

**PHIL 130-021**  
**Philosophy & Persons**  
**SPRING 2018**

**Instructor:** Daniel Skibra

**Time and Location:** T, TH 8:30 - 9:45am, Dumbach Hall, Room 123

**Contact:** email: dskibra@luc.edu

**Office Hours:** **Tues**, 10:00 - 11:00; **Fri**, 9:15 - 10:15; Crown Center 334G or 334H

## Course Description

This is the first course in the Philosophical Knowledge section of the Core Curriculum. It introduces students to the fundamental philosophical issues that bear on our understanding of persons. The unifying question is: What is a person? The course has three equally weighted components, each with its own unifying questions, namely:

- **Persons and Values.** What is value? When does something have value for a person, for instance in ethics, aesthetics, education, the environment, bioethics, and religion? What is the ground of, or basis for, value in human life? Are values culturally relative?
- **Persons and Knowledge.** What is it for persons to have knowledge, including knowledge in such areas as logic, science, morality, and religion?
- **Persons and Reality.** What exactly are persons, and how are they related to the entities acknowledged in religion (e.g., God and souls), metaphysics (e.g., substances and abstract entities), and science (e.g., matter and causal relations)?

## Course Requirements

### Assignments

Reading Quizzes: 10%

Paper 1 due **Mar 1** (Draft due **Feb 22**) (3-4 pages): 15%

Paper 2 due **April 12** (Draft due **April 5**) (3-4 pages): 15%

Paper 3 due **April 26** (2-3 pages): 10%

Mid-term 1 (**Feb 20**): 10%

Mid-term 2 (**March 29**): 10%

Final Exam: 20%

Class discussion/ participation: 10%

## Notes on assignments

Resources for writing a philosophy paper:

- <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

## Course Policies

### Attendance

You are required to attend the class meetings; attendance will be taken. However, I understand that emergencies arise, people get sick, and other factors may legitimately prevent you from coming to a particular class. Therefore, I will adopt the following attendance policy. Your grade will not be affected by up to **2** absences. You do not need to provide any kind of written excuse or justification for these absences (although you are welcome to provide them). However, more than three absences will begin to have an effect on your final grade, bringing your average down by a third of a grade for each additional day missed. *If at some point in the term you expect to miss more than this (due to a serious illness, for example), let me know as soon as you can, **before** you accumulate the absences!* It will be your responsibility to distribute your absences however you see fit. My advice: try not to use them. You never know when something comes up.

Importantly, you are responsible for the material covered in class. Any slides presented in class will be made available on Blackboard, but class time will often not be devoted to lecture, and material will not always be on the slides. There is simply no substitute for being in class.

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a learning disability that requires special arrangements for note-taking in class, essay-writing, or sitting exams, please inform Student Services (Sullivan Center) at the beginning of the semester. After doing that, please inform me by the end of the first week. Student Services will not notify me: you must approach me, and I guarantee confidentiality.

### Policy on Academic Integrity

In writing an essay, don't take a sentence from a book or website and put it into your essay without acknowledging the source. Doing so amounts to claiming the sentence or passage to be your own work. Plagiarism is cheating. It also prevents you from learning.

**Please note:** *That includes unintentional or accidental plagiarizing.*

Loyola's Principles and Policies for Academic Excellence states: "Loyola University Chicago has strict policies on incidents of plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and, in cases of the use of copyrighted material, a legal offense. Incidents of plagiarism are reported to the dean of the college in which the student is enrolled and a note is placed in the

student's file. The student receives an 'F' on the assignment and may receive an 'F' in the course. Serious or repeated incidents of plagiarism could result in permanent expulsion from the university."

If you and other student(s) prepare essays together, limit it to discussion and taking brief notes. Do not work together in writing the essay. Do not prepare for your essay by reading another student's essay, or let another student read yours when she is preparing her own. If the same sentence turns up in two students' essays, the instructor will assume that plagiarism has occurred, and both students may get an 'F' for the essay-assignment.

## **Extension Policy**

The due dates for the assignments are as they appear on the syllabus. Late assignments will not be tolerated, and will accumulate deductions of one third of a letter grade for every day the assignment is late. If you think you will need an extension for an assignment, you need to request one at least two days before the due date. Do not ask after the date has passed, or the night before the deadline.

## **In-class Technology Policy**

In this class, we will regularly engage in small group instruction and activities, as well as discussions with the whole class. Technology such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops easily become a distraction and create an obstacle to engagement during class time. For this reason, the policy of the class will be as follows. Do not use these devices during class time. Any lecture slides will be made available on the online course site, and any notes you might need to make should be taken by hand. Of course, exceptions will be made for adaptive devices. If you have a need for such a device, please consult the instructor.

