

UCF Philosophy Department
T/TH: 4:30-5:45 p.m.
Spring, 2018
Professor Fagiano

American Philosophy
Office Hours: T/TH 12– 1:30 pm
or by appt.
Office Location: PSY 244
Email: Mark.Fagiano@ucf.edu

Course Description:

This course examines the history of American philosophy with particular attention to Native American philosophy, American philosopher-poet traditions, and pragmatism—America's distinctive philosophy.

We often hear the word “pragmatic” used in American life to describe people who seem to get things done or focus on results rather than on reflection or deliberation. Regarding such usages, there is very little, if any, discussion about the moral or philosophical significance of the word.

One of the central goals of this class will be to think critically about these traditions (in the plural) of American philosophy and how philosophical usages of the term "pragmatic" differ from more common usages. We will also focus upon how American philosophy, like no other school of philosophy, provides invaluable insight into the nature and process of democracy.

(This course is a Gordon Rule Writing Course and the required writing assignments are listed in the “Grading” section below and indicated with asterisks).

Required Texts:

1. William James. *Essays in Radical Empiricism*.
ISBN-13: 978-1507577424
2. John Stuhr. *Pragmatism and Classical American Philosophy*.
ISBN-13: 978-0195118308
3. Nancy Stanlick. *American Philosophy: The Basics*.
ISBN-13: 978-0415689700

Recommended secondary source: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
<http://plato.stanford.edu/contents.html>

Grading (Assignments and/or Tests/Exams):

- Participation--10%
- Reflections--20%
- Two papers--30%
- Midterm--20%
- Final Paper--20%

10% Participation—your presence is expected at every class and your participation is both invited and necessary. For some the participation grade is the easiest part to earn, but for those who will miss classes regularly, it will be difficult for them to pass the class.

You are allotted two missed days without an excuse. Upon your third absence, and every additional unexcused absence that follows it, ***your final grade will drop one-half of a letter grade.*** Excused absences (see the full list below) must be supported with a note from your doctor, coach, family, etc. All other absences, after two, count against your final grade. It will be impossible to pass this class if you miss it excessively.

More than just being present for each and every class, participation includes actively engaging with the material by asking questions or making comments during class time, especially during small group discussions. Note also: if you do not have your book or other materials on a given class day, it is nearly the same as not being there and you will lose participation points.

20% Reflections— **every other week** students will comment on a discussion thread on Webcourses. These assignments will require each student to engage actively with the readings/or selected posts for the week. Students comment as early as **Monday** for any given week. (These assignments will be posted in Canvas/Webcourses).

***30% Papers**—thirty percent of your grade will be determined by your performance on three assignments—three analytic/reflective papers (3-5 pages each). Each paper will be based on a prompt provided to you by your professor. The due dates for these papers are **February 8th and April 5th**. Late papers will be marked down one-half of grade for each day it is late. Exemption: e.g., documented illness.

***20% Midterm**—the midterm, on **March 8th** will consist of short answer questions and essays and will be based on lectures, in-class discussions, and the assigned readings. The class day before the midterm will be entirely devoted to reviewing the material for the exam, and I will hand out a list of testable concepts/ideas before the review session. **Students MUST BRING A GREENBOOK for the midterm.**

***20% Final Exam**—The final will resemble the structure of the midterm. **Students MUST ALSO BRING A GREENBOOK for the midterm.**

Midterm and Final Exams:

The midterm/final exams are based on information from **lectures, in-class discussions** and the **assigned readings**. When I grade the written parts of your exams I am not looking for you to agree with what I think, rather I want you to make **strong arguments**. This means you need to support the claims you make. An argument is not an opinion, an assertion or a belief, though you should feel free to construct your argument in the first person. The same holds for the final paper; speak in your own voice, and make an argument.

Academic Honesty

The integrity of students and their written and oral work is a critical component of the academic process. The submission of another's work as one's own is plagiarism and will be dealt with using the procedures outlined in the University of Tennessee catalog. Remember that allowing another student to copy one's own work violates standards of academic integrity.

Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

1. **The unauthorized possession or use of notes, texts, electronic devices (e.g., computers, mobile phones), online materials or other such unauthorized materials/devices in fulfillment of course requirements.**
2. **Copying another's person work or participation in such an effort.**
3. **An attempt or participation in an attempt to fulfill the requirements of the course with work other than one's own.**
4. **Forging or deliberately misrepresenting data or results.**
5. **Obtaining or offering either for profit or free of charge materials one might submit or has submitted for academic credit. This includes uploading course materials to online sites devoted in whole or in part, to aiding and abetting cheating under the guise of providing "study aids." There is no prohibition concerning uploading exemplars one's work to one's personal website or to departmental, divisional, University or professional society websites for the purposes of publicity, praise, examination or review by potential employers, graduate school admissions committees, etc.**
6. **Violating the specific directions concerning the operation of the honor code in relation to a particular assignment.**
7. **Making unauthorized copies of graded work for future distribution.**
8. **Claiming credit for a group project to which one did not contribute.**

Late Work, Absences: All out-of-class work is due AT THE BEGINNING of the class. Papers handed in after class but on the due date may be penalized one-third of a letter grade, and will be penalized by an additional one-half of a letter grade for each day they are late. Papers more than three days late will not be accepted. Students with excused absences may be excused from penalty if the excuse is received promptly. Excuses received at the end of the semester may not remove late penalties for work assigned in advance of the excused period.

There are NO MAKE UPS for any parts of this course without an excused absence:

Legitimate Excuses: college-sponsored activities closely linked to academics or to other official college functions (administrative, athletic, etc.); student illness or injury—with a note from health services—as well as critical illness/death in one’s immediate family; jury duty (or subpoena for court appearance); religious holidays (for students who actively practice the religion).

