

Feminist Philosophy (PHIL 4170) Syllabus

Fall 2022

Professor: Dr. Carissa Phillips-Garrett
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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 2-3:30pm; and by appointment

Class Schedule: MWF 9:25-10:35am

Class Location: St. Robert's Hall 234

Recommended Background: PHIL 1800, PHIL 3100, and two other upper-division philosophy courses

Cora Area: None

Major Requirement: Meets major requirement in Contemporary Philosophy

Course Description

This course is an introduction to issues in feminist philosophy, including its critique of Western philosophy and its contributions to major areas of philosophy such as ethics, social philosophy, theories of human nature, and theories of knowledge.

Learning Outcomes

In successfully completing this course, you will:

- (1) Critically reflect on how the methodology, questions, and critiques of feminist philosophy shapes both how we ought to engage in the act of philosophizing itself and expands the content of traditional philosophical problems and topics.
- (2) Improve philosophical conversational skills through careful and critical interactions, both in reading texts and in verbal conversation.
- (3) Improve the ability to think critically about your own beliefs and reasons for holding those beliefs.
- (4) Expand your capacity to formulate your own coherent and creative philosophical positions.

Communication

- I encourage you to come see me in my office during my open office hours. These are hours set aside each week for me to meet with students. No appointment is necessary during these hours, so feel free to just drop by; unless previously announced, I will be waiting in my office

during those hours each week. For the specific times and location of my office, please see my contact information.

- I will respond to emails within 24 hours, excluding weekends and holidays. I aim to respond within 12 hours during normal business hours, but do not depend on this; I encourage you to begin assignments early and contact me/post on Brightspace as soon as you recognize you have a question.
- Brightspace and your official LMU email will be used for all communication, so it is your responsibility to check both on a daily basis. You can also set your Brightspace settings so that you receive notification when something new is posted, but I also encourage a habit of logging in each day as well.

Required Materials

All readings will be posted on Brightspace, either as a PDF or a link to online material. I highly recommend printing the PDFs, for a couple of reasons:

- We all are more likely to skim when we are reading in an electronic format vs. reading a printed work, and reading philosophy requires careful and thorough reading (see [this article](#) in *Scientific American* on the difference between reading in digital format vs. print format; a literature review of the relevant studies is found [here](#)).
- Our eyes are more likely to get tired when reading online, especially now that we are having classes in an online format and we are all spending more time staring at a screen than we used to.
- When discussing texts during class, it is easier to flip between pages if you have a physical copy vs. a digital copy.

Additionally, you will get the most out of the texts if you make sure to set aside enough time to read through the text prior to class several times (we will discuss specific techniques) and annotate the texts as you read. We will use the texts in class, so come prepared to refer to the text in class.

Participation & Attendance

The default assumption is that you will be present and engaged at all class sessions. As conversational partners together, each of us has a responsibility to participate in pushing the discussion forward in the classroom. This only happens if we are all engaged, however, and a necessary (but not sufficient!) condition of this is being present for the discussion. Missing our class time together should be rare and only for a very good reason, not a regular occurrence, and it will be reflected in your attendance record and participation grade. Attendance is required, and I will keep track of both attendance and contributions for every class.

You are, nevertheless, free to miss up to three class periods with no questions asked (there is no need to inform me or explain why). After the three absences have been exceeded, each further absence will lower your class contribution grade. To avoid this situation, it would be wise to reserve absences for

unexpected problems that may unexpectedly happen (e.g., falling ill or getting a flat tire on the way to class). Since three absences are permitted for any reason, I rarely excuse further absences. However, in rare cases, I may make further exceptions. Except in the case of a medical emergency affecting you or your family, you must receive approval from me before the missed class, so please speak with me as soon as possible. While no supporting documentation is required for the three freebie absences, I may ask for it in the case of any additional excused absences. Keep the following class participation expectations in mind:

- This is a discussion-heavy class, so come to our class discussions prepared to talk about the readings assigned for that day. Preparing for discussion means that you should have read and annotated the text carefully and thought about what questions you have and in what ways you can contribute to the discussion.
- Arrive prepared to focus for the duration of the class period. Sometimes unexpected things come up that may require you to leave (e.g., an emergency phone call that could not be rescheduled or a sudden and acute illness), but prepare for the things that you can (e.g., plan to use the restroom prior to class, not during our time together).
- Use language that is respectful and inclusive. It is perfectly fine to disagree with views expressed but target the argument you disagree with, not the person.

Workload Expectations

The credit standard for this 4-unit course is met by an expectation of a total of 180 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which includes class meeting times and other direct faculty instructions. Additional expectations include reading, writing, and other student work as described in the syllabus. This works out to roughly 8-12 hours per week for 4 credit courses. The majority of this work will consist of reading (which also includes thinking about the ideas raised by the reading) and writing.

