PHI 1100
Introduction to Philosophy
Spring 2011

Professor Karen Bennett
kb383@cornell.edu
322 Goldwin Smith Hall
Office Hours: Thursdays 12:30-1:30 and by appointment
   Note: My office is not wheelchair accessible. Please e-mail me if you need to set up a meeting in an alternate location.

Teaching Assistants
   Nate Meyvis  nwm26@cornell.edu
   Jordan Thomson jat277@cornell.edu
   Andrea Viggiano av229@cornell.edu
   Ru Ye  ry72@cornell.edu

Required Texts
   • A few articles available through electronic reserves, accessible via Blackboard.

Recommended Further Resources
   The Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy: http://www.oxfordreference.com
   (Note: you must cite these resources if you consult them for papers.)

Evaluation
   • Papers: 65%
      You will write three argumentative papers for this course. The first will be only 3-4 pages long and worth 15% of your grade. The second two will be 5-7 pages long, and worth 25% each. All papers must be typed, double spaced, with reasonable font size and margins. More details on how to go about writing them soon.
   • Final Exam: 20%
   • Homework and Participation: 15%
      A brief homework assignment will be assigned via Blackboard every Tuesday and due every Wednesday night at 9PM. They won’t be graded, just checked off—your homework grade will be based on the percentage of assignments you have completed. Your participation grade will be determined by the extent to which you are actively engaged in the course: attendance, contributions to class discussions, and individual meetings all count.

Policy Notes
   1. Homework cannot be made up.
   2. Extensions can be granted on papers, but you have to talk to your TA a few days in advance. If you do not make arrangements beforehand, late papers will be downgraded by 1/3 letter grade per day.
   3. To pass this class, you must write all three papers and take the final exam.
   4. Each student in this course is expected to abide by Cornell’s policies regarding academic integrity. Everything submitted for academic credit must be the student’s own work, and all sources must be properly cited. See http://cuinfo.cornell.edu/Academic/AIC.html for more information.
Use of Blackboard Software

I will use Blackboard to post paper topics and homework questions, as well as to send occasional e-mails. You will submit your answers to homework questions via Blackboard (though you will turn in hard copies of papers the old-fashioned way). You will be automatically enrolled in the Blackboard site when you enroll in the course.

• To self enroll:
  Go to http://blackboard.cornell.edu and log in. (Or, if you do not yet have a Blackboard account, click “New User: Get an Account”.)
  Click “All Blackboard Sites” tab near the upper left
  Search for Introduction to Philosophy (there will be several hits; be sure it’s spring 2011)
  Click button marked “Enroll”

• To access and answer homework questions:
  Log on to Blackboard and access the Phil 1100 site.
  Click on “Assignments” on the left hand side of the page
  Read that week’s homework question.
  Click on the “View/Complete Assignment” link.
  Try to answer the question in the “Comments” box rather than uploading a file. You may upload a file if the comment box isn’t big enough, but bear in mind that homework responses should not exceed a page.

• Questions about Blackboard?
  http://atc.cit.cornell.edu/blackboard/students/index.cfm

Tentative Schedule of Readings

All readings are in the 5th edition of the Perry/Bratman/Fischer anthology unless they are starred. Starred readings are available through the Blackboard site for this course.

0. Introduction
   Perry, Bratman, and Fischer, “Logical Toolkit,” 9-14

1. The Existence of God
   1/27 Aquinas, “The Existence of God” (from Summa Theologica), 44-46
   2/1 Paley, “Natural Theology,” 46-51
   *Dawkins, The Blind Watchmaker, chapter 1
   Optional: Hume, selections from Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion, 92-125
   2/3 Pascal, “The Wager,” 51-55
   Perry, Bratman, and Fischer, “Writing Philosophy Papers,” 15-17
   *Bennett, “Some Helpful Hints for Writing Philosophy Papers”
   2/8 continued
   2/10 Leibniz, “God, Evil, and the Best of All Possible Worlds,” 94-95
   *Voltaire, Candide, chapters 1 and 28
   Optional: John Perry, “Dialogue on Good, Evil, and the Existence of God,” 96-120
   2/15 *Mackie, “Evil and Omnipotence”
2. *Freedom of the Will*
   2/17  *Holbach, “The Illusion of Free Will”*
   *Darrow, two very short selections from his defense at the Leopold and Loeb trial*
   2/22 **Paper # 1 due**
   *Stace, “The Problem of Free Will”*
   2/24  Frankfurt, “Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person,” 430-439
   3/1   Chisholm, “Human Freedom and the Self,” 392-399

3. *Personal Identity*
   3/3   Perry, “A Dialogue on Personal Identity and Immortality,” night 1, 326-333
   3/10  continued
   3/15  Parfit, “Personal Identity,” 357-370
   *Optional: Dennett, “Where am I?” 383-391*
   3/17  continued and catch-up

**Spring break**

4. *Ethics*
   3/29  no reading assigned
   3/31  no class
   **Paper #2 due**
   4/5   *Rachels, “The Challenge of Cultural Relativism”*
   Carritt, “Some Criticisms of Utilitarianism,” 477-479
   4/12  Smart, “Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism,” 479-486
   4/14  Kant, from *Groundwork of the Metaphysic of Morals*, 504-520
   *Optional: Velleman, “A Brief Introduction to Kantian Ethics” 521- 537*
   4/19  continued
   4/21  Nagel, “Moral Luck”, 440-448
   4/26  continued and catch-up
   4/28  Singer, “Famine, Affluence, and Morality,” 495-503
   *Optional: O’Neill, “Kantian Approaches to Some Famine Problems,” 538-544*

5. *Evaluating Our Lives*
   **Paper #3 due**
   5/5   Nagel, “The Absurd,” 768-774

**Final Exam: Wednesday May 18, 7-9:30 PM, room TBA**