

Duquesne University
The McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts
Philosophy: Basic Philosophical Questions UCOR 132-21-Fall 2018



Wanderer Above The Sea Of Fog – C. D. Friedrich

Dr. Michael Rudar
M-W-F 12:00-12:50
College Hall Room 548

Office: TBD
Office Hrs: M-W 1-2:00
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Course Objective

Philosophy begins in wonder. To wonder one must be like a child in which everything becomes a new experience again. As philosophers, our “new experience” will happen through thinking. In turn, thinking this way will allow us to reexamine our prejudices and previously ascribed beliefs. Ironically, what we may come to realize is that philosophical inquiry doesn’t always lend itself to answers as is commonly understood, i.e., philosophy is not a gathering of “facts.” Instead we will see that it is in *the very questions themselves*, as well as the questioning stance, that the power of philosophy lies. In this class we will examine major themes from the Western philosophical tradition. Some of these themes are: “What is the soul and is it immortal?” “What can I be certain of?” “What is the life well lived?” “Am I free and if so, how can I live authentically?” As we work through these difficult but rewarding questions, we will trace the history of the self from ancient roots to its modern conceptions. In the end we will see how philosophy can lead us from the certainty of the naïve to the wonder of the wise.

Texts (Actual Physical Text Required)

Plato-*Five Dialogues*
Rene Descartes-*Meditations on First Philosophy*
David Hume-*An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*
Friedrich Nietzsche-*The Birth of Tragedy*
Other material posted on Blackboard accessed through DORI.

Course Requirements

Midterm 30%
Second Exam 30%
Final 30%
Quizzes 10%
Participation/Attendance

Grading

A 95 - 100
A- 90 - 94.9
B+ 86.7 - 89.9
B 83.3 - 86.6
B- 80 - 83.2
C+ 75 - 79.9
C 70 - 74.9
D 60 - 69.9
F Below 60

Outline of Course

I. Philosophy’s Value
II. Ancient Dialectic
III. Scholastic’s and God
IV. Modernism’s Quest for Certainty
V. A Healthy Dose of Skepticism
VI. The Aesthetic Turn

“Granted that we cannot do anything with philosophy, might not philosophy, if we concern ourselves with it, do something with us?”
~Martin Heidegger~