Assessments

You will be assessed based on six assessments: Seminar Contribution, Philosophical Journal, Discussion Questions/Arguments, Short Paper, Long Paper, and Oral Final Exam.

Seminar Contribution

As a seminar and not a lecture-based class, this class offers the opportunity to create a learning community in which we all have a responsibility to push the discussion forward by co-creating the intellectual community that we build together. Active participation requires preparation for the class (the kind of careful, charitable, and critical engagement with the readings that prepares you to discuss the ideas and arguments presented) and your full focus while in conversation so that you can listen well to what others are saying, respond helpfully to your fellow participants, and develop your own ideas. I recognize that some students are less comfortable than others speaking in class, but reading and thinking carefully and critically allows you to reflect on the ideas prior to class. Contributions can take many forms, such as:

- Asking careful and critical questions about the ideas and arguments put forward in the text or fellow class participants
- Helping other participants to work out their ideas through careful questions
- Criticizing, correcting, or responding to the arguments presented in the text and by other class participants
- Developing a positive interpretation of the arguments or ideas in the text
- Connecting the current text or questions to ideas explored elsewhere, either earlier in the class or in the world outside of the classroom
- Exploring your own philosophical ideas

You may also continue this discussion outside of the classroom, and I will also consider those contributions when evaluating your class contributions.

Discussion Questions/Arguments

Most Fridays, no new reading will be assigned; instead, we will focus in our class on student-led discussions that focus on the questions you want to discuss, in light of the conversation we have already had earlier in the week. In other words: Friday sessions will typically draw together the discussions and texts from the classes on Monday and Wednesday and continue those debates in new ways. Each week, you will submit one question and a more detailed philosophical argument that extends the conversation from earlier in the week through a direct connection to the reading and in-class discussion for the week.

Philosophical Journal

Developing the capacity to think philosophically requires sustained effort. To practice this skill regularly, you will keep a philosophical journal. The journal is a chance to reflect on and critically engage with the texts and questions of the course, both before class discussion and after. Engaging thoughtfully and critically as you read is an important part of preparing for our discussion together, so before each class, you will write a short reflection on the reading. This may take several forms, including reflecting on what the author we read means, interrogating the strength of the argument, reflecting on how this challenges an existing view that you hold, connecting the argument to a real-world experience, or developing your own positive argument. Each week, you will reflect on your before-class entries and write a reflection summarizing how the class discussion shaped what you think now. I encourage you to use this assignment to challenge and push yourself to develop philosophically and to try out a variety of ways of engaging with the text. If taken seriously, this journal should be a wealth of ideas that you can develop during our seminar discussions and for the long paper.

Short Paper

In the short paper (~3 pages, or 750-1,000 words), you will focus on developing a very clear and crisp analysis of the text in question and succinctly assessing the strength and significance of the argument. Only one short paper needs to be submitted and it is up to you to decide which one, but you may

submit multiple short papers if you wish and the higher grade will be counted. Short Paper #1 will be due by Friday, September 23rd and Short Paper #2 will be due by Friday, October 14th.

Long Paper

The long paper will develop and defend your own philosophical position in relation to one of the central questions or problems addressed in the course. This will be written in three stages, with the question explanation and a brief outline due in class on Friday, November 4th, an initial draft submitted by Tuesday, November 18th, and the revised, final draft due by Friday, December 9th.

Oral Final Exam

The final exam is a one-on-one philosophical conversation (approximately 20-30 minutes long) scheduled during finals week.

Grading

Grading will be a bit different in this course than you may be used to. Instead of traditional percentages or points, your final grade in the course will depend on showing mastery of the learning outcomes in each of the assessments. For each assessment type, an assessment sheet will be distributed that will identify what mastery of the learning objectives within that assignment looks like, and each assessment completed will receive an overall assessment of the level of competency demonstrated (level 4= excellent mastery of the learning skills; level 3=satisfactory competency; level 2=developing competency; and level 1=unsatisfactory competency).

For each final grade, here is what must be completed and at what level:

- **A** = complete all assessments; achieve level 4 on the final paper and at least four of the remaining five assessments.
- **A-** = complete all assessments; achieve level 4 in at least four of the six assessments, with no assessments below level 3.
- **B+** = complete all assessments; achieve level 4 in at least three of the assessments and no assessments below level 3, or level 4 in at least two assessments if one of them is the final paper.
- **B** = complete all assessments; achieve at least level 3 in all assessments, or level 2 in one assessment that is not the final paper and level 4 in at least two of the remaining assessments.
- **B-** = complete all assessments; achieve level 3 in two assessments, level 4 in one assessment, and no more than one assessment in level 2.
- **C+** = complete all assessments; achieve level 3 in at least three assessments, with no assessments below level 2.
- **C** = complete all assessments; achieve at least level 3 in two of the assessments, with no assessments below level 2.

