

INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy 11; Fall 2014-15; UC Santa Cruz
Associate Professor Rasmus Grønfeldt Winther
Office: Cowell Annex 104

Office Hours: Tuesdays 4 – 5:30 pm and by appointment (N.b., meeting sign-up required).

Email: rgw@ucsc.edu

Webpage (teaching): <http://www.rgwinther.com/Teaching.html>

There is an [eCommons](#) page for this course.

Class Meetings

TuTh 6-7:45 pm; Earth&Marine B206

FINAL SYLLABUS

TAs

David Donley ddonley@ucsc.edu (Sections H, I, and L)

Jared Gampel jgampel@ucsc.edu (Sections C, D, and F)

Sean Hunter ghunter@ucsc.edu (Sections E, G, and J)

Ryan Lee rlee@ucsc.edu (Sections A, B, and K)

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I. COURSE CONTENT

Philosophy is Everywhere. Would a just, fair, and life-giving society always treat women and men the same way? If not, why not and in which contexts would there be differential treatment? Is science and technology the road to objective knowledge and freedom for all, or is it an oppressive tool used by those in power? How does and should science even work and in which ways might it progress? How should we teach our children? Is the abstract curriculum or personal exploration by the student more important? Whether we talk about gender and sex roles, science in society, or pedagogy, philosophical *questions* percolate up, and philosophical *tools* become useful in our quest for personal and social understanding of complex and urgent matters.

This course is different from other “Introduction to Philosophy” courses, which tend to be cast in one of the following two molds.

- (1) *Problems of Philosophy*. Problems are abstracted out of the flow of experience and addressed on their own terms. This strategy has the strength of identifying important problems such as mind vs. body, a priori vs. empirical knowledge, free will vs. determinism, and the issue of truth. But it also has the weakness of examining these problems (mostly) without reference to personal experience and social justice.
- (2) *History of Philosophy*. Philosophical matters are presented via the “great men” of philosophy. This strategy has the advantage of pinpointing subtle developments and analyses in the history of philosophy, by among the most creative philosophers in Western culture. However, it also has the disadvantage of too-easily turning into merely close readings of difficult texts whose analysis requires training beyond introductory courses, and of booting non-Western or female philosophers and thinkers out of the philosophical canon.

We shall try to keep the best of both these two molds, by locating important problems of philosophy, and placing some of these problems in their appropriate historical context. We shall also avoid the scholastic and overly abstract tendencies of these two kinds of courses, focusing instead on *your* lived experience. Recall this course’s motto: “Philosophy is Everywhere.”

Aims

This course has three main aims:

1. By engaging with four influential books, supplementary materials, and treating your own experience critically, you shall learn to *recognize often implicit philosophical questions* (“why...?”, “what if...?”) in three domains: sex and gender (cf. Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex*), science and society (cf. Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*), and pedagogy (cf. Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*).
2. Teach you the *philosophical tools* of
 - a. conceptualization,
 - b. critique,
 - c. counterfactual reasoning,
 - d. assumption archaeology,
 - e. value and ideology exploration (etc.)
 (Bertrand Russell’s *The Problems of Philosophy* is a useful resource for learning some of these tools.)
3. Challenge you, the student, to apply the philosophical tools you learn in this course to *other* areas of your experience, both within academia and beyond.

Methods

We will achieve these goals by asking you to be seriously committed to this class. This will include (i) doing all the reading, (ii) *turning off* all cell phones, computers, and access to social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.) while in the classroom (lecture or section), and (iii) engaging directly each other, your TAs, and the professor to challenge yourselves with difficult and urgent matters. I implore you to try to take notes by hand, the “old world” way – you can reformulate those into a Word doc later. Dare turn off your computer. The classroom learning process will involve a mix of dialogue, lectures, video clips, journal writing, small group discussion, and random calls.

Evaluation

The extent to which you achieve the aims via the above methods will be evaluated by your TAs and professor through

1. 4 short (one-page) bi-weekly **papers** (30% of your grade) (Due at the beginning of class on October 14, 28, November 18, December 2; prompts uploaded to eCommons at least 7 days before the due date; returned in section the week after the due date),
2. a take-home **midterm** (25% of your grade) (Due at the beginning of class on November 13; uploaded to eCommons by November 6),
3. 1 longer 3-5 page **paper** (30% of your grade) (Due at the beginning of the last day of class, on December 11; uploaded to eCommons by November 26),
4. classroom and peer group **participation** (15% of your grade).

There is no final in this course.

+ **All assignments are mandatory.** Your assignment will drop by one full letter grade for every day it is late. Your final grade will also drop by one full letter grade if you miss an assignment.

