Philosophy 130: Philosophy and Persons

Instructor: Marcella Linn  
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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 11:15a-12:15p and by appointment  
Email: [mrusso2@luc.edu](mailto:mrusso2@luc.edu) (**Please include course and section number in subject line!!!**)

Note: You can expect a response by email **within 48 hours** (not including weekends), but I aim to respond (and often do) within 24 (again, not including weekends).

\*Please Note: Instructor Reserves the Right to Modify or Make Changes to the Syllabus\*

**Course Description**

This course is designed to give you a survey of important themes and issues surrounding the conception of a person that arise from three major areas of philosophy: Epistemology, Metaphysics, and Ethics. The guiding question of this course is, “What is a person?” To answer this question, we will be reading seminal works from the history of Western philosophy that defend views on: human understanding and knowledge, the nature of the soul, existence of God, causality, free will, and what it is to be or do good and to live a good life. Though we are studying philosophers throughout philosophy’s history, our aim is not merely to develop a familiarity with the intellectual history of philosophy, but to inquire into truth through the minds of those who have thought deeply about questions governing reality and human life.

**Course Objectives**

This course satisfies the Philosophical Knowledge requirement of the Core Curriculum.

As a result of taking this course, students will learn what an argument is and how to identify one, how to navigate a philosophical text, and how to write philosophically. This course also introduces students to major philosophical thinkers, ideas, and issues that arise when one asks what it is to be and function as a person.

**Required Texts**

1. *Philosophy: The Quest For Truth* (10th Edition) by Louis P. Pojman and Lewis Vaughn (editors) ISBN 978-0190254773

* Older editions are acceptable as long as they have ALL of the readings listed below. Note there will be page number discrepancies.

2. All other texts will be uploaded to Sakai and will need to be printed out and brought to class on the day they are assigned.

**Assignments and Grading**

*Summary*:There will be a midterm and a final exam, each worth 25% of your final grade. You will also be assigned 5 short writing assignments, 4 of which will count together for 40% of your final grade (if you do 5, the assignment with the lowest score will be dropped). All writing must be submitted to Turnitin.com to check for plagiarism. (See note on academic integrity, pp. 4-5.) Further details on submissions are below. Homework questions together count as 5% and are graded on a pass/fail basis. Lastly, participation constitutes 5% of your grade. Please see below for further details on these grade categories.

*Midterm and Final:* Midterm and Final will each be worth 25% of your final grade and each be composed of 26 questions: 22 multiple choice (.5 points each) and 4 short essay questions (3.5 points each).

*Summary and Reflection Writing Assignments:* You will be required to turn in 4 short writing assignments this semester, each approximately 2 pages and worth 10 points each. Topics are listed throughout the syllabus on days these assignments are due and further details about each paper will be discussed in class. These papers involve summarizing an important part of a text, applying the ideas outside of the classroom, and reflecting on them. There are five topics assigned. You can choose which 4 to do or do all 5 and have the lowest grade dropped. A grading rubric is available on Sakai.

*Homework Questions: Homework:* To prepare for EACH class where reading is assigned you will formulate two questions about the reading: one that is fact-based and one that is discussion-based. **A fact-based question** aims at understanding the text you read and raises a question about the meaning of a philosopher’s claim, idea, theory, or argument. It is of the form: *What does Socrates mean by X?* or *How does Socrates/Plato prove the immortality of the soul?* **A discussion-based question** aims at promoting class discussion and raises a question about how the material applies or connects to a contemporary event, personal experience, another course, or another text, film, or television show. It is of the form: *According to Aristotle, would Joffrey Baratheon (Game of Thrones) be considered a happy person?* Homework should be completed in preparation for EVERY class section that has reading assigned and will often be used in class. Along with your questions, you should write 1-5 sentences establishing the context for your question where appropriate. For instance, your 1-5 sentences might briefly summarize what happiness is for Aristotle before asking whether Joffrey Baratheon is/was a happy person. Your context sentences should either explain why you are asking the question (e.g., is there some contradiction in the text? or why it is a significant question (e.g. will answering this question address some other important issue?). These will be **randomly** collected 10 times throughout the semester and count together for 5% of your final grade. If you miss a class meeting on which homework is collected, you may make arrangements with me to make up the points **if and only if** you have documentation to excuse your absence. See note on late assignments below.

*Grading:* Assignments are graded based on the clarity of writing and accuracy of the student’s interpretation. Direct quotes are not necessary and discouraged. If used, they should not be long and should be used only when you are highlighting or commenting on an ambiguity or tension in the text. Though these assignments should not have direct quotes, you MUST include a citation for every claim you attribute to a philosopher. See the rubric for grading criteria (Sakai).

