

CHC 391AH
Philosophy of Freedom
Course Syllabus
Spring, 2019

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Office Hours: **M** 10:30 - 11:30
And drop-ins or by appointment

Textbook: Intuitive Thinking as a Spiritual Path: A Philosophy of Freedom, Centennial Edition, Rudolf Steiner, Anthroposophic Press, 1995, ISBN 0-88010-385-X

Course Description: In 1900, the Austrian philosopher and scientist, Rudolf Steiner, published one of his first books, exploring the basis for free will. His analysis of consciousness found thinking to be the root of the human psyche. In Steiner's view, intuitive thinking, the kind of reflective thinking through which we acquire new concepts, is a fundamental activity of the human spirit. Because such thinking can be sense-free and self-aware, it provides the basis for true freedom of choice if we learn to exercise it well. Steiner went on to found numerous movements that are still active today, including Waldorf Education, Camphill communities that serve people with developmental disabilities, biodynamic agriculture, a branch of holistic medicine, and schools of art, artistic movement, architecture, and speech. Although he published many more books, he always urged people to read this one, if they wanted to truly enrich their lives. In this course we will follow Steiner's detailed reasoning to develop an understanding of intuitive thinking and free will.

Homework: The book has numbers corresponding to the paragraphs in the original German. We will use these as signposts in our study. The text is written both to be informative regarding intuitive thinking, and as an experience that can be used to develop such thinking, if it is approached with careful scholarship. That requires us to digest each of the original paragraphs, and one means to do so is to write a summary sentence that states the main point of the paragraph. We thus develop a précis of his thesis that we can review, as a way to draw together his many concepts into a coherent picture.

Your summary sentences should not be a simple paraphrase of the content. Instead, they should reflect your understanding of what Steiner is trying to say within the context of the chapter. It is best if you can hand write the summaries as you are reading, rather than turning away from the book to write on a screen. The more that you can focus on the text, by eliminating outside distractions, the easier it will be to delve into it. The closer you can get to a meditative frame of mind, the better. Please write the section number with each summary sentence.

To that end, we will also be working on some meditative exercises that will reveal some aspects of consciousness. In addition to the chapter summaries, you should also write at least one question from the reading that you want to bring for discussion.

Grading: Grades will be based half on participation in the discussions, including being prepared for each class, and half on the summaries that are turned in.

Accommodation Statement

The University of Massachusetts Amherst is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for all students. If you have a documented physical, psychological, or learning disability on file with Disability Services (DS), you may be eligible for reasonable academic accommodations to help you succeed in this course. If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Academic Honesty Statement

Since the integrity of the academic enterprise of any institution of higher education requires honesty in scholarship and research, academic honesty is required of all students at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in all programs of the University. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitating dishonesty. Appropriate sanctions may be imposed on any student who has committed an act of academic dishonesty. Instructors should take reasonable steps to address academic misconduct. Any person who has reason to believe that a student has committed academic dishonesty should bring such information to the attention of the appropriate course instructor as soon as possible. Instances of academic dishonesty not related to a specific course should be brought to the attention of the appropriate department Head or Chair. Since students are expected to be familiar with this policy and the commonly accepted standards of academic integrity, ignorance of such standards is not normally sufficient evidence of lack of intent (http://www.umass.edu/dean_students/codeofconduct/acadhonesty/).

Reading Schedule:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Chapter</u>	<u>Number of Paragraphs</u>	
1/24	Intro., Preface	[22] [5]	
1/31	Chapter 1	[19]	
2/7	Chapter 2	[14]	
2/14	Chapter 3	[33]	
2/21	Chapter 4 [1] - [16]	[16]	No class - away
2/28	Chapter 4 [17] - [33]	[17]	
3/7	Chapters 5 & 6	[33] [18]	
3/14	Spring break		
3/21	Chapters 7 & 8	[38] [9]	
3/28	Chapter 9	[48]	
4/4	Chapters 10 & 11	[13] [10]	
4/11	Chapter 12	[21]	
4/18	Chapter 13	[53]	
4/25	Chapter 14, Conc.	[8] [7]	