+ **Attendance is mandatory.** Attendance will be taken at every class and section. Although I do NOT recommend that you do so, you may miss up to two classes or sections, no questions asked. The third

class or section missed requires a serious medical reason, or your final grade will drop a full letter grade. Missing more than three classes or sections results in failing the course.

II. TEXTS

The four **required texts** for this course can be purchased at *Literary Guillotine* (204 Locust St, Santa Cruz, CA 95060):

- de Beauvoir, Simone. 2011 (1949). *The Second Sex*. Introduction by Judith Thurman. New York: Vintage. (**Henceforth: SSex**)
- Freire, Paulo. 2008 (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. 30th Anniversary edition, with an introduction by Donaldo Macedo. New York: Continuum Press. (**Henceforth: PO**)
- Kuhn, Thomas. 2012 (1962). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 50th Anniversary Edition, with an introduction by Ian Hacking. Chicago: Chicago University Press. (**Henceforth: SSR**)
- Russell, Bertrand. 2009 (1912). *The Problems of Philosophy*. Las Vegas, Nevada: IAP. (**Henceforth: PPhil**)

Although they are not required for this course, two highly recommended “Introduction to philosophy” book series are:

1. *Very Short Introduction* series:
<http://www.oup.com/us/catalog/general/series/VeryShortIntroductions/?view=usa>
2. *Cambridge Companion* series:
<http://cco.cambridge.org/collection?id=philosophy-and-religion>

You can all read any *Very Short Introduction* rather quickly and efficiently. You will learn a lot. The *Cambridge Companion* to *X* are more involved; they are the Porsches of the secondary literature on particular philosophers. Almost all the articles in the *Cambridge Companion* series will be reliable and informative, even if a bit complex. Good luck!

Finally, when in doubt, consult *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*!
<http://plato.stanford.edu/>

III. WRITING ADVICE

Writing is essential to our craft as philosophers. Your writing can always improve. In addition to *A Rulebook for Arguments*, here are some relevant online resources. Read and enjoy.

1. Guidelines for philosophical writing:
<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>
<http://www.public.asu.edu/~dportmor/tips.pdf>
<http://www.hps.cam.ac.uk/research/wp.html>
2. Guidelines for essay writing, in general:
<http://www.westmont.edu/~work/material/writing.html>

3. Oxford English Dictionary. You have online to this extraordinary resource at:

<http://www.oed.com.oca.ucsc.edu/>

4. “Politics and the English Language.” Please read this funny and useful essay by George Orwell (author of *1984*) here:

<http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/patee.html>

5. From the inimitable Kurt Vonnegut:

<http://kmh-lanl.hansonhub.com/pc-24-66-vonnegut.pdf>

IV. COMMUNICATION

Please ask all questions about the content or format of the course *during classtime*. If you’re wondering about X, almost certainly some of your peers also will be. A non-asked question is a lost teaching opportunity and potentially a question never answered! We’ll have “open questions” session for a few minutes during every class. Please consult my webpage (teaching) for my policy regarding student emails.

V. TUTORING

[Via Sharon Castro, LSS]

Learning Support Services (LSS) offers many academic programs to UCSC students. One of these programs is course-specific tutoring that is available to all UCSC students. Students meet in small groups (up to 4 people per group) led by a tutor. Students are eligible for up to 2 hours of tutoring per week per course and may sign-up for tutoring at <https://eop.sa.ucsc.edu/OTSS/tutorsignup/>. All of the tutors hired are current UCSC undergraduate students who have previously taken the course, have received a B or better, and have been recommended by a UCSC faculty member in the appropriate academic discipline. The following student has been hired to support Phil 11:

Andrea McDade (amcdade@ucsc.edu)

VI. STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you qualify for classroom accommodations because of a disability, please submit your Accommodation Authorization Letter from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) to me, after class or in office hours, **as soon as possible**, preferably within the first week of the Quarter. Contact DRC by phone at 831-459-2089 or by email at drc@ucsc.edu for more information.

VII. WARNING

Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Please consult:

http://www.ucsc.edu/academics/academic_integrity/index.html

VIII. WEEK-BY-WEEK READINGS

N.B. *The exact assigned readings are subject to change. Any such changes will be announced during lecture and on eCommons.*

Week 1. (October 7 and 9). **Problems & Tools**

T Oct. 7. **PPhil** Chps. 14-15 + Bibliographic note (pp. 141-163)

Th Oct. 9. **PPhil** Chps. 1-3 (pp. 7-36)

Week 2. (October 14 and 16) **Problems & Tools**

T Oct. 14. Lecture on “Logic and Language”

Reading:

PPhil Chps. 6-8 (pp. 60-90)

Ayer, A.J. 1971 (1936). *Language, Truth, and Logic*. London: Penguin; Chapter 2 “The Function of Philosophy,” pp. 30-47.

