they are to you.

Challenge the ideas of the instructor and your classmates. However, practice disagreeing without being disagreeable. Always leave the person you challenge in tact, with a clear knowledge that you respect her opinions but simply don’t understand why she holds them or that you disagree with them for such and such reasons. Challenge ideas, not people.

If you do not understand the meaning of a word the instructor uses or understand what he is saying because of his Maine accent, ask him to explain or repeat himself. If you cannot read what he has written on the white board, ask him to rewrite it or to spell a word for you. His handwriting is very poor; he will not be insulted. If he moves too quickly, and you do not understand a concept, ask the instructor to go into more detail or to give examples. Chances are there are others who are as confused about what he is saying as you are.

Can I do extra credit?

There will be some opportunities to do a bit of extra credit work, but your instructor believes that your primary focus should be on handing in quality quizzes rather than depending on extra credit to make up for poor or missing work. Extra credit opportunities usually arise spontaneously during class and may involve research on the Internet or in the library, or perhaps a short paper. Extra credit points are added to the points total points at the end of the semester before I divide that number by four. No extra credit assignment is ever accepted the day after it is due.
How will the final grade be computed?

Average of 5 quizzes – 60%
Class Participation - 20%
Final Exam - 20%

This is an example:
Quiz 1  80
Quiz 2  90
Quiz 3  95
Quiz 4  72
Quiz 5  81
Quiz Average = 83.6 (60% of your grade) 83.2x6= 501.6
Class Participation= 85 (20% of your grade) 85x2=170.0
Final Paper= 90 (20) of your grade                90x2=180
Total Points                            861.6
Plus 12 bonus points               12 (87.4
87.4 divided by 10= 87
Minus 3 hours excessive absence = 84 (B)

Grading Scale:

100-90= A
89-80 = B
79-70 = C
69-60 = D
Below 60 = F

What if I must celebrate a religious holiday that is not in the college schedule?

Please let the instructor know a few days in advance of your plans to celebrate this holiday, and your absences on this day will not be counted against the six absences allotted you.

Can I eat and drink in class?

Eating and drinking in classrooms is officially against college rules. However, the instructor does not mind if students bring a light snack, a soft drink, coffee, bottled water, and that sort of thing as to class long as they dispose of their trash and bottles in proper trash cans and recycling bins. Please use the recycling bins whenever possible.

Can I tape record class sessions?

Yes.
Can I use my laptop computer in class?

No. Laptops are permitted only when authorized by Disability Services.

Can I bring a guest to class?

Yes, guests are always welcome. However, the instructor does not allow guests under sixteen years old in class, because of liability issues and the nature of some of the material being discussed.

What is the last date to drop or to withdraw?

**MAY 28th** is the last day to drop or withdraw with a “W”.

**MAY 17th** is the last day to drop and have no notation on your transcript. A student initiates the drop or withdrawal in the Advising Area in T170 (Thunderduck Hall). However, before you drop or withdraw, talk with the instructor to see if there is any way that the semester can be salvaged for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>May 16</td>
<td>Classes begins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 17</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO DROP WITHOUT A “W”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 18</td>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 20</td>
<td>Quiz 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 25</td>
<td>Quiz 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 27</td>
<td>Quiz 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 28</td>
<td>LAST DAY TO DROP WITH A “W”</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 30</td>
<td>Memorial Day No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 1</td>
<td>Quiz 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June 2</td>
<td>FINAL PAPERS AND EXIT INTERVIEWS – 9:00-12:15</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What if I have a physical or mental ability that challenges my learning?

Your first step is to visit the Disability Services in Thunderduck Hall, T120. If appropriate, that office will issue instructions to the instructor for special accommodations that should be made.
How do I get my final grades?

Richland College no longer mails grades to students. Students may receive their grades on-line or by telephone. You will need your student ID number published on your fee receipt and elsewhere as well as your password. Log on the Richland Homepage and then go to the last category in the menu on the left, “Online Services,” and check into e-Connect. Or call 972-613-1818. I will post grades on June 3rd and they will appear immediately on students’ transcripts.

How will I know if the school is closed due to bad weather or another emergency?