*Grading Summary:*

Points: 1 Midterm X 25 points = 25 points

1 Final X 25 points = 25 points

4 Papers X 10 points = 40 points

10 homework X .5 points = 5 points

Participation X 5 points = 5 points

Total Points = 100 points

A .934 - 1.0

A- .900 - .933

B+ .866-.899

B .834-.865

B- .800-.833

C+ .766-.799

C .734-.765

C- .700-.733

D+ .666-.699

D .600-.665

F .599 and below

*Participation:* As a field that values discourse, it is expected for you to speak up in class and express your thoughts about what is being said in the readings and whether or not you believe it is true. This requires first and foremost that you’ve read the material carefully and can refer back to it to support your claims when needed. Although I will not grade your attendance, frequent absences (missing 1/3 of class meetings or more) will influence your participation grade. There will also be in-class activities that cannot be made up outside of class and that will count towards your participation grade. These in-class assignments will not be announced ahead of time so only regular attendance will ensure you get these points. Missing one or two will not heavily impact your grade, but missing several may. The factors that influence your participation points (5% of final grade) are: coming to class prepared, speaking up during discussion or utilizing office hours, coming to class regularly, and completing all in-class work (which means, you need to be in class to complete any in-class assignment).

*Extra Credit:* You might make up some points by turning in a 5th writing assignment. Borderline grades (grades within .5 of the next highest grade) may be boosted to the higher grade only at the end of the semester and according to my discretion. You must have completed ALL assignments in order to get a grade boost (e.g. an 89.5 (B+) to a 90 (A-). Some things that may influence my decision to bump a grade up are *excellen*t class participation or evidence of significant progress throughout the semester.

All exams will be curved so that the class **average** is no lower than a B- (80%). Extra credit questions may appear on exams.

**Classroom Policies**

*Classroom Courtesy*: It is expected that everyone speaks and behaves in ways that express respect to one another as fellow classmates and human beings. Bear in mind that you will be speaking in a class of others who have different backgrounds and value systems than your own and so you should not assume everyone is familiar with or shares your assumptions. It is possible to respect others while still expressing your own point of view of what’s good or bad, right or wrong, by providing appropriate evidence for the claims you make and being willing to critically examine your own presuppositions.

*Technology*: There is no need for any electronics during class time, and so, to prevent distractions, you will not be allowed to use a computer during class. Much of what you learn will require that you are attentive to the lectures and a part of classroom discussions, both of which are hindered when there is a computer in front of you. Studies have shown that taking notes on a computer is less effective than by paper and pencil. (http://pss.sagepub.com/content/early/2014/04/22/0956797614524581.abstract,)

*Late Assignments or Missed Exams*: The writing assignments are to be turned in through Turnitin on the due date indicated on the syllabus. A writing assignment may be turned in up to two days late with a one point penalty per day late. After two days, these assignments will automatically receive a 0. Missed exams or homework due to a **documented** illness or unforeseeable circumstances such as a flight delay, family death, etc. may be made up at the instructor’s discretion. Please notify me as soon as possible when you realize that you will miss an exam or if you missed a day where homework was collected. With proper documentation, we can schedule a makeup immediately and I may accept late homework (or collect your homework for a different day).

**Academic Integrity**

The faculty and administration of Loyola University Chicago wish to make it clear that the following acts are regarded as serious violations of personal honesty and the academic ideal that binds the university into a learning community:

Submitting as one's own:

1. Material copied from a published source: print, internet, CD-ROM, audio, video, etc.  
2. Another person's unpublished work or examination material.  
3. Allowing another or paying another to write or research a paper for one's own benefit.  
4. Purchasing, acquiring, and using for course credit a pre-written paper.

The critical issue is to give proper recognition to other sources. To do so is both an act of personal, professional courtesy and of intellectual honesty. (<http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml>)

Producing academically honest work requires not only that you avoid 1-4 above, but that you ACTIVELY determine you have avoided plagiarism. This means that if you are unsure about how to cite something or unsure if something you’ve written counts as plagiarism, you should ask me before turning in any assignment. Any instance of plagiarism will at **MINIMUM** result in a grade 0 for the assignment and will be reported. Depending on the severity of the case, it may even result in an F for the course.

The following is a description of Loyola’s policy on and procedures for cases of plagiarism.

Plagiarism on part of a student in academic work or dishonest examination behavior will result minimally in the instructor assigning the grade of “F” for the assignment or examination. In addition, all instances of academic dishonesty must be reported to the chairperson of the department involved. The chairperson may constitute a hearing board to consider the imposition of sanctions in addition to those imposed by the instructor, including a recommendation of expulsion, depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct. (<http://luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml>)

**Students with Disabilities**

If you need accommodations for this course, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) office in Sullivan Center to make arrangements. You can visit their site at [www.luc.edu/sswd](http://www.luc.edu/sswd). They will provide you with the proper documentation that I will need in order to make the appropriate accommodations. The sooner this is done, the better we can assure you will get the accommodations you need.

**Student Support Sources**

* ITS HelpDesk
  + [helpdesk@luc.edu](mailto:helpdesk@luc.edu)
  + 773-508-4487
* Library
  + Subject Specialists: <http://libraries.luc.edu/specialists>
* Services for Students with Disabilities
  + <http://www.luc.edu/sswd/>
* Writing Center
  + <http://www.luc.edu/writing/>
* Ethics Hotline
  + <http://luc.edu/sglc/aboutus/>
  + 855.603.6988

**Course Schedule.** All reading should be read prior to the class meeting it is listed under.

NOTE: Bring your textbook or a printout of the text to EVERY class except on exam days.

