

Philosophy 110: Human Nature
University of Oregon
Winter 2015, CRN 24862, MTWR 9:00-9:50a, Fenton 105

Instructor: Dana Rognlie
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Office: Knight Library XXX
Office Hours: Thursdays 11:00a-1:00p and by
appt.

Course Description:

This course is designed to critically acquaint students with various theories of human nature throughout the history of (Western) philosophy. What is human nature? What is the soul? Is human nature inherently good or bad? Material or immaterial? Among these questions, students will also think through, at the outset of the course, how our conceptions of human nature frame understandings of sex, gender, sexuality, race, class, ability, and so forth and how this contributes to and reinforces relations of power and oppression.

While students will never be asked to divulge personal information to each other, self-reflection and participation in class discussion are vital to one's success in this course, as well as the success of the course as a whole. Given the personal nature of the themes of this course, all participants are expected and required to agree to a code of confidentiality with regard to any personal information shared and conduct themselves in a respectful and sensitive manner so as to promote an atmosphere of openness and trust.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Knowledge of key theories of human nature throughout the Western canon;
2. A critical understanding of how canonical theories have problematically constructed and reinforced structures of power and oppression;
3. Develop an ability to apply critical theoretical thought to contemporary issues;
4. Develop critical reading, writing, and discussion skills.

Note: *There is a large amount of reading, writing, and class discussion required of you in order to be successful in this class.*

Required Texts: On Blackboard
Plato, *Republic*, trans. Grube 978-0872201361
Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Kaufmann ISBN 978-0679724629

Suggested Texts: Sophocles, *Antigone*, trans. Robert Fagles ISBN 978-0140444254

Course Requirements:

Citizenship: Quizzes, attendance and participation (20%)
Paper 1: *Antigone* explication and response; 2-3p (10%)
Paper 2: Ancients; 3-4p (20%)
Paper 3: Modernity; 4-5p (20%)
Paper 4: Final; 5-6p (30%)

Citizenship:

Beyond mandatory attendance and required reading (there will be daily reading quizzes), you have a responsibility to actively and respectfully participate in this class. You are a citizen in a learning

community and your contribution matters. This contribution can take a number of forms including speaking in class, exchanging links on our Blackboard Discussion Board, regularly attending office hours, etc. A basic rubric is as follows:

A-Exceptional: The student is prepared and has near perfect attendance (1 absence); they are recognized as a leader and consistently contribute thoughts and/or material to class that brings the discussion to a deeper level without dominating the discussion such that it is an impediment to the participation of others.

B- Very Good: The student is prepared and has very good attendance (3 absences); the student takes a very active role in discussion section, the contributions of which are both helpful and on topic.

C- Good: The student is moderately prepared (minimally has read and brought materials to class) and has good attendance (4 absences); the student participates in discussions, though inconsistently.

D-Poor: The student is not prepared for class and/or has poor attendance (no more than 6 absences), and rarely participates.

F- Failing: The student is not prepared for class and/or has poor attendance and/or is not a positive contributor to discussions.

Electronics policy: Except for those whose accessibility to the classroom requires use of such devices, electronics are **absolutely not allowed** in this classroom. Keep your phones, e-readers, laptops, etc at home or in your bag. Usage of these devices disrupts the classroom and **WILL RESULT IN A FAILED CITIZENSHIP GRADE**. All reading materials should be printed in hard-copy from the class Blackboard site.

Papers:

Philosophy papers are argumentative essays, and the papers in this course are designed to both test your knowledge of the course material as well as your ability to form a coherent argument. Successful papers will deeply engage and explicate the texts of the philosophers discussed in the course. There should be a clearly stated (or implied) thesis that has the support of reasons or warrants. Papers should be written in a reasonable font (Times New Roman 12pt, Calibri 11pt, etc) and be double-spaced. Philosophy does not have a standard format for citations, but students will be expected to utilize either MLA or Chicago Manual of Style formatting. We will go over this in class as the first paper approaches. Suggested essay topics will be distributed for all four papers, though students are encouraged to create their own topic with instructor approval. The first three papers are due at the beginning of class on their due date and the final paper is due by 5PM on the Wednesday of finals week.

All un-excused late papers will receive reduced grades (1/3 letter grade deduction per day late). Except in unusual circumstances, papers more than a week late will only be accepted for credit.