Generally an announcement will be made on major local radio and television stations by 6 a.m. Or you may call 972-238-6196, the Inclement Weather Hotline. Notice of opening status will also be posted on the Richland Homepage. In addition, as soon as I receive information, I will leave the update on my voice mail both at home and at school at the numbers listed on page 1 of this syllabus.

SPECIAL NOTICE TO FINANCIAL AID STUDENTS:

New regulations require instructors to report your attendance the first twelve calendar days of class. If a student fails to attend at all during these first days of the semester, financial aid may be reduced, withdrawn or withheld.

If you are receiving financial aid grants or loans, you must begin attendance in all classes. DO NOT drop or stop attending any class without first consulting the Financial Aid Office in Thunderduck Hall. Changes in your enrollment level and failing grades may require that you repay financial aid funds.
Academic Dishonesty Statement:

Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion. As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct published in the DCCCD Catalogue at http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm.

A student who is caught copying without proper citations of the source from a book, an internet page, or another student or is caught cheating in any other way will receive a “0” for that test or assignment and will not be allowed to make it up or to compensate for it in any way. Plagiarism and proper ways to document sources will be covered in class.

See the appendix to this syllabus regarding acceptable methods of documentation. This is especially important for you to review.

The Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course Rule:

The Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in additional tuition to be charged. Developmental Education and some other courses will not be charged additional tuition. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 semester. Visit www.dcccd.edu/ThirdCourse/Attempt for a list of courses and additional information.

A NEW STATE REGULATION: THE SIX “W” RULE -VERY IMPORTANT!!

Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions. Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W”. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access: https://www1.dcccd.edu/coursedrops
EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS PLAN

To help ensure your safety on campus, please watch this video on keeping safe in a campus emergency at http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv”

COURSE CALENDAR

MAY 16 - Monday

Syllabus
Introductions
What is Philosophy? pp. 3-7; 13-14

MAY 17 –Tuesday

Socrates – pp. 3-4; 12-14
Arguments and Inductive Logic – pp.15-20
Deductive Logic – pp.16-17 (Appendix B (385-387))

MAY 18- Wednesday

Informal Fallacies – pp.41-45 (Appendix C (391-396)
Theories of Truth – pp. 168-172
QUIZ 1

MAY 19 – Thursday

Rationalism: Descartes – pp.157-159.
Rationalism: Plato – pp.120-122
“The Cave”

MAY 20 – Friday

Empiricism: Locke pp. 147-168
Empiricism: Berkeley and Hume
QUIZ 2
MAY 23 – Monday

Feminist Epistemology – pp.323-338
Artificial Intelligence – No Readings
Introduction to Ethics – pp. 267-269.

MAY 24 – Tuesday

Axioms in Ethics – No readings
Ethical Relativism – pp. 267-269.
Hedonism – pp. 253-257; 245-247

MAY 25 – Wednesday

Utilitarianism – pp. 263-266.
Introduction to Animal Rights – pp.295-297
Quiz 3

MAY 26 – Thursday

Animal Rights Concluded
“Liberation of Animals”
Kant – pp.260-263

MAY 27 – Friday

Kant – pp.260-263
“A Class Divided”
Quiz 4

MAY 30 – Monday

Memorial Day – No Class

JUNE 1 – Tuesday

Aristotle’s Ethics – pp. 251-252; 266-267
Quiz 5

JUNE 2 – Wednesday

Final Exam and Exit Interviews
**Is there anything else I should know?**

You should know that studying philosophy is a lot of fun. So enjoy it. You should know that to some of the questions we ask, there is a multitude of answers, some in direct opposition to each other, and that you will not be given “the right answer” in this class. You must decide many of these answers for yourself. And know that such ambiguity and vagueness can sometimes be frustrating for the person who wants closure, ready-made, sudden answers. But such is the nature of philosophy. Enjoy!

