

# HONORS PROGRAM IN WHAT IS PHILOSOPHY

## 80-102, MINI-4 2009

### GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

*Time:* Wednesday 6:30–7:20 PM

*Room:* Porter Hall 125B

### INSTRUCTOR

*Name:* David Emmanuel Gray

*Office:* Baker Hall 135-F

*Email:* [degray@andrew.cmu.edu](mailto:degray@andrew.cmu.edu)

*Office Hours:* Monday and Wednesday 2:30–4:00 PM, also by appointment

### TEACHING ASSISTANT

*Name:* Jayna Bonfini

*Office:* Baker Hall 135-F

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*Office Hours:* Tuesday 12:00–1:00 PM and Friday 10:30–11:30 AM

### REQUIRED TEXTS

All reading will be handed out the week before they are to be discussed in class.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Honors Program in What is Philosophy is an invite-only seminar for 80-100 students who have demonstrated both competence and interest in philosophy. In this seminar, we will explore three topics that are not normally covered in 80-100: Game Theory, Philosophy of Science, and Philosophy of Mathematics. More importantly, you will also have the opportunity to meet and discuss these topics with distinguished Carnegie Mellon faculty.

The format of this course will fall into three blocks corresponding respectively to the three topics. Each block will consist of two class sessions. The first will be spent discussing an assigned article and the second will be lead by a guest presenter from the Philosophy Department who will give a short presentation and take questions. (The exception here is Game Theory; Teddy Seidenfeld will grace us with his presence for both sessions.)

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Philosophy is a full-contact sport, but conducted as a cooperative process. Together we wrestle with arguments and not attack those advocating them. All our meetings will follow a seminar format and, as a result, the quality of our meetings depends critically on the

quality of each individual's participation. Unlike lecture based classes, seminar-style courses challenge each of us to share in the difficult process of understanding and evaluating complex and important works of philosophy. **DO NOT CONFUSE THIS COOPERATIVE STYLE OF LEARNING WITH MERE CONVERSATION OR INFORMAL, ORGANIZED CHATTING.** You are expected to participate thoughtfully and to have a grasp of what was accomplished in each meeting. You will be expected to have read and thought about the material assigned for each class and to come prepared to collaborate with others in understanding the arguments in these texts. The purpose of us coming together as a class is to engage in this philosophical activity together.

In addition to class participation, you are also expected to complete three one-page reflection papers, one for each topic of the course. Each reflection paper should (a) respond to the claims made in the article on the topic, (b) respond to the issues that came up in our class discussion of it, and (c) pose questions or concerns about these things that you would like the guest speaker to address. The point of these is to engage with the topics, and prepare you to discuss them intelligently with the guest speakers.

If all this is done, you will receive the same grade that you receive for 80-100. Missing a class, failing to turn a paper in on time, or turning in mediocre work will all lower your grade for this seminar.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

March 18: Course Introduction.

### GAME THEORY

March 25: Class Discussion with Teddy Seidenfeld.

April 1: Class Discussion with Teddy Seidenfeld.

**Reflection paper due.**

### PHILOSOPHY OF SCIENCE

April 8: Class Discussion.

April 15\*: Class Discussion with David Danks.

**Reflection paper due.**

### PHILOSOPHY OF MATHEMATICS

April 22: Class Discussion.

April 29: Class Discussion with Jeremy Avigad.

**Reflection paper due.**

\*On the first day of class, we will determine whether to cancel class on April 15 because of Carnival. If so, we will move the schedule back one week and make up the missed class on May 6, which is a reading day during finals week.

## REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

I recognize that most students are human beings with occasional human problems associated with human finitude. Illness, family emergencies, job interviews, Other Professors, etc. . . will inevitably lead to legitimate conflicts over your time. If you expect that you will be missing class or be unable to turn in an assignment on time, please notify me (either in class or via email) **IN ADVANCE** and we can agree on a reasonable accommodation. Arrangements after the fact will only be made in extraordinary, documented circumstances.

## A NOTE ON CLASSROOM COURTESY

Classes begin on the half-hour. Students are expected to be seated by that time and to remain seated until the class is dismissed. If you must leave before the class ends because of a medical appointment, or similar commitment, notify me before class begins and sit near the door. Students who leave without providing such notice and have not suddenly taken ill will be expected to file a drop form and not to return.

## VIDEO TAPING AND AUDIO RECORDING

Under Pennsylvania state law, consent is required to record any communication uttered by a person who has an expectation that it will not be recorded by any electronic device. Your classmates, your recitation leader, and I have a reasonable expectation to not be recorded in this course. Therefore, video taping and audio recording are prohibited without the expressed permission of both your classmates, your recitation leader, and myself.

## CELL PHONES, LAPTOPS, AND OTHER RELATED TECHNOLOGIES

Student interactions with portable technology devices can harm the dynamics of the classroom. Therefore, I expect you to silence your cell phones prior to class and to not text message during class. **ALL LAPTOPS SHOULD BE CLOSED UNLESS YOU HAVE MADE PRIOR ARRANGEMENTS WITH ME AND HAVE DEMONSTRATED THAT USING A LAPTOP IS NECESSARY FOR YOUR LEARNING.**

## CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

**plagiarism** (plā'jĕ-rīz'ĕm) *n* 1: a piece of writing that has been copied from someone else and is presented as being your own work. 2: the act of plagiarizing; taking someone's words or ideas as if they were your own.

Plagiarism is bad. Do not do it. It amounts to lying, cheating, and stealing. Anyone caught doing it can fairly assume that they will not pass this course.

It is the responsibility of each student to be aware of the university policies on academic integrity, including the policies on cheating and plagiarism. This information is available at

<http://www.cmu.edu/policies/documents/Cheating.html> and in the section on “University Policies” in the most recent edition of *The Word: Undergraduate Student Handbook*.

Students who cheat or plagiarize face serious sanctions at both the course level, and the university level. At the course level, faculty at Carnegie Mellon University have significant discretion to determine the sanctions that are appropriate to individual cases of cheating and plagiarism. Within the Philosophy Department, it is customary to give plagiarized assignments a failing grade and, where appropriate, to fail students for the course. Additionally, a letter is sent to the Dean of Students indicating that the student in question has submitted plagiarized material and received a course-level sanction. Plagiarism is also a violation of the community standards of Carnegie Mellon University. As such, allegations of plagiarism may be brought before a University Academic Review Board, which will determine whether a violation of community standards has taken place and level additional sanctions if appropriate. Although this body also has significant discretion over the sanctions that it levels, plagiarism can result in academic probation, suspension, and even expulsion.