***INTRODUCTIONS***

**8/27** Class Introduction, Syllabus, How to Read Philosophy

**8/29** Introduction to Logic and Argument

**8/31** The Value of Philosophy: *Socrates’ Apology*Reading: P&V, pp. 27-33

**9/3** \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Labor Day, No Classes\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**9/5** The Value of Philosophy: *Socrates’ Apology*Reading: P&V, pp. 34-38

**9/7** Paper 1 workshop day: How to Write Philosophy

***Unit 1: Epistemology: What is it for persons to have knowledge? What can be known?***

**9/10** Plato: The Allegory of the Cave

Reading: P&V, pp. 39-42

**Assignment 1 DUE – The examined life and Socrates’ divine mission**

**9/12** Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy*  
 Reading: Meditation One, P&V, pp. 195-198

**9/14** Descartes: *Meditations on First Philosophy*

Reading: Meditation Two, P&V, pp. 198-200

**9/17** Hume: *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

Reading: P&V, pp. 222-224

**9/19** Hume on Induction

Reading: P&V, Part 1 pp. 267-270

**9/21** Catch-up/Discussion Day

**9/24** Hume on Induction

Reading: P&V, pp. 270-276

**9/26** Feminist Epistemology: Eva Browning Cole

Reading: P&V, pp. 260-262

**9/28** Reflection Papers Discussion Day – How to Live Philosophy

**Assignment 2 DUE – Hume on the origin of ideas.**

***Unit 2: Metaphysics: What is the nature of the soul? What is personal identity? What is causation? Does God Exist? Do we have free will?***

**10/1** Aristotle on the Soul (*De Anima* II.1-4; III.4-5, Sakai)

**10/3** Plato on the Immortality of the Soul (*Phaedo* selections, Sakai)

**10/5**  Locke on Personal Identity P&V, p. 380-383

**10/8-10/9 \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***Fall Break**\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\***

**10/10** Hume on Personal Identity P&V, p. 383-386

**10/12** Review for Mid-Term

**10/15** Mid-Term Exam

**10/17** Aristotle on causality (*Physics* II.3-6 Sakai)

**10/19** Baron d’Holbach

Reading: “We Are Completely Determined,” P&V, pp. 395-400

**10/22** Augustine On the Free Choice of the Will, Book One, chs. 12-14 and Book Three, ch.1

(Sakai)

**10/24** Hume’s Compatibilism in *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*

Reading: P&V, pp. 430-432

**10/26** Catch-up/Reflection/Discussion Day

**Assignment 3 DUE – Determinism**

**10/29** Philosophy of Religion: Proofs of God’s Existence

The Cosmological Argument: Aquinas’ 5 Ways

P&V, pp. 61-63

**10/31** Philosophy of Religion: Proofs of God’s Existence

The Teleological Argument: Paley’s Watch and Watchmaker

P&V, pp. 92-94

**11/2** Philosophy of Religion: Proofs of God’s Existence

The Ontological Argument: St. Anselm and Gaunilo

P&V, pp. 103-105

***Unit 3: Ethics: What kind of life should a person live? How should we evaluate a person or act? What is the basis for value?***

**11/5** James Rachels: Morality is not Relative

P&V, pp. 446-454

**11/7** Ruth Benedict: Morality Is Relative

Reading: P&V, pp. 440-445

**11/9** Discussion/Catch-up/Reflection Day

**Assignment 4 DUE – Proof of God’s Existence.**

**11/12** Kant *The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (selections)

Reading: P&V, pp. 482-487

**11/14** Kant *The Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (selections)

Reading: P&V, pp. 487-493

**11/16** Discussion/Catch-up/Reflection Day

**11/19** John S. Mill’sUtilitarianism

Reading: *Utilitarianism,* chapters 2 & 4 (selections)

P&V, pp. 494-499

**11/21-11/24** \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*Thanksgiving Break\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

**11/26** Aristotle: On Happiness and the Proper Function of a Human Being

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* I. 1-3, 5-6 (textbook chapter numbers)

P&V, pp. 509-512

**11/28** Aristotle: On Virtue

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* II. 1-4

P&V, pp. 512-515

**11/30** Aristotle: On Virtue

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics* II. 6, 8-9

P&V, pp. 515-518

**Assignment 5 Due – Mill’s Greatest Happiness Principle**

**12/3** Virginia Held, “The Ethics of Care”  
 P&V, pp. 519-528

**12/5** Final Review

**12/7** Final Reflections

**FINAL EXAMS:**

MWF 12:35-1:25: FRI. DEC. 14, 9-11a

MWF 1:40-2:30: THURS DEC. 13, 1-3p

MWF 2:45-3:35: FRI DEC 14, 4:15p

**Note: Final exams cannot be rescheduled.**