

Philosophy Department

PHILOSOPHY 220 "PHILOSOPHICAL CLASSICS" DR. MACKEY

There is little to be said about this course that is not already common campus knowledge. It is considered to be one of the best courses ever to be offered in the humanities field. Most students reporting on the course could offer no suggestions for improvement.

The reading is considered to be excellently chosen, with no assignments so long as to be destructive of their purpose. The reading is utilized as a basis for class lectures, which are thoroughly organized and impressively valuable to the understanding of the philosophies under consideration.

Dr. Mackey presents the material from the philosopher's point of view and is for the greatest part objective and fair. Philosophical examination of the various systems is generated by the close consideration of each system in light of the cumulative studies of the class. At the end of the year the impression is left that the entire course is a unity which allows the student to apply his knowledge to all his other fields of study.

In fairness, it might be pointed out that the direction in this course is "Kierkegaardian." But it is done extremely well, and all opinions seem to point out

that any philosophy without a central motivation (or conviction, as you like) is so much pap.

There are no tests in the course. Instead, each student is required to write three papers a semester. All students felt that this was the best conceivable means of testing knowledge and understanding of the course. The first semester, short ten minute quizzes were given every other week to encourage the reading of assignments.

Grading was viewed as extremely fair. There are no final exams, as such, but a long paper is required of each student. About this means of testing, the student consensus was summarized by a senior student's statement that it was "the most thorough learning process I have ever encountered at the Institute."

Mr. Mackey is very friendly, very enthusiastic about both teaching and his field, and encourages student participation. He is receptive to students and seems always happy to assist them in any fashion possible.

PHILOSOPHY 220 "PHILOSOPHICAL CLASSICS" DR. KOLENDA

It is our understanding that Dr. Kolenda will return from a year of research at Heidelberg to resume the instruction of a section of 220. He did not in-

struct the course last year. Although the nature of the course has changed since he taught it a year ago, most students were well satisfied with that course.

Dr. Kolenda's witty and interesting lectures provided explanations and background material for the reading. Much of the time was spent in class discussion which the student enjoyed greatly. Tests were interesting and graded fairly.

PHILOSOPHY 300 HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY DR. FULTON

Philosophy 300 is a historical survey of Western Philosophy beginning with the pre-Socratics and continuing up to the early twentieth century. Heavy stress is laid upon ancient philosophy, with emphasis on Plato and Aristotle. The medieval period is dealt with rather cursorily.

A thorough coverage is then given of the British Empiricists, the Cartesian school, Kant, and Hegel. The treatment of modern



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philosophy is of necessity very limited.

A good background for understanding modern philosophy is provided by the development of
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Philosophy...

(Cont. from Page 1, Section B) philosophical ideas and problems. Primary criticisms of the course are:

1. The historical relation of various philosophers is not always fully developed.

2. The course is not tightly organized and this sometimes leads to spotty coverage of major figures or ideas.

Grading is very fair, emphasis on papers rather than tests. To conclude, it is a good basic course which should be required of all philosophy majors.

PHILOSOPHY 310

A HISTORY OF RELIGIONS

DR. NIELSEN

The course deals primarily with the Indian religions of Hinduism and Buddhism, Chinese religious of Taoism and Confucianism, and Christianity. cursory treatment is given to Jainism, Sikhism, Zoroasterianism, Shintoism, and Islam.

Religions are dealt with both historically and theologically. The course is very rewarding to those interested in the Oriental world view or in comparative religion. The treatment of Christian theology is especially emphasized with stress placed upon understanding the role of the Bible in Christianity and the development and meaning of Christian ortho-

doxy.

The final paper of the second semester is an evaluation of one's personal religion (whether orthodox, agnostic, atheistic, etc.). This is in itself an experience which makes the course well worth taking.

Major criticisms of the course are:

1. Difficult concepts are often not fully explained, the instructor's approach frequently being one of debate rather than discussion.

2. The argumentative nature of many class discussions keeps some students from entering them.

In summary, it is an excellent course for general knowledge and for gaining a better understanding of one's own religion.

PHILOSOPHY 350

PHILOSOPHICAL IDEAS IN LITERATURE

DR. KOLENDA

The title of the course should actually be philosophical ideas in German literature. It opens to the student the whole rich panorama of German literature. Goethe is studied extensively from his romantic stage of *Young Werthe*, to *Iphigenia and Tauris*, to *Faust*.

The works of Kafka, Rilke's *Divine Elegies*, the works of Nietzsche, Schiller's *Maria Stu-*

art, and a thorough study of Mann's *The Magic Mountain* provide an intensely enjoyable and edifying course of study.

There are no hour tests, the emphasis being on the finals and papers. The course should broaden one's intellect and increase his sensitivity. It is highly recommended for those interested in literature, philosophy, and life.

PHILOSOPHY 360

DR. MACKEY

Dr. Mackey's profound analysis of the material covered in this course makes it one of the most stimulating and intellectually challenging courses offered at Rice. The major works in aesthetics from Greece to the present are covered in detail.

The student is challenged to apply the theory studied to works of art, music, and poetry. This is found to be of immense value. The grading is largely based on written papers which is practically the best possible system. In this way the student is able to show how well he understands the material and not how much he can regurgitate in a given length of time.

PHILOSOPHY 410

PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

DR. NIELSEN

This course, in some respects, overlaps with Philosophy 310. However, greater study and emphasis are given to the religion's theoretical content rather than historical development.

In addition, the relation of modern philosophy is covered. Source readings are done in the works of Whitehead, Kierkegaard, Kaufmann, (*Critique of Religion and Philosophy*), Karl Barth and Martin Buber. In particular, the relations of religion and science, and Christianity and existentialism are discussed.

The same general criticisms apply to this course that apply to 310. It can be taken either as a complementary course to 310 or independently. The material and questions which it covers are those which any sensitive thinking religious or irreligious person will face. It is a highly worthwhile course regardless of one's creed.

Grading is done on the basis of hour quizzes and short tests and papers with very heavy emphasis on the finals, or term papers. "Twos" are given for thorough work, "ones" rather difficult to achieve.

PHILOSOPHY 440

CONTEMPORARY

PHILOSOPHY DR. FULTON

The course starts at the beginning of this century with the work of C. S. Pierce, then progresses through William James, Henri Bergson, G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, John Dewey, Alfred North Whitehead, Martin Heidegger, and Ludwig Wittgenstein.

There is an excellent coverage of the basic schools of thought in modern philosophy, with the exception of existentialism, whose only representative is Heidegger. The course should be of special benefit to science majors who are interested in the relationship of contemporary philosophy and metaphysics.

It is also an excellent course for those with general interest in philosophy. The greatest benefit is gained by taking a historical philosophy course, such as 220 or 300, as a prerequisite.

There are no hour tests. Grades are based the first semester on a number of small papers and the final, the second semester on a term paper. Grading is strict without being severe.