

Philosophy 2994, Topics: Socially Engaged Philosophy, Fall 2013

Time and Place: TR, 1:30-3:10 PM; Whitby Hall, Room 204B

Instructor: Susan Hawthorne

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Teaching Assistant: Cody Flaherty

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Course description

Some philosophy is otherworldly. But there is also a strong tradition, going back at least to the time of Socrates, in which philosophy asks questions about the “real world” and engages with it, offering challenges, inspiring change, or actively working toward change. We will read historical and modern literature in this tradition, and we will be socially engaged ourselves, through self-designed civic engagement projects, and through reflection on what philosophy can offer the world, and what real-world challenges can offer to philosophy.

Course Goals

This course aims to help you gain academic skills, including:

- Analyzing difficult ideas and texts,
- Creative, reflective, and critical thinking about philosophical issues,
- Thoughtful and open-minded discussion of controversial issues, and
- Argumentative writing

It also aims to help you relate your academic knowledge to real world applications and to help you develop practical and citizenship skills, including the experience and skills needed to:

- Make a difference in your community
- Engage the public in an issue that is important to you.
- Relate the philosophical theories learned in class to your own life and the lives of other people.
- Raise questions about the ways in which your own life and the lives of other people challenge or corroborate philosophical theories.
- Learn more about specific social issues.
- Defend your own views on social issues.
- Take a project from start to finish.

Resources

Please purchase the following text:

Grube, G. M. A. (Transl.), John M. Cooper (Ed.): *Plato: Five Dialogues*, ed. 2. Indianapolis, Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2002

All other readings will be posted on D2L. *Please bring a hard copy of assigned material to each class session.* I will also post assignments, the syllabus, and grades on D2L, and you will hand in your assignments to the D2L dropbox.

Evaluation

Grades will be based on a standard scale in which A- and A grades require 90+ %; B-, B, and B+ require 80+%, etc.

Assignments have the following weights:

Project: 100 points (see civic engagement project for components)

Proposal: 10 points

Reflections: 6 points each; 11 required = 66 points total

Participation: 34 points

Paper 1: 20 points

Paper 2: 20 points

Paper 3: 25 points

Final reflection: 25 points

TOTAL: 300 points

IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING DUE DATES: All assignments must be handed in on time. I will not accept late reflections. I will accept papers late, but they will lose 2 points immediately after the start of class on the due date and an additional 4 points each week, to a maximum loss of 50% of the possible points. For example, if you hand in Paper 1 on the due date after class has begun, it loses 2 points. If you hand it in 6 days late, it loses 6 points. If you hand it in 3 weeks late, it will lose 10 points, or half the 20 possible, off whatever score it would have earned. For example, a B paper 3 weeks late would receive 7 rather than 20 points. It is very important that you finish your civic engagement project and portfolio on time, as you will be presenting your results in class. The class structure will help you plan ahead for this.

If you need an extension because of individual circumstances, we will discuss whether granting you an extension is fair to those who complete their assignments on time.

More about the project

Please see the civic engagement project handout.

More about the proposal

Please see the civic engagement project handout.

More about the reflections

Your reflections are a learning tool for you. Each will be your response to a question about the readings. I will post the question on D2L the week before it is due. Upload your responses to D2L before the start of class; this will help you prepare for discussion.

Entries should be at least 300 words long (about one full double-spaced page). They should *demonstrate that you have (1) read and (2) thought about the readings*. Reflections grades are based on clarity and completeness, as well as on demonstrating #1 and #2. You may choose to improve your grade by completing all 13 possible reflections and dropping the lowest scores, but no entry can be handed in late for credit.

More about class participation

Your participation grade takes two general criteria into account:

- 1) Quality – Participation does not just mean raising a hand and speaking. The quality makes a big difference, and the goal is to ensure that you are absorbing and ready and able to discuss and analyze the principles raised in readings and class.
- 2) Quantity and consistency – Usually, the more actively you participate, the better, as long as the quality is there and you participate consistently throughout the course.

In addition, I will consider the following factors:

- Preparedness (was it clear you had studied the day's assignments?)
 - Engagement (did you engage with the materials and other students, or did you remain at the periphery of the class discussion or raise off-topic issues?)
 - Small group contribution (did you contribute meaningfully, sensitively, and appropriately in small group discussions?)
 - Non-dominance/non-monopolization of conversation (did you allow others to speak/contribute?)
 - Respect (did you show respect for all individuals in the class, e.g., not interrupt or talk over others?)
 - Voluntariness of participation (did you volunteer or did I have to ask you to participate?)
 - Sensitivity (did you show sensitivity to others in the class, e.g., use non-sexist, non-racist, non-ageist, non-homophobic language?)

