

PHIL 120 Intro to Ethics



Instructor: Professor Josh DiPaolo

Student Office Hours: Tu/Th 9-9:55am & By Appointment

My Office: Humanities (H) 311-C

Tech Support: Student Help Desk (657) 278-8888 or StudentITHelpDesk@fullerton.edu

Spring 2021

Email: jdipaolo@fullerton.edu

Class: Tu/Th 11:30-12:45 H521

Course Description

Should we take down confederate monuments? Is eating meat ethical? Should people lose their jobs and be shamed for making hurtful jokes on social media? When does a punishment fit the crime? Is it ethical to prevent your children from overcoming a disability? Should schools and neighborhoods be integrated to alleviate the costs of racism and diminish the harms of racial segregation? In this class, we will address these and many other ethical questions.

Note about Philosophy: Philosophy classes differ from other kinds of classes. You will be a **truth-seeker** in this class, **not a mere information consumer**: you will try to answer the questions raised in the course through reason and argument, rather than just learning what others have thought. This means I expect you to play an **active** role in class discussions.

Learning Objectives: In this course, you will:

- Search for complexity and plausibility where you expect simplicity and implausibility.
- Question arguments for conclusions with which you agree.
- Develop a disposition for finding the philosophical in the familiar.
- Uncover philosophical questions about your own discipline.
- Experience the social side of philosophical inquiry.
- Develop important intellectual virtues (e.g., humility and honesty).
- Learn what philosophers have said about some important philosophical problems.

Texts: All readings will be freely available on Canvas. Please bring hard or digital copies to class.

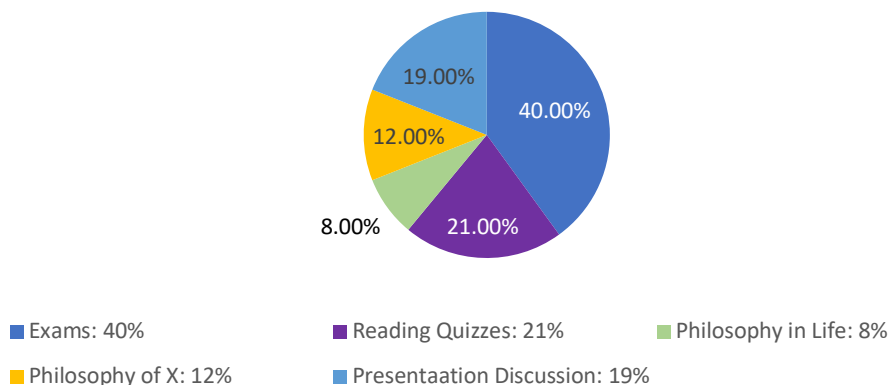
GE Requirement

This course satisfies the **C.2 Introduction to Humanities** GE Requirement. To earn GE credit for this course, you must earn a grade of **D or higher**.

Students taking courses in subarea C.2 shall:

- a. Cultivate their intellectual reasoning skills, expand their capacity for creative imagination, develop their reasonable moral sensibilities, and increase their capacity for sensitive engagement through studying great works of human imagination and reason (which are to be primarily, although not exclusively, written texts and literature).
- b. Understand how the humanities have contributed to the development of culture, including the comparative study of the humanities in diverse cultures.
- c. Understand how the humanities have sought to provide answers to complex problems facing humanity, including the relationship of the self to culture and the natural world, the nature of moral and legal obligations, and the meaning and purpose of human existence.

Grading Policy



Exams (x2)	200 points
Reading Quizzes (x9)	108 points
Philosophy in Life Post (x2)	40 points
Philosophy of X Assignment	60 points
Presentation Discussion	92 points
Total	500 points

Grade Changers

Attendance: If you miss 3 or more classes, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade.

Participation: 25 points will be deducted from your final grade if you do not regularly participate or if you are distracting in class.

A+	98-100%	490-500 Points
A	92-97%	460-489 Points
A-	90-91%	450-459 Points
B+	88-89%	440-449 Points
B	82-87%	410-439 Points
B-	80-81%	400-409 Points
C+	78-79%	390-399 Points
C	72-77%	360-389 Points
C-	70-71%	350-359 Points
D+	68-69%	340-349 Points
D	62-67%	310-339 Points
D-	60-61%	300-309 Points
F	0-59%	0-299 Points

Assignment Descriptions

Attendance: Attendance is required because you won't do well in this course if you don't attend. If you have 3 or more unexcused absences, your final grade will be reduced by one letter grade. Absences due to sickness are excused. We do not want students coming to class if you are unwell. Just be honest. I will trust you.

To find out what you missed when you miss class, come to office hours or ask:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Exams: You will take two exams. Exams test your understanding of course content, not your opinion. They assess your grasp of the readings and in-class discussions, provide you with more opportunities to reflect on the course material, and allow you to demonstrate what you've learned.

