What is the difference between knowledge and mere opinion? Can we be certain of anything? Are there universal criteria for distinguishing between right and wrong? Is there a universal good that can be known by all? Is there a relationship between virtue and happiness? Can we be truly free? Are ideas innate or acquired? What is the relation between reason and faith, or reason and experience? No matter what our answers to these questions, how are we to proceed? What role does culture, gender, politics, science play in shaping our identities? Assuming that judgments and actions can be morally right or wrong, what aspects of actions make them so? Is it the consequence of an action, for example? Or the action itself? And, in general, what is the best way to live? What is the good life? We will examine a variety of answers to these questions through a combination of classical and modern readings.

Required Text (Available at the College Bookstore).
Additional Readings on WebCT  
(You must bring the assigned text to class.)

Assignments and percentages: first in class essay exam (20%), midterm exam (25%), paper (25%), final exam (25%), participation (5%).

Grading Scale: Letter (or numerical) grades will be assigned as follows: A+ (97-100), A (93-96), A- (90-92), B+ (87-89), B (83-86), B- (80-82), C+ (77-79), C (73-76), C- (70-72), D+ (67-69), D (63-66), D- (60-62), F (59 or lower).

Attendance: It is essential that you attend classes! More than three unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade and may result in your dismissal from the class.

Honor Code: Lying, cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the Honor Code and are not permitted at the College. Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly to the Dean of Students. A student suspected for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure based on dishonesty.

Assignments policy: You must complete all assignments in order to obtain a final grade for this course. Failure to take the final exam will result in a grade of F for the entire course. Late (or early) exams will only be arranged if you can show that a real emergency prevents you from taking the exam on the due date.

Disabilities: Please let me know at the beginning of the semester if you require any type of special academic accommodation, due to your disability. You must also provide a letter from the Center for Disability Services to that effect. Please inform me of any other special needs you may have. Information about the SNAP program, can be found at: http://spinner.cofc.edu/~cds/?referrer=webcluster&

Tentative Reading Assignments
Jan 11  Introduction: What is philosophy and why study it? Readings: Perry et al. (IP: 3-8).
Expectations:

- Bring your textbook to class. If you fail to do so you will not be able to follow the lecture and the discussion.
- Keep in mind that the reading assignments are tentative. Expect changes throughout the semester. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to find out how far we have gotten in the current reading assignment or whether any changes have been made to the syllabus.
- Due dates for all assignments are clearly marked in the syllabus (make sure you add them to your calendar).
- How well you do in this course will depend in large measure on how well you prepare yourself for each class. Read the entire assignment at least once and mark any passage, concept, or idea that you have trouble understanding, and bring it up in class. If you are too shy, come and see me during my office hours or email me your queries (which should be precise and to the point). Coming to class unprepared, apart from annoying your colleagues, will also adversely affect your participation grade.
- You will continuously learn new and unfamiliar concepts and ideas. It is your responsibility to construct a glossary of all the technical terms with appropriate definitions.