

Course Outline

PHIL 1100, 005, Introduction to Philosophy: Ethics, Social and Political

Year and semester: 2024, Fall

Course Format: In Person, Tuesdays 6.30pm - 9.20pm, Room A334

Credits: 3

Transfer Credit: For information, visit
bctransferguide.ca

Course Description, Prerequisites, and Corequisites:

An introduction to a variety of the classic responses to the question "How should I conduct my life?" This is one of the most fundamental questions all of us must ask, and we will think about four possible answers from classical ethical theories: one should live one's life egoistically; in a way that maximizes utility; in a way that is rationally self-governed; virtuously. We will also discuss the State. States massively affect the lives of the people who live in them, and even those who live outside of them. We will think about some philosophical issues relating to these kind of power. Finally we will think about love. Some say love is everything, or that it can "conquer all." But love is also confusing, personally and philosophically. We will consider different kinds of love and what is required of romantic love, and then think about the social significance of loneliness.

This course has no prerequisites.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze an author's writing and identify their argument
- Construct and motivate their own arguments
- Articulate their thoughts in a clear philosophical manner
- Write a philosophical essay
- Provide feedback to others
- Understand classical philosophical theories of ethics
- Explain the justification of political authority and what it means to be free
- Think more clearly about love and our social obligations to others

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Office Hours: Thursdays, 1.30 - 2.45pm

Textbook and Course Materials:

All readings for this course are made available in a course pack available from the Langara bookstore, or are free and available online and are linked on the syllabus.

Assessments and Weighting:

Weekly Reading Responses (10%)

A sentence or two reflecting on the reading that week

Due before Tuesday class every week

Pass/fail

In-Class Exam (15%)

September 24th

Short-answer exam covering the concepts addressed in Module 1

2 Written Essays (15% each, 30% total)

Essay 1

Due October 8th by 11.59pm

1000 words

Pre-set topics (to be set)

Peer review session prior to submission

Essay 2

Due November 5th to receive instructor feedback OR November 12th, by 11.59pm. Essays submitted after November 5th will not receive instructor feedback.

1000 words

Pre-set topics (to be set)

Peer review session prior to submission

2 Peer Review Sessions (5% each, 10% total)

In class

Oct 8th and Nov 5th

Students will review each others' essay drafts, and provide feedback

Group Presentations (15%)

In class November 26th

Students will prepare a presentation and present an argument on any topic of their choice, and respond to audience and instructor questions

In groups of ~5

Final Exam (20%)

Details TBA

Grading:

Rubrics will be made available for each assessment

[Grades, Grade Points, & Notations](#)

Detailed Course Schedule:

Week	Topic	Reading
MODULE 1	How Should I Live?	
Week 1, Sep 3	Introductions Thinking Normatively	<i>The Best Criticism of Ethical Egoism</i> , Stephen Leach: Link here
Week 2, Sep 10	Thinking normatively continued... Utilitarianism	<i>Euthyphro</i> , Plato: Link here <i>Utilitarianism</i> , John Stuart Mill, pages 12-15 and 48-54: Link here <i>Objections to Utilitarianism</i> , Jonathan Bennett, p. 12 and p. 16: Link here
Week 3, Sep 17	Deontology	<i>Kant's Categorical Imperative</i> , BBC In Our Time Podcast: Link here <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , Immanuel Kant, chapter 1: Link here
Week 4, Sep 24	Virtue Ethics Assessment Due - In-Class Exam	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Aristotle, books I and II: Link here <i>Elucidations Podcast - Julia Annas Discusses Virtue Ethics</i> : Link here
MODULE 2	The State, Freedom, and Rebellion	
Week 5, Oct 1	Justifying the State	<i>Leviathan</i> , Thomas Hobbes, part 1, chapter 13 (link here) and part 2, chapter 17 (link here) The Social Contract, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, book 1: Link here
Week 6, Oct 8	Liberty and freedom Oct 8, peer review session Assessment Due - Essay 1 Submission	<i>On Liberty</i> , John Stuart Mill, chapters 1 and 2: Link here <i>Two Concepts of Liberty</i> , Isaiah Berlin, sections I and II: Link here <i>The Paradox of Tolerance</i> , United 4 Change: Link here
Week 7, Oct 15	The right, or the obligation, to rebel	<i>Conscience and Conviction: the Case for Civil Disobedience</i> , Kimberley Brownlee, Introduction <i>The Case for Rage: Why Anger is Essential to Anti-Racist Struggle</i> , Myisha Cherry, talk at the Hannah Arendt Centre for Politics and Humanities: Link here
Week 8, Oct 22	Privacy	<i>Losing Privacy and Living the Sound Bite Life</i> , Chelsea Rosenthal (Available on course Brightspace)
MODULE 3	Love and Happiness	
Week 9, Oct 29	What is love?	<i>Love's Bond</i> , Robert Nozick

Week 10, Nov 5	Love and envy Peer review session Assessment Due - Essay 2, 1st submission	<i>Envidio et Amo: on Envyng the Beloved</i> , Sara Protasi
Week 11, Nov 12	Loneliness Assessment Due - Essay 2, 2nd submission	<i>A Human Right Against Social Deprivation</i> , Kimberley Brownlee
Week 12, Nov 19	Sex and relationships	<i>Does Anyone Have the Right to Sex?</i> , Amia Srinivasan: Link here
Week 12, Nov 26	Assessment Due - Student Presentations	No reading

Policy

As a student at Langara, you are responsible for familiarizing yourself and complying with the following policies:

College Policies:

[Student Code of Conduct - E1003](#)

[Academic Integrity - F1004](#)

[Academic Standing - Academic Probation and Academic Suspension - E2008](#)

[Appeal of Final Grade - E2006](#)

[Concerns about Instruction - F1002](#)

[Withdrawal from Courses and Deferred Standing - E2011](#)

Course Policies:

Content Warning and Respectful Classroom Policy

In this course we will cover a number of topics, issues, and real world events that may have affected the personal lives of students taking this course and the teachers teaching it. While it is important that we be able to freely pursue academic inquiry into these issues, it is equally important we be attentive and sensitive to the different ways people might be affected by these issues and by our study of them. Academic freedom is an important right we all have, but it is also an important responsibility we all share. As a student it is your right to bring your personal and lived experiences to your studies in this course. It is also your duty to be respectful of other people's experiences, no matter how different they are from your own. At its best the study of philosophy is collaborative, constructive, and respectful of individuality. I hope that throughout this course we will all do our best to embody these norms.

Policy on Late Work

You are expected to submit your assignments by the due date. Failure to do so may result in late penalties or a fail grade for the course.

If **FOR ANY REASON** you are not able to submit your work on time **please contact me** to request an extension. Please do not send me personal medical information.

Policy on Email

I will answer all emails within 48 hours. If an issue is especially urgent, please put "URGENT" in the subject line.

If you haven't heard back from me within 48 hours please feel free to start poking me for a response.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. If you are unsure, please come and speak with me.

Policy On The Use of A.I. (ChatGPT etc.)

You are permitted to use AI to complete your assignments. This includes having AI write your essays for you. You do not need to indicate whether you have used AI in any assignment.

But **please be aware of the risks of using AI**. The risk is to your grade. It is unlikely that an AI generated essay will receive a grade of more than C-, and will often receive a lower grade. This is not because I as an instructor have a magical ability to detect AI generated essays and will not assign them higher than a C- on principle. It is because **AI software is unable to produce academically rigorous work**.

If you have further questions about using AI please come and speak with me.

Copyright

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