- **C-** = achieve level 2 in all assessments, or complete at least five assessments (one of which must be the long paper) and achieve level 3 (or above) in at least two assessments, with no more than one assessment below level 2.
- **D** = achieve level 2 (or above) in at least four assessments, one of which must be the long paper.
- **F** = at least three of the assessments are not completed with level 2 or better.

Late Assignment Policy

I know that life happens, so you have one free, no-questions-asked, no-excuse-needed late submission allowed per semester that extends your assignment due date for 48 hours (though you do need to communicate via email that you are doing that prior to the submission deadline and when you submit your assignment, remind me that you are using your late pass; this late assignment policy also does not apply to the discussion posts since your classmates depend on those being submitted in a timely fashion). If you have specific extenuating circumstances that might justify an extension of longer than 48 hours, please let me know that you will be requesting an extension of more than 48 hours. For any other late assignments, please see the rubric for that assignment.

To be counted as being submitted on time, the file must be received in the appropriate, working format; it is the student's responsibility to verify this. If there are technical issues, it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor immediately in an email with the file/content that they are attempting to submit and a screenshot of the problem. This allows us a chance to resolve the issue prior to the deadline. If this is done before the deadline, a one-time exception may be made to the late policy, but no other exceptions will be made.

Academic Honesty

All students will be expected to follow LMU's Academic Honesty Policy, found at <https://academics.lmu.edu/honesty/>. This document outlines the university's expectations for the integrity of your academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of those expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty members throughout the process. Violations of this code include plagiarism, cheating, misrepresenting another's work as one's own, and the intentional falsification of data. I recommend reviewing this policy in its entirety each semester and asking any questions you have before you submit assignments, since ignorance will not be accepted as an excuse for violation of the academic honesty policy. While it is expected that you will discuss the issues in the course with other students both in and out of class, all written work you turn in must be *your own*. Please come talk to me if you have questions about what this means! You are encouraged to work together in the pre-writing and development stages of papers and by soliciting peer feedback on drafts. However, only the author may write and revise each assignment for submission.

Passages taken from another source must be explicitly quoted and cited, and ideas or ways of framing and organizing an issue that rely on the work of others must be cited as well. Additionally, work that you submitted for credit in this course cannot have been submitted for credit in another course. Unless

it is explicitly allowed, work written up for an earlier assignment in this course also cannot be used for a later assignment. Ignorance of what is required will not be accepted as an excuse, so any questions about what constitutes plagiarism should be addressed prior to handing in your written assignments.

One tool I may use this semester is Turnitin. Loyola Marymount University has partnered with the third-party application Turnitin to help maintain our standards of excellence in academic integrity. Turnitin is a suite of tools that provide instructors with information about the authenticity of submitted work and facilitates the process of grading for instructors. Submitted files are compared against an extensive database of content comprising of over 165 million journal articles, 1 billion student papers, and 62 billion current and archived websites. Turnitin produces a similarity report and a similarity score. A similarity score is the percentage of a document that is similar to content held within the database. A similarity report gives the instructor more information about any potential matches and their sources. Turnitin does not determine if an instance of plagiarism has occurred. Instead, it gives instructors the information they need to determine the authenticity of work as a part of a larger process. All submissions to this course may be checked using Turnitin.

Technical Challenges

- If you have any technical challenges with Brightspace, please email me immediately, along with a screenshot of the problem. Please also contact the ITS Service Desk (310-338-7777 or 213-736-1097; helpdesk@lmu.edu) immediately to get your issue resolved.
- If you are worried that the problem will keep you from submitting an assignment in a timely fashion, be sure that you email me immediately with details of the problem you are experiencing, along with a screenshot.
- In general, ITS recommends using the Chrome browser on a computer (rather than a phone) for the optimal experience with Brightspace.

Special Accommodations

Students with an identified disability who require accommodations in this course should promptly direct their request to the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office. Any student who currently has a documented disability (ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Learning, Physical, or Psychiatric) needing academic accommodations should contact the DSS Office (Daum Hall 2nd floor, 310.338.4216) as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please visit www.lmu.edu/dss for additional information.

If necessary, this syllabus and its contents are subject to revision; students are responsible for any changes or modifications announced in class or posted on Brightspace.

Reading & Assignment Schedule

Note: For more detailed explanations and any updates or changes to due dates or readings, please see Brightspace.