## **Email/ Communication**

The best way to reach me outside class is via email. However, give me 24-48 hours to respond during the week. If you email me after 5pm on Friday, don't expect a response until Monday morning. Most of the time, I will be able to respond to you sooner than this, but please plan your emails accordingly. When there is a paper due, get all of your questions to me 48 hours before the due date.

I will answer *simple, specific* questions over email pertaining to the course material or the logistics of the course. I can also address simple interpretive questions you have with the material, or arguments you are trying out for your papers. To address anything more involved, you'll need to meet with me in office hours. (I highly encourage you to come to office hours in any event.)

## Participation

Participation in class discussion constitutes a significant part of your grade. You will be expected to attend class having done the readings and thought about them enough to discuss the arguments they make, to ask informed questions about them, and to engage with the other members of the class on these matters. Two expectations in service of these aims are worth making explicit. First, you'll need to be well-prepared, having read and thought about the assigned readings before class. Secondly, we will all need to foster a respectful, open environment where we can clarify, interpret and critically engage the philosophical issues dealt with in readings. Maintaining a respectful classroom atmosphere is crucial, and part of your responsibility.

## Required Texts

- All required readings will be posted to the online course site. You do not need to buy a book for this class.

## Reading Schedule\*

\*The readings should be completed by the date indicated. When a reading assignment is listed more than once, we will continue talking about this reading. It is *not* a new assignment.

Day	Date	Assignment	Length
TUES	Jan 16	Mill- Chapter 2 of <i>Utilitarianism</i>	18 PAGES
THURS	Jan 18	Mill- Chapter 4 of <i>Utilitarianism</i>	6 PAGES
TUES	Jan 23	Shafer-Landau- Chapter 11 of <i>Fundamentals of Ethics</i>	13 PAGES
THURS	Jan 25	Shafer-Landau- Chapter 12 of <i>Fundamentals of Ethics</i>	17 PAGES
TUES	Jan 30	Kant- section 1 of <i>Groundwork for a Metaphysics of Morals</i>	12 PAGES
THURS	Feb 1	Kant- <i>Theory and Practice</i>	12 PAGES
TUES	Feb 6	No new reading	
THURS	Feb 8	Aristotle- <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> : Book 1, Ch 7-13	21 PAGES
TUES	Feb 13	Aristotle- <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> : Book 10, Ch 6-9	20 PAGES
THURS	Feb 15	No new reading	
TUES	Feb 20	<b>Mid Term 1</b>	
THURS	Feb 22	Plato- <i>Theaetetus</i> excerpt; <b>Draft of Paper 1 due</b>	12 PAGES
TUES	Feb 27	Descartes- <i>Meditation 1</i>	5 PAGES
THURS	Mar 1	Descartes- <i>Meditation 2</i> ; <b>Paper 1 due</b>	7 PAGES
TUES	Mar 6	Spring Break - No Class	
THURS	Mar 8	Spring Break - No Class	
TUES	Mar 13	Locke- <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> , Book 2, Ch 1-4	8 PAGES
THURS	Mar 15	Locke- <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i> , Book 4, Ch 1-3	11 PAGES

Day	Date	Assignment	Length
TUES	Mar 20	Audi- <i>the Scope of Knowledge</i>	11 PAGES
THURS	Mar 22	Zagzebski <i>What is Knowledge?</i>	11 PAGES
TUES	Mar 27	No new reading	
THURS	Mar 29	<b>Mid Term 2</b>	
TUES	April 3	Plato- <i>Phaedo</i> 65a - 88a	21 PAGES
THURS	April 5	Descartes- Meditation 6; <b>Draft of Paper 2 due</b>	13 PAGES
TUES	April 10	Locke- Of Identity and Diversity, from <i>An Essay Concerning Human Understanding</i>	29 PAGES
THURS	April 12	Sider- Personal Identity; <b>Draft of Paper 2 due</b>	15 PAGES
TUES	April 17	Hume- Sec 7 of <i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>	14 PAGES
THURS	April 19	Hume- Sec 8 of <i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i>	18 PAGES
TUES	April 24	Augustine- <i>On the Free Choice of the Will</i> , Book 3 excerpts	12 PAGES
THURS	April 26	Boethius- excerpt from <i>the Consolation of Philosophy</i> ; <b>Paper 3 due</b>	
SAT	May 5	<b>Final Exam: 9:00 - 11:00 am (sorry)</b>	