Laptops and Phones

Laptops are allowed in class if and only if the laptop is being used for taking notes or, in certain circumstances, for looking up something (I will explain this in detail when appropriate). Phones are not allowed during any time during class. If you use your phone in class or it makes noise, it will be confiscated, then returned at the end of class. Repeated offense will result in a lowering of your participation grade.

Incompletes: The grade of incomplete will be given only in special circumstances such as an illness, an accident, or a death in the family.

Tentative Class Schedule:

		Session content	Material to be read prior to session (it is best to do the reading for each week during the week before it!).
			Reading for 1/11 -- Stuhr: 1-7 Whitman Leaves of Grass: Selections (on Webcourses)
	Week One 1/9 1/11	Class One: Syllabus overview Walt Whitman – “Songs of Myself” “The Open Road” Class Two: More Walt, “Open Road” What is Pragmatism?	Reading for 1/16: Stanlick: Chapter 3 Reading for 1/18 Emerson in Stuhr, 2000: 13-39 Stanlick: Chapter 4

	<p>Week Five</p> <p>2/6</p> <p>2/8</p>	<p>Class Nine: William James: Relationalism, Pluralism, Pragmatism</p> <p>Class Ten: More Poetry</p> <p>Paper ONE DUE</p>	<p>Reading for 2/13: Finish <i>Radical Empiricism</i></p> <p>Reading for 2/15 ON Webcourses: Excerpt from <i>The Quest for Certainty</i>.</p>
	<p>Week Six</p> <p>2/13</p> <p>2/15</p>	<p>Class Eleven: James: Radical Empiricism and Social Meliorism</p> <p>Class Twelve: Philosophy as the Quest for Certainty</p>	<p>Reading for 2/20 Stuhr: Dewey; 471-476; 445-455; 530-537</p> <p>Reading for 2/22 Stuhr 504-518; 530-538</p>
	<p>Week Seven</p> <p>2/20</p> <p>2/22</p>	<p>Class Thirteen: Dewey: On Philosophy</p> <hr/> <p>Class Fourteen: Philosophy, Faith, and Community</p>	<p>Reading for 2/27: Stuhr: GH Mead: 581-591</p> <p>Reading for 3/1: NONE, Review Notes and Readings</p>

	<p>Week Eight</p> <p>2/27</p> <p>3/1</p>	<p><i>Class Fifteen:</i> George Herbert Mead and the Generalized Other; The “I” and ‘me’”</p> <hr/> <p><i>Class Sixteen:</i> REVIEW</p>	<p>Reading for 3/6: NONE. Study for the midterm</p> <p>Reading for 3/8: NONE. Study for the midterm</p>
	<p>Week Nine</p> <p>3/6</p> <p>3/8</p>	<p><i>Class Seventeen:</i> MIDTERM REVIEW</p> <hr/> <p><i>Class Eighteen:</i> MIDTERM</p>	<p><i>Reading for 3/20</i> (reading is for the first class after Spring Break)</p> <p>Stanlick: 132-138 Addams in Stuhr: 625-644</p> <hr/> <p>Reading for 3/22: Stanlick: 139-145 Locke in Stuhr: 676-686</p>
	<p>Week Ten</p> <p>3/13</p> <p>3/15</p>	<p><i>SPRING</i></p> <p><i>BREAK</i></p>	<p>:</p> <p><i>SPRING</i></p> <p><i>BREAK</i></p>
	<p>Week Eleven</p> <p>3/20</p> <p>3/22</p>	<p><i>Class Nineteen:</i> Pragmatism and Feminism Jane Addams</p> <p><i>Class Twenty:</i> Alain Locke: Values & Imperatives</p>	<p>Reading for 3/27: No New Reading: Review Notes</p> <p>Reading for 3/29: Stanlick: 113-119</p>

	<p>Week Twelve</p> <p>3/27</p> <p>3/29</p>	<p>Class Twenty-one: Pragmatism and the Philosophy of Race</p> <p>Class Twenty-two: In Class Readings American Poetry</p> <p>PAPER TWO ASSIGNED</p>	<p>Reading for 4/3: Excerpt on Webcourses: Cornel West. <i>Prophetic Pragmatism</i>.</p> <hr/> <p>Reading for 4/5: Excerpt on Webcourses: Rorty, <i>Achieving our Country</i>.</p>
	<p>Week Thirteen</p> <p>4/3</p> <p>4/5</p>	<p>Class Twenty-three: The Tragic</p> <p>Class Twenty-four: Rorty: Achieving our Country</p> <p>PAPER # 2 DUE</p>	<p>Reading for 4/10 NONE</p> <hr/> <p>Reading for 4/12 Sidney Hook: <i>Democracy as a Way of Life</i> https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/interwar/hook.htm</p>
	<p>Week Fourteen</p> <p>4/10</p> <p>4/12</p>	<p>Class Twenty-five: Class Discussion: Pragmatism and Social Political Philosophy</p> <p>Class Twenty-six: Sidney Hook: Democracy as a Way</p>	<p>Reading for 4/17 In Stuhr: Dewey: Experience and Philosophical Method 460-476</p>

		of Life	Emerson: http://transcendentalism-legacy.tamu.edu/authors/emerson/essays/experience.html <hr/> Reading for 4/19: NONE
	Week Fifteen 4/17 4/19	<i>4/18--Class Twenty-seven: Experience</i> <hr/> <i>Class Twenty-eight Review for Final</i> <hr/>	<hr/>
	T.B.A.	FINAL	