Attendance

Class attendance is important because hearing different views about the issues/readings helps you develop and defend a deeper understanding of the material. For that reason, missing more than two classes decreases your grade. The third and fourth missed classes subtract 5 points each from your total.* Missing five or more classes is grounds for failing the course.

**If individual circumstances require you to miss class, we will discuss whether granting you an exception is fair to those who attend class regularly.*

More about Papers 1-3, final reflection

The papers offer you an opportunity to reason about the themes of three class units: challenge and critique, analysis and recommendations, and personal choices. The final reflection is your chance to consider your civic engagement project in the light of what you have learned in class. Papers 1 and 2 will be about 3 pages each; Paper 3 and your final reflection will be about 4 pages each. I will clarify expectations for each of these as we approach the due dates.

Our time in class

It's my observation that students who are using laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc., in class are often not attending to what is happening in class. This wastes that student's class time and—even more importantly—distracts and disrespects classmates and me. Snacking (other than beverages) during class has similar effects, unless you bring enough for everyone to share. So: *Turn off the electronics for the time you are in class. * And fortify yourself before class starts, unless you're bringing treats for all.* Don't worry, we'll have breaks so you can check your devices and fill your stomachs!

**If there is some reason you must use or have access to electronics in class, please let me know why, in writing. Include your plan for avoiding distractions to you and other students.*

O'Neill Center for Academic Development

The Writing/Reading Center offers free one-on-one assistance with your papers. Trained peer tutors are available during drop-in hours throughout the semester, and they can help you in any stage of the writing process, from brainstorming to writing the final draft. Workshops, handouts, and resources on a variety of topics, such as MLA and APA style, thesis construction, and grammar/punctuation rules are also available for you.

The Writing/Reading Center is located in the O'Neill Center for Academic Development in the lower level of the CdC. Drop in hours and more information can be found at: <http://minerva.stkate.edu/offices/academic/oneill.nsf> or by calling the O'Neill Center and 651-690-6563.

For students with disabilities

Saint Catherine University values diversity and inclusion. The University recognizes that disability is an aspect of diversity. Our goal is to create learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive and welcoming. If there is an aspect of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment or achievement related to your disability, please notify me as soon as possible. Students are also welcome to contact Lisa King or Patty Wallway in Resources for Disabilities in the O'Neill Center, # 651-690-6563 for further information about academic adjustments or accommodations.

Academic integrity

St. Catherine University assumes that all students strive to attain the highest level of academic writing and academic honesty. Academic integrity is important for many reasons. Fairness among students, responsibility for your own learning, and giving credit

to others are several of these. It also involves learning academic norms for citing others' words and ideas, and for avoiding plagiarism. See the student handbook, Le Guide, for basics. To help you assure the proper use of citations, St. Kate's provides Grammarly. All students can set up a free account. See the *Grammarly Help Guide* [<https://docs.google.com/a/stkate.edu/viewer?a=v&pid=sites&srcid=c3RrYXRILmVkdXxoZWxwLWd1aWRlc3xneDoyZTg5ZTU4NTgyNDBjM2E3&pli=1>] for set-up and use instructions. At a minimum, any plagiarized assignment receives a 0. Other penalties may also apply.

Class readings and assignments. All readings except Plato are posted on D2L.

	Unit	Class	Reading Due	Writing Due
Sept 5	Intro			
Sept 10	Unit 1: Challenge & critique		Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i> ; CE project guidelines, D2L; Partners 2013, D2L	
Sept 12			Plato, <i>Apology</i>	Reflection 1
Sept 17		NO CLASS; Meet with Hawthorne in Whitby 208 for project OK.	None	Draft Proposal
Sept 19			Davis	Final proposal Reflection 2
Sept 24		<i>Paper writing</i>	Elliott	
Sept 26		<i>Chasing Ice</i> Screening and discussion, 7 PM, extra credit	Gardiner; Documentary, <i>Chasing Ice</i>	Reflection 3
Oct 1		Part 1, <i>Examined Life</i> , in class	Singer	Reflection 4
Oct 3		Part 2, <i>Examined Life</i> , in class	None	Paper 1
Oct 8	Unit 2: Analysis, recommendations		Haslanger	
Oct 10			Thomas	Reflection 5
Oct 15		NO CLASS; required meeting with Flaherty re project check-in		
Oct 17			Kant	Reflection 6
Oct 22			Nussbaum	
Oct 24			Sandel	Reflection 7

