

PHIL 3923H: Honors Colloquium on Free Will
University of Arkansas, Fall 2006

Professor: Eric Funkhouser
Office hours: Tuesdays 9:30 – 11:00 a.m., Fridays 2:00 – 3:30 p.m., and by appointment
Office location: 308 Old Main
Office phone: 575–7441
Email: efunkho@uark.edu (This is the best way to reach me.)

Class webpage: <http://comp.uark.edu/~efunkho/freewill.html>
All class handouts, and some additional information, will be posted on this website. So, be sure to check it out from time to time.

Class meeting time: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 a.m. – 12:20 p.m.
Classroom: 613 Science and Engineering

I. Texts (Required)

1. Fischer, John Martin and Mark Ravizza. 2000. *Responsibility and Control: A Theory of Moral Responsibility*, (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press). (Hereafter: *F&R.*)
2. Frankfurt, Harry. 1988. *The Importance of What We Care About* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press). (Hereafter: *Frankfurt.*)
3. van Inwagen, Peter. 1983. *An Essay on Free Will* (Oxford: Clarendon Press.). (Hereafter: *PVI.*)

All books are available at the campus bookstore.

The first few readings will be available online.

II. Course Description

This course examines the importance and nature of free will, giving special attention to its connection to determinism. Most of us think that having a free will is essential to living a good human life, or even living a human life at all. Most of us also think that free will is required for morality. Specifically, it seems that we are morally responsible only for those actions that we freely perform. But what does it even mean for a choice or action to be free? Would our freedom be undermined if our choices and actions were determined by, say, biological or sociological forces beyond our control? Can one be morally responsible for one's actions even if one could not have done otherwise? This course will address these types of questions.

III. Grading

- Your course grade will be determined as follows:
 - Midterm exams: 40% (20% each)
 - Short Papers: 30% (15% each)
 - Final exam: 30%
- There also could be “pop” quizzes at any time.
- Attendance, participation, quizzes etc. will help settle borderline cases.
- The final exam will mostly cover material since the second exam. But, it will also cover some material from earlier in the semester.

IV. Miscellaneous

- Assignments are due as listed on the schedule below. Late assignments will not be accepted, but for *extreme circumstances*. Even in these extreme circumstances (death in family, hospitalization, imprisonment, etc.) you should notify me *before* the assignment is due. This holds for exams as well.
- Academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism or cheating on tests) is taken very seriously. Any violation will result in the most severe repercussions allowed by the University. For the University policy on academic dishonesty, see: <http://www.uark.edu:80/campus-resources/rlee/honesty.html>

- If you require special accommodations for test-taking and/or paper-writing, inform me of them by the first week of class (with proper documentation) so that the proper arrangements can be made.
- Inclement weather policy: Assume, until and unless you hear otherwise from me, that class will *not* be canceled due to inclement weather (even if the university's inclement weather policy is in effect). If class must be canceled due to the weather, or for any other reason, I will send out a class email as soon as possible. In the worst case scenario, I will simply have a notice posted in the classroom.

V. Schedule and Reading Assignments

Note: This schedule is subject to change.

Background and Historical Sources

T Aug 22: No assignment
 Th Aug 24: See class website

T Aug 29: Locke, "Of Power", §1–14 and §31–50 only
<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/l/locke/john/l81u/under27.html>
 Th Aug 31: Hume, "Of Liberty and Necessity"
<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/h/hume/david/h92e/chapter8.html>

van Inwagen

T Sept 5: *PVI*, Chapter 1
 Th Sept 7: *PVI*, Chapter 2 (skip §2.4–2.5)

T Sept 12: *PVI*, Chapter 2, continued
 Th Sept 14: *PVI*, Chapter 3, §3.1–3.5

T Sept 19: *PVI*, Chapter 3, §3.6–3.11
 Th Sept 21: *PVI*, Chapter 4, §4.1–4.3

T Sept 26: *PVI*, Chapter 4, §4.4–4.5
 Th Sept 28: **EXAM #1**

Frankfurt

- T Oct 3: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 1
Th Oct 5: *PVI*, Chapter 5, §5.1–5.5
- T Oct 10: *PVI*, Chapter 5, §5.6–5.9
Th Oct 12: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 2
- T Oct 17: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 3
Th Oct 19: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 3, continued
- T Oct 24: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 4
Th Oct 26: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 5
- T Oct 31: *Frankfurt*, Chapter 6
Th Nov 2: **EXAM #2**

Fischer and Ravizza

- T Nov 7: *F&R*, Chapter 1
Th Nov 9: *F&R*, Chapter 2
- T Nov 14: *F&R*, Chapter 3
Th Nov 16: *F&R*, Chapter 4
- T Nov 21: *F&R*, Chapter 5
Th Nov 23: **NO CLASS THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
- T Nov 28: *F&R*, Chapters 6 and 7
Th Nov 30: *F&R*, Chapter 8
- T Dec 5: *F&R*, Chapter 9
Th Dec 7: **FINAL EXAM**
- Note: The exam is from 7:30 – 9:30 a.m., *not* during our regular meeting time.