

PHIL 130: Philosophy and Persons

John Felice Rome Center

Spring 2024

Dr. Francesco Mariani

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Mon. & Wed. | 10:30 - 11:45 p.m

Office Hour: Mon. 11:45 - 12:45 p.m.

(by appointment)

Course Description

This introductory course is designed not only to acquaint the student with some of the classical ideas and topics in Western philosophy, but also to show how closely Western philosophy has been entwined with other cultural expressions throughout history. The course will particularly focus on how philosophy has conceived of human nature and the relationship between individual and community. The trajectory of this course follows the development of philosophical thought from Plato to modernity and is divided into four blocks.

The first block deals with the role of Socrates and Plato in understanding the meaning of philosophy and its leading role in changing society. The second block is devoted to the beginning of early modern age. Attention will be paid to the new notion of humanity and utopia elaborated in the Renaissance. The third block deals with the century of the Enlightenment. Along with the new “critical” notion of humanity, we will examine the new understanding of the role of the individual in society, the idea of a “revolution of the mind” and of an ever-increasing progress that will transform society for the better. We will pay special attention to Kant’s paradigmatic philosophy of history. To this end, it will be important to investigate those philosophical notions while keeping in mind the historical context and the intertwining of moral, political, and cultural considerations. The fourth block focuses on the notion of “crisis” in the second half of the 19th century. We will then analyze Nietzsche’s arguments about human and humanity and his harsh critique of modern European culture and civilization.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of the course students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the various approaches of the philosophical questions related to what it means to be human, with attention to the historical and conceptual development of these questions, and be able to articulate some of the major problems and responses central to this area of philosophy.

This course will also enable students to:

- (a) distinguish alternative paradigms on human nature, the individual’s understanding and evaluation of his or her role in the world, the relationship between the individual and the community and the idea of progress;
- (b) look for and appreciate the reasons given in support of the different views, to assess the forcefulness of the challenge that each poses for the others;
- (c) grasp the historical and cultural determinacy of any philosophical conception of the role of the person and the community of which he or she is part;
- (d) identify in the different philosophical conceptions the point of balance between historical material elements, on the one hand, and theoretical and spiritual, on the other hand;
- (e) engage in dialogue with great philosophers, paying close attention to their meaning, their reasons, their concerns, their vision;
- (f) insert their own reflections into the dialogue;

Required Texts/Materials

Assigned and supplementary readings posted on Sakai;

Plato, *The Apology of Socrates* (available online)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Mankind* (available online)

Immanuel Kant, *Answering the Question: What Is Enlightenment?; Perpetual Peace* (available online)

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two absences.

The final course grade will drop by 1 % for each absence beyond the allowance specified. This course meets twice a week, thus a total of two absences will be permitted. Attendance is mandatory in class including on all scheduled Friday class days. Students should consult the on-campus nurse or call the on-call doctor if they are sick. The collective health of the JFRC is everyone's responsibility. **DO NOT ATTEND CLASS IF YOU ARE ILL.**

Assessment Components

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|--------------------------------|------|
| • Midterm Exam (in-class test) | 35 % |
| • Final Exam (take-home paper) | 35 % |
| • Participation | 15 % |
| • Presentation | 15 % |

Grading

94-100: A

90-93: A-

87-89: B+

84-86: B

80-83: B-

77-79: C+

74-76: C

70-73: C-

67-69: D+

60-66: D

59 or lower: F

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty (use of AI included) are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here: http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

You are responsible to comply with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor. As per the JFRC academic policies, students who miss any scheduled exam or quiz, including a final exam at the assigned hours will not be permitted to sit for a make-up examination without approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs. Permission is given rarely and only for grave reason; travel is not considered a grave reason. Make-up exams will only be given for documented absences.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center, the first week of classes.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	Assignment
Mon. 1/15	Introduction to the course	
Wed. 1/17	Ancient philosophy and the nature of man I	Plato, <i>Apology of Socrates</i> (section I)
Mon. 1/22	Ancient philosophy and the nature of man II	Plato, <i>Apology of Socrates</i> (section II)
Wed. 1/24	Ancient philosophy and the nature of man III	Plato, <i>Republic</i> (excerpts)
Mon. 1/29	Introduction to Renaissance and Humanism	Cassirer, (excerpts)
Fri. 2/02	Pico della Mirandola: The Dignity of Man I	Pico, <i>The Dignity of Man</i> (excerpts)
Mon. 2/05	Pico della Mirandola: The Dignity of Man II	Pico, <i>The Dignity of Man</i> (excerpts)
Wed. 2/07	Thomas More: Utopia	More, <i>Utopia</i> (excerpts)
Mon. 2/12	Machiavelli	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (excerpts)
Wed. 2/14	Introduction to the Enlightenment	J. Israel, <i>A Revolution of the Mind</i> (Introduction)
Mon. 2/19	Rousseau I	<i>Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Mankind</i> (first part)



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Date	Topic (s)	Assignment
Wed. 2/21	Rousseau II	<i>Discourse on the Origin</i> (second part)
Mon. 2/26	Rousseau III	<i>The Social Contract</i> (excerpts)
Wed. 2/28	Midterm exam	
Mon. 3/11	Introduction to Kant	
Wed. 3/13	Kant I	<i>What is Enlightenment?</i> I
Mon. 3/18	Kant II	<i>What is Enlightenment?</i> II
Wed. 3/20	Kant III	<i>Idea for a Universal History</i> (Part I)
Mon. 3/25	Kant IV	<i>Perpetual Peace</i> I
Wed. 3/27	Kant V	<i>Perpetual Peace</i> II
Wed. 4/03	Nietzsche I	<i>Zarathustra</i> (§ 1)
Mon. 4/08	Nietzsche II	<i>On the Genealogy of Morality</i> (excerpts)
Wed. 4/10	Nietzsche III	<i>Twilight of the Idols</i> (excerpts)
Mon. 4/15	Student presentations	
Wed. 4/17	Student presentations	
Fri. 4/19	Study Day	
Mon. 4/22	General review	
Wed. 4/24	Final exam	