<http://www.rgwinther.com/Ayer1936LanguageTruthandLogicCh2TheFunctionofPhilosophy.pdf>

Th Oct 16. “The Knife and the One”; “The Triangle Model of Critical Thinking”; “Steps to an Assumption Archaeology” by Professor Winther (eCommons)

Week 3. (October 21 and 23) **Sex & Gender**

T Oct. 21. Guest lecture by Jocelyn Hoy, UC Santa Cruz.

Reading:

SSex “Introduction,” pp. 3 - 17; “Biological data,” pp. 44 - 48; 2nd Vol Introduction, p. 279; “Childhood,” p. 283; “The Mother,” pp. 524 - 535; 538-39; 554; “The Woman in Love,” pp. 683-708.

Th Oct. 23. **SSex** “The Independent Woman,” pp. 721-725; 735-751; “Conclusion,” pp. 753 - 766.

Week 4. (October 28 and 30) **Sex & Gender**

T Oct. 28. Lecture on “Analytic Metaethics”

Reading:

O'Neill, Onora. 1987a. “Abstraction, Idealization, and Ideology in Ethics.” In *Moral Philosophy and Contemporary problems*, edited by J. D. G. Evans, pp. 55-69, Cambridge University Press.

<http://www.rgwinther.com/ONeill1987AbstractionIdealizationandIdeologyinEthics.pdf>

Williams, Bernard. 1986. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*. Harvard University Press; Chapter 5 “Styles of Ethical Theory,” pp. 71-92.

<http://philosophy.rutgers.edu/dmdocuments/Williams,%20ELP5.pdf>

Th Oct. 30. Lecture on “Objectification and Pornography in Critical Perspective”

Reading:

Longino, Helen. 1980. “Pornography, Oppression, and Freedom: A Closer Look.” In *Take Back the Night. Women on Pornography*, edited by Laura Lederer, pp. 40-54, New York: William Morrow.

<http://www.redwoods.edu/instruct/jjohnston/Philosophy10/CaseStudies/PornographyOppressionFreedom.pdf>

Nussbaum, Martha. 1995. Objectification. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 24: 249-291.

<http://www.mit.edu/~shaslang/mprg/nussbaumO.pdf>

Week 5. (November 4 and 6) **Science & Society**

T Nov. 4. **SSR** Chps. 1-5 (pp. 1-51)

Th Nov 6. **SSR** Chps. 6-9 (pp. 52-110)

Week 6. (November 11 and 13) **Science & Society**

T Nov. 11. No class, *Veterans Day*

Th Nov. 13. **SSR** Chps. 10-13 + Postscript (pp. 111-210)

Week 7. (November 18 and 20) **Science & Society**

T Nov. 18. Lecture on “Minds & Machines.”

Reading:

Turing, Alan. 1950. Computing Machinery and Intelligence. *Mind* 59: 433-460. (Skip Section 5)

<http://www.loebner.net/Prizef/TuringArticle.html>

Harnad, Steven. 2012. Alan Turing and the “Hard” and “Easy” Problem of Cognition: Doing and Feeling. In *Turing100: Essays in Honour of Centenary Turing Year 2012*.

<http://eprints.soton.ac.uk/340293/1/harnad-huma-turingessay.pdf>

Th Nov. 20. Guest lecture by Michael “Doc” Edge, Stanford U:

“Talking about Race: Geneticists, Philosophers, the Media, and the People”

Reading (very short pieces):

Wade, Nicholas. May 9, 2014. What Science Says About Race and Genetics. *Time Magazine*.

<http://time.com/91081/what-science-says-about-race-and-genetics/>

Orr, H. Allen. June 5, 2014. Stretch Genes. *The New York Review of Books*.

<http://www.nybooks.com/articles/archives/2014/jun/05/stretch-genes/>

Coop, Graham, Eisen, Michael B., Nielsen, Rasmus, Przeworski, Molly, Rosenberg, Noah. August 8, 2014. Letters: ‘A Troublesome Inheritance.’ *The New York Times Book Review*.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/10/books/review/letters-a-troublesome-inheritance.html>

Week 8. (November 25; November 27 = Thanksgiving) **Pedagogy**

T Nov. 25. **PO** Preface + Chapter 1 (pp. 35-69)

Week 9. (December 2 and 4) **Pedagogy**

T Dec. 2. **PO** Chps. 2-3 (pp. 69-124)

T Dec. 4. **PO** Chp. 4 (pp. 125-183)

Week 10. (December 9 and 11)

T Dec. 9. Dewey, John. 1902. *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

www.munseys.com/diskeight/chid.pdf

Th Dec. 11. Wrap-up and final dialogue.