

Professor Lackey
Fall, 2019
TTh, 12:30-1:50 PM, 107 Harris Hall
j-lackey@northwestern.edu

Office Hours: TTh, 2:00-3:00 PM
and by appointment
3-423 Kresge Hall
491-2557 (office)

PHIL 110 INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY

Course Description:

In this course, we will explore a broad range of philosophical questions, both traditional and contemporary. We will pay particular attention to how these issues relate to our moral, social, and political values. Questions to be discussed include: What is the connection between belief in God and human suffering? Are there moral absolutes, or is morality relative? What should our view be on abortion, the death penalty, torture, and the status of nonhuman animals? The abilities to think, read, and write critically and to develop and defend arguments will be emphasized.

Course Work:

Students are required to write reports of no more than one page, double-spaced, of **each class period's reading assignments**, which should have two distinct components: (a) a summary of the readings, and (b) a philosophical critique, or engagement with, the arguments. These reports should be submitted on Canvas by 12:20 PM on the day the reading is due and will be graded on a 4-point scale, with 4 as excellent, 3 as good, 2 as adequate, 1 as deficient (or late), and N/C as not deserving of credit. Students may drop their two lowest reading report grades.

In addition to the reading reports, students are required to write two paper outlines and two papers during the quarter. The topics and requirements for these papers are available on Canvas.

Students also have the opportunity to earn up to 10 additional extra credit points throughout the quarter by taking the topic of the class for the day and exploring how it is relevant to a current media piece. These reports should (i) include a link to the media piece, (ii) be no more than one-page, double spaced, and (iii) draw a connection between the issue(s) in the media piece and the readings from the course. For instance, one might show how a recent affirmative action court ruling assumes a backward-looking approach or how testimonial injustice was at work in a wrongful conviction featured through the Innocence Project. Each reading report may earn up to 2 points and students may turn in no more than 5 throughout the quarter. They are due on Canvas by 12:20 PM on the day the reading is due. Some of these media pieces may be discussed in lecture or in sections.

Grade Distribution:

The final grade for the course will be determined in the following way:

- Two paper outlines, worth 10% of the final grade
- One 5-6 page, double-spaced paper, worth 25% of the final grade
- One 6-7 page, double-spaced paper, worth 35% of the final grade
- Reading reports and class participation, worth 30% of the final grade

Grade Scale:

A+	98-100	A-	90-92	B	83-86	C+	77-79
A	93-97	B+	87-89	B-	80-82	C	73-76

C-	70-72	D	63-66	F	59-0
D+	67-69	D-	60-62		

Course Policies:

(1) No electronic devices are permitted during class, unless special arrangements are made with the professor.

(2) In order for this course to succeed, attending and being well-prepared for class consistently are both essential. This requires, among other things, reading the assigned texts and articles closely and carefully and being engaged participants in class lectures and discussions.

(3) In order to pass the course, *all* assignments must be completed. Note: the two reading report grades that may be dropped include grades of NC for reading reports not submitted.

(4) Extensions must be requested before the due date.

(5) Students are permitted two unexcused absences. Excused absences include, e.g., illness, a family tragedy, or a mandatory court appearance. For every additional unexcused absence, the final grade in the course will be reduced by a percentage point.

(6) Reading reports due during an excused absence or during one of the two free unexcused absences may be turned in for full credit no later than at the beginning of the class immediately following the absence; reading reports otherwise due during an unexcused absence will be penalized a point for every class period that they are late. Students must make arrangements with the professor or the Teaching Assistant regarding papers due during an absence; when the absence is unexcused, papers will be penalized a third of a letter grade for every class period that they are late.

(7) Plagiarism is the presenting of someone else's thoughts, ideas, or work as one's own, *regardless of whether this is what is intended*, and it will not be tolerated in this course. All cases of alleged violation of academic integrity will be referred to the Assistant Dean for Advising and Academic Integrity. Possible penalties range from failing the course to permanent exclusion from the university. For more on plagiarism, see:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/index.html> and

<http://www.northwestern.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/how-to-avoid-plagiarism.html>.

Students with Disabilities:

Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with [AccessibleNU](http://www.northwestern.edu/accessible) (accessiblenu@northwestern.edu; 847-467-5530) and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. All information will remain confidential.

Resources for Well-Being:

Students can find useful resources for safety and security, academic support, and mental and physical health and well-being at the NUhelp [website](#) and [app](#).

Teaching Assistants:

- Andrés Abugattas, jaae@u.northwestern.edu

Office hours: Mondays, 4:00-6:00 PM, Kresge 3-430

- Hansen Breitling, hansenbreitling2023@u.northwestern.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00 PM, Kresge 3-430
- Christiana Eltiste, celtiste@u.northwestern.edu
Office hours: Thursdays, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM, Kresge 3-430

Canvas:

Some of the business of this course will be conducted through Canvas. You are encouraged to check it frequently, as I may post announcements there from time to time. To access Canvas from Northwestern's homepage, you will need to use your NetID and password.

