

# Introduction to Philosophy

**Philosophy 20-01**  
Summer 2008, Pre-session

home page: [www.georgetown.edu/faculty/blattnew/2/08b/index.htm](http://www.georgetown.edu/faculty/blattnew/2/08b/index.htm)

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## Course Syllabus

### Course Description:

What is human freedom? Is there such a thing anyhow? In this course we will look at several of the conceptions of human freedom offered in the Western philosophical tradition. You will learn not only the content of these views, but how to analyze and confront them critically.



### Course Requirements:

You will write three short (5 pp.) papers, as follows:

1. due Fri., May 30<sup>th</sup>, NOON: 25% of your final grade
2. due Mon., June 9<sup>th</sup>, noon: 33%
3. due Mon., June 16<sup>th</sup>, 5 PM: 42%

All papers will be submitted *via* [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com). For the first two assignments, you must also hand in a printed copy of your paper in the class session that follows.

**Late papers:** unexcused late papers will be graded down one grade step (e.g., B+ to B) per day. Please discuss legitimate excuses with me as early as possible, and consult my blurb on good excuses (on the Web).

**Attendance policy:** Attendance is required. I will keep attendance in order to encourage you to come to class, and if I notice an "attendance problem" emerging, I will discuss it with you. Bear in mind that the readings are difficult and that lecture and class discussion are almost certainly indispensable to your ability to write good papers. If you do miss a class session, do not request a make-up lecture or review session in my office. Get notes from a classmate.

**Academic Integrity:** In accordance with university policy, any suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be turned over to the Honor Council for investigation. If the Honor Council confirms that a violation of the Honor Code has taken place, the violator will receive an "F" grade for the course (not just the assignment).

### Course Prerequisites:

There are no prerequisites for this course. This course satisfies the University core requirement in general philosophy.

### Blackboard:

I will manage the day-to-day business of the course through Blackboard.

## INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

### Texts:

- Derk Pereboom, ed., *Free Will*. Hackett.
- David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Penguin.
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Genealogy of Morals*. Vintage.
- William James, *Essays in Pragmatism*, ed. Alburey Castell. Hafner.
- William Strunk, Jr. & E.B. White, *Elements of Style*. Allyn & Bacon.
- Mark B. Woodhouse, *A Preface to Philosophy*, 8th ed. Wadsworth (*optional*).

### Schedule

	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments</i>
M, 5/19	Introduction and Aristotle, <i>Voluntary Action</i>	Pereboom, pp. 1-4	
T, 5/20	Aquinas, <i>Voluntary Action</i>	Pereboom, pp. 41-56	
W, 5/21	Aquinas, <i>Free Choice</i>	Pereboom, pp. 34-41	
Th, 5/22	Overflow day to finish up Aquinas	No new reading	
Fri., 5/23	What is a Philosophical Argument?/How to Write a Philosophy Paper	<i>Optional readings from Woodhouse, A Preface to Philosophy, TBA</i>	
<b>Week 2 Hume</b>			
M, 5/26	<i>Memorial Day – No Class</i>		
T, 5/27	<i>Necessity or Psychological Determinism</i>	<i>Treatise</i> , II.iii.1: pp. 447-455 Pereboom, pp. 79-80	
W, 5/28	<i>Hume's Conception of Liberty</i>	<i>Treatise</i> , II.iii.2, pp. 455-460	
Th, 5/29	<i>Hume's Conception of Liberty, ctd</i>	<i>Treatise</i> , II.ii.3, pp. 397-400.	
F, 5/30	<i>Motivation and Reason</i>	<i>Treatise</i> , II.iii.3, pp. 460-465	First Paper Due
<b>Week 3 James</b>			
M, 6/2	<i>Kant &amp; James Against Compatibilism</i>	Kant, in Pereboom, pp. 101-104. James, "Dilemma of Determinism"	
T, 6/3	<i>Belief and Reason</i>	"The Will to Believe," in <i>Essays</i>	
W, 6/4	<i>Truth</i>	"Pragmatism's Conception of Truth," in <i>Essays</i>	
Th, 6/5	<i>The Right to Believe We Have Freedom</i>	"The Dilemma of Determinism" again	
F, 6/6	Overflow day to finish up James	No new reading	
<b>Week 4 Nietzsche</b>			
M, 6/9	<i>What is a Genealogy of Morals?</i>	<i>The Genealogy of Morals</i> , Preface and First Essay	Second Paper Due
T, 6/10	<i>Agency and Physiological Drives</i>	<i>Genealogy</i> , First Essay, ctd.	
W, 6/11	<i>Moral Responsibility &amp; the Ascetic Ideal</i>	<i>Genealogy</i> , Second Essay, & third Essay, §§1 - 22	
Th, 6/12	<i>The Free Spirit</i>	<i>Genealogy</i> , Third Essay, GS 290 & some addtl passages	
F, 6/13	Final Class Meeting	No new reading	
M, 6/16, 5 PM			Third Paper Due