Date	Before Class Readings & Assignments	After Class Assignments
Aug 29		
Aug 31	Janet A. Kourany, "Philosophy in a <i>Feminist Voice</i> ?"	
Sep 2	Elinor Mason, "Sexism, Oppression, and Misogyny"	
Sep 5	NO CLASS (Labor Day holiday)	
Sep 7	Simone de Beauvoir, <i>The Second Sex</i> (introduction); Journal Entry	
Sep 9	Judith Butler, "Subjects of Sex/Gender/Desire"; Journal Entry	Week 2 Journal Reflection
Sep 12	Sally Haslanger, "Gender and Social Construction: Who? What? Why? When? Where? How?"; Journal Entry	
Sep 14	Ásta (Sveinsdóttir), "The Metaphysics of Sex and Gender"; Journal Entry	
Sep 16	Week 3 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 3 Journal Reflection
Sep 19	Overview Video; Sandra Harding, "Rethinking Standpoint Epistemology"; Alessandra Tanesini, "Standpoint Then and Now"; Journal Entry	
Sep 21	Patricia Hill Collins, "Black Feminist Epistemology"; Kristie Dotson, "Inheriting Patricia Hill Collins's Black Feminist Epistemology" (<i>optional</i> : Kimberlé Crenshaw, "Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex"); Journal Entry	
Sep 23	Week 4 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 4 Journal Reflection; Short Paper #1
Sep 26	Uma Narayan, "The Project of Feminist Epistemology: Perspectives from a Nonwestern Feminist"; Journal Entry	
Sep 28	María Lugones, "Playfulness, 'World'-Travelling, and Loving Perception"; Journal Entry	
Sep 30	Week 5 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 5 Journal Reflection
Oct 3	Alison Jaggar, "Love and Knowledge: Emotion in Feminist Epistemology"; Journal Entry	

Oct 5	Miranda Fricker, “Précis” in Symposium on <i>Epistemic Injustice</i> ; Miranda Fricker, “Epistemic Injustice and a Role for Virtue in the Politics of Knowing” (<i>optional</i> : “Miranda Fricker on Credibility and Discrimination”); Journal Entry	
Oct 7	Week 6 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 6 Journal Reflection
Oct 10	Margaret Urban Walker, “Feminist Ethics and Human Conditions”; Journal Entry	
Oct 12	Lisa Tessman, “Idealizing Morality”; Journal Entry	
Oct 14	NO CLASS (Autumn Day holiday)	Week 7 Journal Reflection; Short Paper #2
Oct 17	Margaret Olivia Little, “Seeing and Caring: The Role of Affect in Feminist Moral Epistemology”; Journal Entry	
Oct 19	Virginia Held, “The Ethics of Care as Moral Theory” & “The Meshing of Care and Justice”; Journal Entry	
Oct 21	Week 8 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 8 Journal Reflection; Mid-Semester Contribution Self-Assessment
Oct 24	Claudia Card, “Caring, Justice, and Evils”; Journal Entry	
Oct 26	Carol Hay, “Resisting Oppression Revisited”; Journal Entry	
Oct 28	Week 9 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 9 Journal Reflection
Oct 31	Joan Tronto, “Care as a Basis for Radical Political Judgments”; Journal Entry	
Nov 2	Eva Feder Kittay, “Centering Justice on Dependency and Recovering Freedom”; Journal Entry	
Nov 4	Long Paper Question Explanation	Week 10 Journal Reflection
Nov 7	Martha Nussbaum, “The Feminist Critique of Liberalism”; Journal Entry	
Nov 9	Lisa Schwartzman, “A Feminist Critique of Nussbaum’s Liberalism”; Journal Entry	
Nov 11	Week 11 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 11 Journal Reflection
Nov 14	Susan Moller Okin, “Feminism, Women’s Human Rights, and Cultural Differences”; Journal Entry	
Nov 16	Serene Khader, “Must Theorising about Adaptive Preferences Deny Women’s Agency?” (<i>optional</i> : “Identifying Adaptive Preferences in Practice”); Journal Entry	
Nov 18	Week 12 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Week 12 Journal Reflection

Nov 21	Lisa Tessman, <i>Moral Failures</i> , Introduction & Ch. 1; Journal Entry	Long Paper Draft (Nov 22)
Nov 23	NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Day holiday)	
Nov 25	NO CLASS (Thanksgiving Day holiday)	
Nov 28	Lisa Tessman, <i>Moral Failures</i> , Ch. 2; Journal Entry	
Nov 30	Lisa Tessman, <i>Moral Failures</i> , Ch. 3; Journal Entry	
Dec 2	NO CLASS	Week 14 Journal Reflection
Dec 5	Lisa Tessman, <i>Moral Failures</i> , Ch. 4 & 5; Journal Entry	
Dec 7	Lisa Tessman, <i>Moral Failures</i> , Ch. 6 & 7; Journal Entry	Week 15 Journal Reflection
Dec 9	Week 15 Discussion Questions & Arguments	Long Paper (Dec 11); Contribution Self-Assessment (Dec 12); Philosophical Journal Reflection (Dec 16); Oral Final Exam (TBA)