

PHILOSOPHY 367 Section AB 1 — Jan 9 to April 3, 2007

Philosophy for Counsellors

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Peter B. Raabe
CLASSROOM: A354 **TIME:** TUES. 8:30 AM – 11:20 AM
OFFICE: D3089 **OFFICE HOURS:** by appointment only please
PHONE: HOME: 1-604-986-9446
E-MAIL: raabe@interchange.ubc.ca *or* peter.raabe@ucfv.ca
WEB SITE: <http://www.ucfv.ca/philosophy/raabep/>

COURSE OUTLINE

OBJECTIVES: Clinical psychology, psychotherapy and counselling were developed out of the science of psychology. But their most successful clinical methods, such as Rational Emotional Behavior Therapy (R.E.B.T.), existential therapy, cognitive therapy, and Logo therapy, are largely fashioned after philosophy. Unfortunately, most clinical psychologists, therapists, and counsellors receive little if any formal training in philosophy before they offer their professional services to the public. This leaves them inadequately prepared to deal with their clients' philosophical issues such as ethical decision-making, sorting out confused reasoning, coming to terms with religion, defining reality, determining what it means to be a normal person within society, and so on. This course is designed to enhance your philosophical reasoning skills and increase your knowledge of the content of philosophy in order to improve your ability to deal with real-life issues and problems. This will be accomplished through readings, discussions, case studies, and essay assignments.

TEXTS: Required: *Philosophy*. Manuel Velasquez (New York: Thomson, 2005).
Issues in Philosophical Counseling. Peter Raabe. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2002).

METHOD: Classes will contain a minimum amount of formal lecturing and a maximum amount of discussion and other in-class activities.

EVALUATION: Requirements include two research essays and two easy exams.

Distribution of marks:

Essay 1	25%
Mid-term exam	20%
Essay 2	30%
Final exam	25%

ESSAYS: Maximum length: Essay 1: 7 double-spaced pages; Essay 2: 10 double-spaced pages. Please do not cover your essay in any sort of plastic folder. A simple title page is fine. Assignments sent by e-mail will **not** be accepted. **Works cited:** Because the assignments are research essays, a works cited page is required. Any format is acceptable as long as you keep it consistent throughout your entire essay.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: All essays are due at the beginning of class. Late essays (without a good reason) will be given an automatic 0%.

OUTLINE OF TOPICS AND READINGS

- 1) Jan 9 Reasoning and thinking skills — Part 1.
What philosophy is, and how it can be used in counselling and therapy.
- 2) Jan 16 Reasoning and thinking skills — Part 2
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 1 “The Nature of Philosophy”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 1 “The Man Who Saved the World But....”
- 3) Jan 23 Philosophy of human beings. **Essay #1 Due**
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 2 “Human Nature”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 7 “Sex and Logic”
- 4) Jan 30 Metaphysics: What is and isn’t real.
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 3 “Reality and Being”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 19 “Dream Interpretation”
- 5) Feb 6 Epistemology: Knowledge, truth, and the emotions.
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 5 “The Sources of Knowledge” and Chapter 6 “Truth”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 9 “Rational Passions”
- 6) Feb 13 Moral theory: Proposed strategies for an ethical life.
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 7 “Ethics”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 20 “Duty to Oneself”
- 7) Feb 20 No Class
- 8) Feb 27 Applied ethics: Theories put to work in real-life situations.
Read for this class: *ISSUES IN PC* Chap. 17 “Suicide as Self-defense”
- 9) March 6 **Mid-term exam**
- 10) March 13 Religion, Spirituality, and God
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 4 “Philosophy and God”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 18 “What Does God Have to Do With it?”
- 11) March 20 Social & Political philosophy: Power, conflict, and cooperation.
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 8 “Social Philosophy”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 16 “Learning to be Old.”
- 12) March 27 Feminist philosophy: Women and men as equal but different.
Read for this class: *ISSUES IN PC* Chap. 8 “Speaking Like a Woman/Listening Like a Man”
- 13) April 3 The meaning of life **Essay #2 Due**
Read for this class: *PHILOSOPHY* Chapter 9 “Postscript: Art and Meaning”
ISSUES IN PC Chap. 15 “The Meaning of Life”
Review for exam

Due May ##

Research Essay #1 Topic:

Read Chapter 2 in *Philosophy* “Human Nature” and Chap. 7 in *Issues* “Sex and Logic” and answer the following question:

