

Dr. Pamela Hood

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My Website: <http://www.profpam.com> Class web: <http://socratesking.net>

Upload essays on iLearn: <https://ilearn.sfsu.edu/login/index.php>

Office Hours: TH 3-6pm [TA's will announce their own office hours and emails]

Course Description

In this course we will examine some of the perennial questions of life, especially those central to issues of personal integrity and social justice. Here are some of the questions we will explore: What makes something moral or immoral? Does might make right? Is the death penalty ever justified? Is it right to defy the government? Is retaliation ever justified? What does it mean to be a friend? Is there life after death?

Goals

This course has three specific aims: (1) to introduce students to the history and practice of philosophy, (2) to instill in them the habit of thinking philosophically and critically about fundamental issues and concerns in our society and in their lives, and (3) to encourage the development of analytical and creative skills that will enable students to evaluate the quality of their ideas and arguments, and those of others.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, students should be able to: (1) demonstrate the ability to form arguments of their own, (2) analyze and evaluate arguments, (3) identify and explain several key aspects of Socratic and Platonic Philosophy and Moral Philosophy, and (4) gain an appreciation of the close relationship that often exists between social events, figures, and movements and the philosophical ideas that inform and guide them.

Required Texts

Grube (translator), *Plato: Five Dialogues*

Martin Luther King, Jr., *I Have A Dream: Writings & Speeches* (edited by James Washington)

Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience*

Homework

You will have reading to do nearly every class session. Use the study questions for the readings. I won't collect the study questions. No, there is no "grade" for doing your homework.

Grades

Exams 30% Essays 40% Online Forum 20% Creative Projects 10%

You must complete all elements of the course to receive a grade. So if you complete only some of the essays, for instance, you'll receive an 'F'. Make-up quizzes and exams are possible in cases of documented illness or emergency situations.

Exams: At the end of the first four units you will have a Zeus (Scantron) exam based on the readings and lectures. These exams test your comprehension of the dialogue or reading for that unit.

Essays: There will usually be one short (1 page) and a longer (2-3 page) essay due for each unit. Sometimes there will be just one (short or long) essay due. The longer essays will allow you to stretch your wings a bit and get down to some serious philosophizing. You'll have a selection of topics. The essays will require that you address philosophical issues in the King, Thoreau and other readings, and the Socratic dialogues, and also articulate your own views.

Creative Projects

Five creative projects are due. As a response to the Thoreau and Socratic reading assignments, I'll ask you to produce a creative work. These will be due about every three (3) weeks or so. The creative projects can be done in just about any way you want (see below for exceptions): a poem, a script of a scene for a play, a video, a song on audio tape or CD, a letter, a collage, sculpture, web page, a board game, etc. I have only two limitations: NO LIVE or DEAD ANIMALS and NO CONTAMINATED SUBSTANCES. Along with your creative work you are to provide a brief description of your project (e.g., "My project is a screenplay."). In addition, you are to write a short explanation (1 page is fine) of how your project relates to the dialogue. You may work collaboratively on these creative projects.

Midterm and Final Exam

None. Midterms and Final Exams are evil. Evil should be banned from the face of the earth. This class is held on the earth. Therefore, midterms and final exams should be banned from this course. By the power vested in me by the state of California, and by the Great Gator, I hereby ban any and all midterms and final exams from this course. So help me Gator. Amen. (wait for applause)

Plagiarism Policy

Don't cheat. Check out the College of Humanities policy at <http://www.sfsu.edu/~collhum/plagiarism.html>

Disability Accommodation

Let me know if you need any accommodations that will improve your experience of or access to the course. Contact the Disability Resource Center at 338-2472 (Voice/TDD) for assistance.

Online Access and Resources

This is a web-intensive course: study questions, assignments, exams, powerpoints, outlines of my lecture notes will be available on the course website. We will also have a class online forum.

Contacting me or the TA's

There is a gmail account for the course: sfsuphil101@gmail.com. The TA will have access to this account and I will check it, too. If you've got a *personal* issue to discuss with me, say, if your significant other has just dumped you and you're too distraught to come to class, email me at my campus address: phood@sfsu.edu. If it is general class business or questions about course material email us at the gmail account.

Course Outline

Unit 1 Philosophical Theme: Basic Elements of Logic & History of philosophy

Activity: Written diagnostic, argument exercises

Reading: Thoreau: Civil Disobedience; King - front matter (Foreword-Chronology)

Unit 2 Philosophical Theme: What is the nature of morality?

Activity: Recognizing arguments

Reading: *Euthyphro* (Euthyphro = you-the-fro); King Part I - The Dream Bursts Forth

Unit 3 Philosophical Theme: Society and Personal Integrity

Activity: Critical Reading and Active Reflection

Reading: *Apology*; King Part II - The Dream Enters World History

Unit 4 Philosophical Theme: Friendship and Civil Disobedience

Activity: Analyzing arguments I

Reading: *Crito* (Crito = cree-toe, cry-toe); King Part III - The Dream is Deferred

Unit 5 Philosophical Theme: Death and Immortality

Activity: Analyzing arguments II

Reading: selections from the *Phaedo* (Phaedo = fee-dough or Fido); King Part IV - The Prophet Foresees the Future