Required Readings:

Available on Canvas

Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

1. INTRODUCTION

09/24 Introductory Remarks

2. DOES DESIGN PROVE THE EXISTENCE OF GOD?

09/26 William Paley, "The Watch and the Watchmaker"
David Hume, "A Critique of the Teleological Argument"

3. IS THE EXISTENCE OF EVIL COMPATIBLE WITH GOD'S EXISTENCE?

10/01 Fyodor Dostoevsky, "Why Is There Evil?"
[No reading report is required for Dostoevsky]
B. C. Johnson, "Why Doesn't God Intervene to Prevent Evil?"
John Hick, "There Is a Reason Why God Allows Evil"

4. ARE THERE ANY MORAL ABSOLUTES OR IS MORALITY COMPLETELY RELATIVE?

10/03 Ruth Benedict, "Morality Is Relative"
James Rachels, "Morality Is Not Relative"

5. WHAT MATTERS FOR MORALITY: THE WILL OR THE CONSEQUENCES?

10/08 Immanuel Kant, "The Moral Law"
John Stuart Mill, "Utilitarianism"
Ian Parker, "The Gift" [No reading report is required for Parker]

6. IS ABORTION MORALLY PERMISSIBLE?

10/10 Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"
Don Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral"

***Guest Lecture: Christiana Eltiste**

7. IS GENETIC ENGINEERING MORALLY PERMISSIBLE?

- 10/15 M. Spriggs, "Lesbian Couple Create a Child Who Is Deaf Like Them"
K. W. Anstey, "Are Attempts to Have Impaired Children Justifiable?"
Michael J. Sandel, "Mastery and Gift"
***Outline of 5-6 Page Paper Due on Canvas by 12:20 PM**

8. IS AFFIRMATIVE ACTION MORALLY JUSTIFIED?

- 10/17 Albert Mosley, "The Case for Affirmative Action"
Celia Wolf-Devine, "Preferential Policies Have Become Toxic"
Anemona Hartocollis, "What's at Stake in the Harvard Lawsuit? Decades of Debate
Over Race in Admissions." [No reading report is required for Hartocollis]

9. IS ETHICAL VEGETARIANISM MORALLY REQUIRED?

- 10/22 Mylan Engel, Jr., "The Immorality of Eating Meat"
Carl Cohen, "The Case Against Animal Rights"
Michael Pollan, "An Animal's Place" [No reading report is required for Pollan]

- 10/24 Discussion—bring a prepared discussion question to class
***5-6 Page Paper Due on Canvas by 12:20 PM**

10. DOES DECEPTION UNDERMINE SEXUAL CONSENT?

- 10/29 Tom Dougherty, "Sex, Lies, and Consent"
Hallie Liberto, "Intention and Sexual Consent"
David Mack, "The Wrong Man" [No reading report is required for Mack]

11. DO WE HAVE DEMANDING OBLIGATIONS TO THE POOR AND HUNGRY?

- 10/31 Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality"
Garrett Hardin, "Lifeboat Ethics"
John Cassidy, "How the War on Poverty Succeeded (in Four Charts)"
[No reading report is required for Cassidy]
***Guest Lecture: Andrés Abugattas**

12. IS THE DEATH PENALTY MORALLY PERMISSIBLE?

- 11/05 Burton Leiser, "The Death Penalty Is Permissible"
Hugo Adam Bedau, "No, the Death Penalty Is Not Morally Permissible"
David Grann, "Trial by Fire" [No reading report is required for Grann]

13. IS TORTURE EVER MORALLY PERMISSIBLE?

- 11/07 Henry Shue, "Torture"

Daniel J. Hill, "Ticking Bombs, Torture, and the Analogy with Self-Defense"
"CIA Torture Report Fast Facts" [No reading report is required for CIA Torture
Report]

14. IS MASS INCARCERATION THE NEW JIM CROW?

11/12 Michelle Alexander, Chapter 5 of *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of
Colorblindness*

***In-Class Viewing of 13th**

11/14 James Forman, Jr., "Racial Critiques of Mass Incarceration: Beyond the New Jim
Crow"

***In-Class Viewing of 13th**

***Outline of 6-7 Page Final Paper Due on Canvas by 12:20 PM**

15. CAN TESTIMONIAL INJUSTICE INVOLVE AN EXCESS OF CREDIBILITY?

11/19 Miranda Fricker, "Testimonial Injustice"

***Guest Lecture: Hansen Breitling**

11/21 Jennifer Lackey, "False Confessions and Testimonial Injustice"

11/26 Discussion—bring a prepared discussion question to class

***6-7 Page Paper Due on Canvas by 12:20 PM**