Reading Quizzes: There are only 10 philosophical readings assigned in this class. On average, that's less than one reading per week. Reading these few texts is required. We will discuss important points from the readings in class, but to learn and be prepared for class, you'll need to understand these articles. To help you keep up with the readings, there will be 10 reading quizzes—one for each assigned reading. These will be short 4-5 question quizzes. The plan is for you to take them on Canvas during class. So please bring a device (e.g., tablet, smart phone, or laptop) that will allow you to access the quiz during class. Quizzes will be password protected; you will only be given the password if you are in class. Your lowest quiz score will be dropped.

Philosophy in Life Posts: To help you get in the habit of approaching your life philosophically, you will complete two "philosophy in life" posts in the discussion forums on Canvas. For these assignments, you will write about connections between your life and what you've learned or thought about in this course. You will also read and comment on some of your peers' posts.

Philosophy of X Assignment: Whatever your major, there are philosophical questions in your field. For this assignment, you will uncover some of those questions and discuss your findings with the class. **Attendance is mandatory during these class periods.**

Presentation Discussions: During the last weeks of the semester, you will tackle traditional ethical issues. You will be split into 10-12 groups. Each group will read 2-3 assigned articles on a relevant ethical issue, and the groups will teach the class the arguments for and against the relevant positions on their presentation date. As our "experts," the groups will briefly discuss the issue amongst themselves in front of the class. Then the discussion will open up to the rest of the class. **Attendance is mandatory during these class periods.**

Participation: Participating in class benefits you and others. We often learn while we attempt to express our thoughts. And since you have a unique perspective, everyone else in the class learns when you share that perspective. Here are **some ways to participate**:

1. Ask questions about the readings or lectures.
2. Answer questions when asked.
3. Contribute your perspective to a discussion.
4. Raise objections to arguments.
5. Mention a relevant life experience at an appropriate time.
6. Discuss course material with me outside of class.
7. Participate during small group activities.
8. Complete in-class writing assignments.

Extra Credit Assignment: You may complete one extra credit assignment in this class to improve your grade. You can choose **one** of these assignments:

- **Agree with the Conclusion, Disagree with the Argument:** One lesson I want you to learn about logical reasoning is that there are bad arguments for true conclusions. So even if we agree with an argument's conclusion, we must still scrutinize the argument itself. For this assignment, you will talk with likeminded people about some belief you share. You will ask these people why they think this belief is true. Once you hear an argument you disagree with, you'll explain that argument in writing and explain why you think the argument is flawed even though you think the conclusion is true.
- **Your Culture and Your Beliefs:** What is some philosophical, political, or moral belief you have that differs from your parents? What made you think differently? What is some philosophical belief you have that is the same as your parents? Do you believe it just because they raised you to believe it or for some other reason? Answer these questions in detail.
- **Philosophy in Art:** Find a passage in a poem, novel, play, song, or some visual piece of art that relates to course material. Provide the passage, a link to the song, a picture of the visual art, etc., and explain how it relates to the course. Submitting your own art as part of this assignment is welcome!

- **Change of Mind:** During this course, you may change your mind about some course-relevant issue. Explain the issue, describe your previous opinion and why you used to think it, and then explain what you now think and why your opinion changed. When appropriate, be sure to explain an argument, theory, or reading that caused you to change your mind.

Communication

Student Office Hours I will be available in my office H-311C for questions and discussion Tu/Th 9:00-9:55am. No appointment is necessary during these times. I welcome you to drop in! If you'd like to meet with at a different time, you should **ABSOLUTELY ABSOLUTELY** feel free to set an appointment with me. **I want to help you succeed!** Just email me. If it helps, you can use this script:

*“Hi Josh,
I’m in your [CLASS NAME & TIME]. I’d like to schedule an appointment with you outside of your scheduled office hours. Do any of these times work for you [LIST THREE DIFFERENT TIMES YOU CAN MEET]?
Thanks,
[NAME]”*

Virtual Office Hours By appointment, we can setup virtual office hours. Click the “Virtual Office Hours” button on Canvas to enter my Zoom office hours. Note: my office hours will be **IN PERSON** unless we decide to meet on Zoom.

Contact Outside of office hours, you can reach me at my email address. I will usually respond within 24 hours. Feel free to get back in touch if I don’t. **If you have a question about the course, please check the syllabus before emailing.**

You I expect you to regularly check your email and Canvas for announcements.

Ask a Question On Canvas, there will be two “Ask a Question” discussion boards: (1) “Ask Josh a Question” and (2) “Ask Peers a Question.” I will regularly check (1) and rarely check (2). You should check both often. Questions on these boards should be general. Think: “Could someone else benefit from knowing the answer to this question?” If Yes, post; if No, maybe just email me. **If you have a question about the course, please check these boards before emailing.**

Accommodations I will do my very best to help students with disabilities, special needs, or learning challenges succeed in this course. Students with disabilities who need accommodations, access to technology, or information about emergency building/campus evacuation processes should contact Disability Support Services. Services are available to students with a wide range of disabilities and conditions.
Phone: (657) 278-3112 Website: www.fullerton.edu/dss

Good Impression Education is a **professional environment**. One day you may want a letter of recommendation from me. You may want your peers to recommend you for some professional position. Behave accordingly and make a good impression!