Oct 29		Group work, example	None	
Oct 31		E-portfolio intro	None	
SUNDAY Nov 3				Paper 2
Nov 5	Impairment, disability example		Asch, Greely	Reflection 8
Nov 7			Steinbock	Reflection 9
Nov 12	Unit 3: Other forms of engagement		Addams, Hull House VIII; Modern Lear	
Nov 14			Frodeman	Reflection 10
Nov 19			Alcoff, Hale	
Nov 21		NO CLASS; required meeting with Flaherty re project wrap-up		
Nov 26	Unit 4: Personal choices		Thoreau	Reflection 11
Nov 28		NO CLASS; Thanksgiving		
Dec 3			Lichtenberg; Chakraborty	Reflection 12
Dec 5			Tiberius	Reflection 13
MON Dec 9				Final reflection Portfolio
Dec 10			None	Student presentations
Dec 12			None	Student presentations
Dec 19		No class during exam period; <i>no final exam</i>	--	Paper 3

References for readings posted on D2L

Alcoff, Linda: The problem of speaking for others. *Cultural Critique* 1991-1992; 20 (Winter); 5-32

Asch, Adrienne. Prenatal diagnosis and selective abortion: a challenge to practice and policy." *American Journal of Public Health*. 89, 1999: 1649-1657.

Bradley, Ann: Why Shouldn't Women Abort Disabled Fetuses? *Living Marxism*. 82, September 1995. Also at http://www.informinc.co.uk/LM/LM82/LM_82_Taboos.html

Chakraborty, Aditya: The woman who early died making your iPad. *The Guardian* 2013; August 5. Accessed August 29, 2007. Available at <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/aug/05/woman-nearly-died-making-ipad>

Davis, Angela Y.: Racialized punishment and prison abolition, in Lott, Tommy T. and John P. Pittman (Eds.): *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*. Malden, MA, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 360-369

Elliott, Carl: Making a killing. *Mother Jones* 2010; Sept-Oct, pp. 54-63

Frodeman, Robert, Adam Briggle & J. Britt Holbrook: Philosophy in the age of neoliberalism. *Social Epistemology* 2012; 26(3-4):311-330

Gardiner, Stephen M.: A perfect moral storm: climate change, intergenerational ethics, and the problem of corruption, in Gardiner, Stephen M., Simon Caney, Dale Jamieson, Henry Shue (Eds.), *Climate Ethics: Essential Readings*. New York, Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 87-98

Greely, Henry T: Get ready for the flood of fetal gene screening. *Nature* 2011: 469 (January 20): 289-291

Hale, Jacob: Suggested rules for non-transsexuals writing about transsexuals, transsexuality, transsexualism, or trans _____. <http://sandystone.com/hale.rules.html>, Accessed August 28, 2013

Haslanger, Sally: Oppressions: racial and other, in Michael P. Levine, Tamas Pataki (Eds.), *Racism in Mind*. Ithaca, NY, Cornell University Press, 2004, pp. 97-123. Accessed August 29, 2013. Available at <http://www.mit.edu/%7Eshaslang/papers/SHraceopp.pdf>

John Paul II (Pope), The unspeakable crime of abortion, from *Evangelium Vita*, Encyclical Letter, August 16, 1993, in Bonnie Steinbock, Alex J. London, John D Arras (Eds.), *Ethical Issues in Modern Medicine*, Ed. 8. New York, McGraw-Hill, 2013, pp. 543-545

Kant, Immanuel: *Toward Perpetual Peace*, parts I and II, in *Practical Philosophy: Cambridge Edition of the Works of Immanuel Kant*, Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 1998 [1795], pp. 317-331.

Lichtenberg: Absence and the unfond heart: why people are less giving than they might be, in Deen K. Chatterjee (Ed.), *The Ethics of Assistance: Morality and the Distant Needy*. Cambridge, UK, Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 75-97

Nussbaum, Martha: Women's capabilities and social justice. *Journal of Human Development* 2000; 1(2): 219-247

<http://philosophy.uchicago.edu/faculty/files/nussbaum/Women's%20Capabilities%20and%20Social%20Justice.pdf>, Accessed August 27, 2013

Sandel, Michael J.: Morality and the liberal ideal, in *Public Philosophy: Essays on Morality in Politics*. Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2005, pp. 147-155

Singer, Peter: Famine, affluence, and morality. *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 1972: 1(3): 229-243

Thomas, Laurence M.: Self-respect, fairness, and living morally, in Lott, Tommy T. and John P. Pittman (Eds.): *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*. Malden, MA, Blackwell Publishing, 2003, pp. 293-305

Thoreau, Henry David: *On the Duty of Civil Disobedience*, 1849. Available at <http://www.ibiblio.org/ebooks/Thoreau/Civil%20Disobedience.pdf>, Accessed August 29, 2013.

Tiberius, Valerie: Value commitments and the balanced life. *Utilitas* 2005; 17(1): 24-45