Your client is an unmarried woman in her late twenties asking for your help in overcoming her feelings of sadness and hopelessness. She tells you that a medical doctor at a local clinic told her she is suffering from depression. She says she is worried that she will go back to using hard drugs and working as a prostitute, both of which she gave up two years ago to work at a boring and poorly-paid restaurant job. She tells you she is an adopted child. She says she believes her parents never really loved her; they only adopted her to “make a family” or to collect the government child support cheques. She says that she read an article in a recent *People* magazine which said that an addiction can be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her unborn child. She says that she knows a number of young women addicts her own age whose mothers were also addicts. This has convinced her that it’s in her nature to use drugs and to be a prostitute because she has discovered that her biological mother lived the same lifestyle. She says she expects to die at an early age either from the drugs or some sexual disease. How would you use philosophy to help this woman?

(Apply what we’ve discussed concerning problems that arise in reasoning, and also what you’ve read about human nature) (Max. 7 pages)

Due July ##

Research Essay # 2 Topic:

Do an on-line search of the term “anti-psychiatry” and read Chaps. 11,12, & 13 in *Issues IN PC* “Medicating the Mind,...Getting to Normal” and answer the following question:

Imagine that you have been invited to speak at a conference for psychoanalysts, clinical psychologists, psychotherapists, and counsellors. You have been asked to discuss the role of philosophy in psychotherapy and counselling in relation to modern medications. In other words, what’s the point of philosophy given that there are so many psychopharmaceutical treatments available today for individuals diagnosed as having mental illnesses? What would you tell your audience?

(NOTE: Don’t just quote from the Raabe text. Use what you learn from your on-line research and from both course texts) (Max. 10 pages)

Related Books:

Ballou, Mary and Laura S. Brown. *Rethinking Mental Health and Disorder: Feminist Perspectives*. New York: Guilford, 2002.

Cohen, Elliot D. *What Would Aristotle Do?* New York: Prometheus, 2003.

Diestler, Sherry. *Becoming a Critical Thinker*. New Jersey: Pearson, 2005.

Dryden, Windy. *Reason and Therapeutic Change*. London: Whurr Publishers, 1991.

Erwin, Edward. *Philosophy and Psychotherapy*. London: Sage, 1997.

Gordon, Paul and Rosalind Mayo. *Between Psychotherapy and Philosophy*. London: Whurr Publishers, 2004.

Gula, Robert J. *Non-Sense: A Handbook of Logical Fallacies*. Mount Jackson, VA: Axios Press, 2002.

Horowitz, Allan V. *Creating Mental Illness*. Chicago: University Of Chicago Press, 2002.

Howard, Alex. *Philosophy for Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Macmillan, 2000.

Lahav, Ran. *Essays in Philosophical Counselling*. New York: University Press, 1995.

LeBon, Tim. *Wise Therapy*. London: Continuum, 2001.

Raabe, Peter. *Philosophical Counseling: Theory and Practice*. Westport, CONN: Praeger, 2001.

Schuster, Shlomit C. *Philosophy Practice*. Westport, CONN: Praeger, 1999.

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY “PHILOSOPHY”?

Philosophy involves examining the reasons we have for the values we hold as good, and the beliefs we hold as true, so that we can free ourselves from blindly following tradition, slavishly obeying authority figures, or simply acting only on our feelings.

Personal philosophy: my philosophy; my approach to life; my “Weltanschauung;” what leads me to act the way I do; what I believe, not just spiritual.

Being philosophical: critical and creative thinking and discussion; good reasoning about an issue; a thoughtful and thorough exploration; a learned skill.

History of philosophy: the study of the origin and evolution of ideas; what great thinkers have said on various important topics.

Academic philosophy: structured courses studying philosophers and their theories and ideas; systematic examination of various, mostly abstract, issues.

Applied philosophy: discussion and research into problems arising in specific areas such as medicine, business, the environment, etc.

Philosophical counselling: A philosopher helps a non-philosopher resolve real-life issues and problems by examining conflicting values, problematic assumptions, dubious beliefs, unjustified biases, things learned as a child, etc.

Epicurus (341 B.C.–271 B.C.): “Empty is the argument of the philosopher which does not relieve any human suffering; for just as there is no benefit in medicine if it does not drive out bodily diseases, so there is no benefit in philosophy if it does not drive out diseases of the soul.”