Academic Integrity:

I like to assume students are honest; do not prove me wrong. Academic integrity is a core principle of our learning community and your own education. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the University of Oregon's Student Conduct Code especially on the issue of academic integrity (<http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct.aspx>). Students who fail to comply with these policies will fail the assignment, potentially fail the course, and be reported according to university policy.

Accessibility:

It is my pedagogical goal and responsibility to students to make this class as accessible as possible. Please notify me if you foresee a hindrance to your ability to engage or complete assignments in this class. You will have an opportunity to discuss this in a required 5-minute office hour meeting with me in

the first weeks of class. I also encourage you to contact the Accessible Education Center (164 Oregon Hall; 541-346-1155; uoaec@uoregon.edu; <http://aec.uoregon.edu/about/index.html>).

Other Resources:

If you (or someone you know) have been a victim of sex-based violence (domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual harassment, etc.), know that you are not alone. I am always willing to listen and provide intellectual and institutional resources for survivors; however, I am a mandatory reporter by Oregon law and University policy.

Please know that these additional community and campus resources are available:

Sexual Assault Support Services: 541-343-7277
WomenSpace: 541-485-8232
University Counseling Center: 541-346-3227
University Health Center: 541-346-2770

Office of Affirmative Action: 541-346-3123
UO Police Department: 541-346-2919
Eugene Police Department: 541-682-5111
ASUO SafeRide: 541-346-7433

Course Schedule (subject to alteration):

Unit 1: The Ancients

Week 1

Jan. 5 Introduction to the course
In class: Nancy Tuana, "Reading Philosophy as a Woman" (11p)
6 Sophocles, *Antigone* (40p)
7 Sophocles, *Antigone* continued
8 Paper writing workshop

Week 2

12 **Paper Due: *Antigone***
Plato, *Republic* Book I (31p)
13 Plato, *Republic* Book II (27p)
14 Plato, *Republic* Book III (33p)
15 Plato, *Republic* Book IV (27p)

Week 3

19 No class: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
20 Plato, *Republic* Book V (34p)
21 Plato, *Republic* Book VI (18p) and Book VII (26p)
22 Plato, *Republic* Book VIII (27p) and Book IX (22p)

Week 4

26 Plato, *Republic* Book X (28p)
27 Aristotle, *De Anima* excerpts (10p);
Aristotle, *Generation of Animals* I and IV excerpts (12p)
28 Aristotle, *Politics* I and II excerpts (10p)
29 Paper writing workshop

Unit 2: Modernity

Week 5

Feb. 2 **Paper Due: Ancients**
In class: *Bible*, Genesis I and II (2.5p)
3 Hobbes, *Leviathan* excerpts (10p)
4 Locke, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* excerpts (8p)
5 Rousseau, *Emile* and *The Social Contract or Principles of Political Right* excerpts (7p)

		Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> excerpts (5p)
Week 6		
	9	Hegel, "Master-Slave Dialectic" (15p)
	10	Marx, "On the Jewish Question" (27p)
	11	Marx cont.
	12	Paper writing workshop
		Unit 3: (Post?)Modernity and Difference
Week 7		
	16	Paper due: Modernity In class: Nietzsche, <i>Gay Science</i> and <i>Will to Power</i> excerpts
	17	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> , Preface (8p)
	18	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> , First Essay (28p)
	19	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> , First Essay, cont
Week 8		
	23	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> , Second Essay (40p)
	24	Nietzsche, <i>Genealogy of Morals</i> , Second Essay, cont.
	25	Foucault, <i>History of Sexuality</i> excerpts (15p)
	26	Foucault, <i>History of Sexuality</i> cont.
Week 9		
March	2	Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> , "Introduction" (17p)
	3	Rosemarie Garland-Thomson, "Feminist Theory, the Body, and the Disabled Figure" (6p)
	4	Fanon, <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i> , "The Lived Experience of the Black Man" (20p)
	5	Butler, <i>Bodies that Matter</i> , "Passing, Queering" (20p)
Week 10		
	9	María Lugones, "Heterosexualism and the Colonial/Modern Gender System" (20p)
	10	Lugones cont.
	11	Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class, and Sex" (7 pages)
	12	Paper writing workshop
Finals		
	18	Final paper due 5p