**Disclaimer:** All material in this syllabus and the course calendar is subject to change as circumstances demand.
APPENDIX REGARDING PLAGIARISM

In Academia, as well as in the world at large, plagiarism becomes an increasingly serious problem. “Plagiarism” is presenting your work and ideas as your own when they are actually not and have been stolen from someone else. Copying from the Internet, copying from another student, handing in a paper that has been written by someone else, such as a friend or a relative, who took this course in some semester past all constitute plagiarism. It is a dishonest practice; it is a form of theft; in many instances it is illegal as well as unethical. To avoid being accused of plagiarism, use the principles of citation you learned in your Freshman English classes. Here are a few very simple rules for your review.

If you quote directly from a book or a Website, enclose the quoted passage within quotation marks. For example: “Every minute of the day, twenty-four hours a day, one hundred animals are killed in laboratories in the United States.” (Pojman, The Moral Life, p. 821).

If you quote indirectly, also cite the source of the indirect quotation. For example: Nietzsche is one of the most prominent figures in the twentieth century philosophical movements of existentialism and post modernism. (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nietzsche).

At the end of your paper or exam, put a “Works Cited” Page. The Richland College Library Homepage has a detailed essay about the proper ways to do this.

Failure to follow this annotating procedure or any other form of using work that is not your own will result in a “0” on the entire paper or quiz.
COMPETENCIES FOR PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION COURSES

**Reading**: Students will be asked to read from philosophy and religion textbooks written for students reading at the 12th grade level or above. Students may be asked to read some short passages from primary sources. Student achievement will be measured by such methods as exams, quizzes, and in-class discussion of the material.

**Writing**: Students will be given opportunities to write essays and papers about philosophical and religious issues. The student’s progress in improving academic writing will be communicated by such methods as instructor remarks written on papers and individual student conferences.

**Speaking**: Students are expected to participate in such speaking activities as class discussions, small group discussions, and class presentations. The instructor will evaluate their speaking skills.

**Listening**: Students will enhance their listening skills by practicing speaking one at a time and attending to the speaker. Students may be asked to summarize or repeat an argument they have just heard.

**Critical Thinking**: Students’ writing and class participation will be evaluated continually by such criteria as clarity, consistency, coherence, comprehensiveness, compatibility, and fairness in thought and expression.

**Scope and Variety in Philosophy and Religion**: By studying a wide range of ideas, purported by different historical periods, ages, and cultures, the student will demonstrate through written and spoken work an awareness of the scope and variety of issues and ideas studied in philosophy and religion. Some non-western ideas may be presented and discussed.

**Expressions of Individual and Human Values within a Social and Historical Context**: In class ideas will generally be presented within a historical, cultural, and social context, so students can understand why and how the ideas emerged. Students will be encouraged, in class discussions and in written work, to relate the ideas studied in philosophy and religion to ideas studied in other courses (e.g., literature, psychology, history, etc.).

**Critical Response**: Students will practice, in speech and writing, giving reasoned, critical responses to the ideas and theories presented. Unsupported statements of likes or dislikes will be treated as seminal material by the instructor for the development of a reasoned, critical response to a theory, idea, or religion.

**Informed Personal Reaction**: Students will be encouraged by the instructor to personalize the material studied and to react to it. The instructor, however, may ask students to support reactions by such means as the use of logic, reason, and bibliographical research.

**Influence of Philosophy/Religion on Intellectual Experiences**: Through such means as written papers and exams, class participation and discussions, oral presentations, and small group activities, students will relate the ideas and theories studied in religion and philosophy to various related intellectual experiences.

**EXEMPLARY EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES**

1. To demonstrate awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts and humanities.
2. To understand those works as expressions of individual and human values within an historical and social context.
3. To respond critically to works in the arts and humanities.
4. To articulate an informed personal reaction to works in the arts and humanities.
5. To demonstrate knowledge of the influence of literature, philosophy, and/or the arts on intercultural experiences.
THE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Philosophy/Religion Department at Richland College is to provide to students and teachers alike interactive and cooperative learning environments in which they may examine ideas related to their cultural, philosophical, and religious heritages. The Department further strives to develop skills in analysis and evaluation of arguments and the ability to write and to speak clearly about philosophic and religious issues, which pertain to values, knowledge, reality, human nature, and God. The Department aims at translating these skills into considered actions in the lives of those involved and into reasoned interactions with the greater global community.