Statement	Please only submit work that is your own. Doing otherwise is one of the worst mistakes you can make in your academic career. When students plagiarize in my classes, they receive a score of 0 points on the assignment and I refer them to the Dean of Students' office.
Plagiarism	<p>The university defines 'plagiarism' as "the unacknowledged and inappropriate use of the ideas or wording of another writer" and instructs me to include the following info on my syllabus:</p> <p>If plagiarism is found in your work, you will be subject to prosecution to the fullest extent of university code, which will result in a failure of the assignment and will probably result in your failure of the course. Confirmation of plagiarism precludes you from being eligible to repeat the course under the university's course repeat and grade forgiveness policy. For complete details regarding the university's policies about plagiarism and other forms of cheating, see</p> <p>http://www.fullerton.edu/integrity/student/AcademicIntegrityResources.asp http://www.fullerton.edu/senate/publications_policies_resolutions/ups/UPS%20300/UPS%20300.021.pdf</p>

Emergencies

To be prepared for classroom emergencies, please visit: <http://prepare.fullerton.edu>

COVID-19 Protocols

Follow all the rules: be vaccinated when you're supposed to; wear a mask when you're supposed to; stay home when you're supposed to. If we have to go virtual this semester, we'll keep roughly the same class structure.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1 Course Introduction

Tu 1/25 Syllabus

Th 1/27 Start logic lecture & logic video

Week 2 Logic, Morality, Removing Monuments

Tu 2/1 Logic lecture & logic video

Th 2/3 Removing Monuments: Brainstorming (No Reading)

Week 3 Removing Monuments

Tu 2/8 Timmerman "A Case for Removing Confederate Monuments"

Th 2/10 Demetriou "Ashes of Our Fathers: Racist Monuments and the Tribal Right"

Assignments: Reading Quiz 2/8; 2/10

Week 4 Animal Ethics

Tu 2/15 Animals: Brainstorming (No Reading)

Th 2/17 Norcross "Puppies, Pigs, and People"

Assignment: Reading Quiz 2/17

Week 5 Animal Ethics

Tu 2/22 Norcross "Puppies, Pigs, and People"

Th 2/24 NO CLASS

Week 6 Punishment

Tu 3/1 Punishment: Brainstorming + Ronson "How One Stupid Tweet Blew up J. Sacco's Life"

Th 3/3 Primoratz "Justifying Legal Punishment"

Assignments: Reading Quiz 3/1; 3/3

Week 7 Punishment, Exam Review

Tu 3/8 Nathanson “An Eye for an Eye?”

Th 3/10 Review

Assignments: Reading Quiz 3/8

Philosophy in Life Post Due 3/9 by 10pm

Philosophy in Life 2 Comments Due 3/10 by 10pm

Week 8 Exam 1, Philosophy of X and Presentation Prep

Tu 3/15 Exam 1 (In class)

Th 3/17 Philosophy of X Prep + Presentation Prep

Week 9 Philosophy of X Week

Tu 3/22 Philosophy of X (Attendance Mandatory)

Th 3/24 Philosophy of X (Attendance Mandatory)

Assignment: Philosophy of X Submission Due 3/21 10pm

Week 10 SPRING BREAK

Tu 3/29 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Th 3/31 NO CLASS SPRING BREAK

Week 11 Disability

Tu 4/5 Disability: Brainstorming (No Reading)

Optional: Mundy “A World of their Own”

Th 4/7 Jackson “The Mere Difference View”

Assignment: Reading Quiz 4/7

Week 12 Disability & Integration

Tu 4/12 Jackson “The Bad Difference View”

Th 4/14 Integration: Brainstorming

Assignment: Reading Quiz 4/12

Week 13 Integration

Tu 4/19 Anderson “Why Integration Remains an Imperative”

Th 4/21 Shelby “Integration, Inequality, and Imperatives of Justice” (Sections: VII-VIII)

Optional: *Nice White Parents* Podcast: “The Book of Statutes”

Assignments: Reading Quiz 4/19; 4/21

Week 14 Presentations

Tu 4/26 Presentations (2)

Th 4/28 Presentations (2)

Week 15 Presentations

Tu 5/3 Presentations (3)

Th 5/5 Presentations (3)

Assignments: Philosophy in Life Post Due 5/4 by 10pm

Philosophy in Life 2 Comments Due 5/6 by 10pm

Week 16 Presentations, Exam Review, Extra Credit Assignment

Tu 5/10 Presentations (3)

Th 5/12 Review

Assignment: Optional Extra Credit Due 5/10 by 10pm

Week 17 Final Exam

Th 5/19 FINAL 11:12-50