**FWS: How to Disagree**

(PHIL 1112 SEM 101)

TR 10:10-11.25am

**Instructor Information**:

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Office Hour: Tuesday 3-4pm or by appointment

Office Location: 235 Goldwin Smith Hall

**Course Description**:

What is virtue? Is knowledge necessary for acting well? How do we acquire knowledge for good action? Philosophers disagree over these questions. What do they disagree about? What are the rules for engaging in such disagreements? What can we learn by looking at disagreements among philosophers? In this class we are going to think about these questions by reading from authors such as Plato, Aristotle, Kant, and Hume. The assignments will include both short expository papers and longer essays. We will start by practicing writing short response papers on the primary literature. Later in the semester we are going to practice writing longer philosophical essays on topics of one’s choice.

**Learning Outcomes**:

This course aims at helping its participants building necessary skills for academic writing. Special emphasis will be given to close reading of the texts and rigorous engagement with arguments. The learning outcomes include: (i) knowing how to find and evaluate philosophical arguments in historical texts (ii) knowing how to raise and respond to objections (iii) familiarity with a regular writing process that involves notes taking, outlining, drafting, and revision.

**Required Texts**:

Plato, *Protagoras*, Hackett.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Hackett.

Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Cambridge.

Joseph Williams and Gregory Colomb, Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace, Longman. (You may get cheaper older editions on Amazon.)

**Required Work and Evaluation**:

* Reading response: 10%

Questions on the assigned reading (see schedule for details) will be posted on blackboard every week under the heading of “Discussion”. **Post your response by 12pm every Monday and Wednesday**. (You may either choose to respond to the reading questions or questions raised by others.) The purpose of the assignment is to facilitate the class discussion on the following day. No late submission will be accepted.

* Essays: 75%

There will be five writing assignments in total: two short expository pieces, two longer papers, and one final version of a longer paper. Late submission will be marked down by 1/3 of the grade per day unless extension is granted by the instructor beforehand.

* Attendance and in-class discussion: 15%

All students are expected to attend all classes and participate in all class activities. If you have to miss any class for any reason, notice the instructor beforehand and get her permission. Otherwise, each absence will cost 0.5 point of your final grade (out of 100).

* Meetings:

**Every student is expected to meet with the instructor at least twice** during the semester to discuss their writings. The final paper will not be graded until the meeting requirement is met.

**Policies:**

1. Academic Integrity:

Each student in this course is expected to abide by the Cornell University Code of Academic Integrity. Any work submitted by a student in this course for academic credit will be the student’s own work.

By taking this course, students agree that all papers may be subject to submission to

Turnitin.com for textual similarity review for the detection of plagiarism. Submitted papers will

be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of

detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy

posted on the Turnitin.com site.

To acquaint yourself with the university policy on plagiarism, **take the following test by the end of today**:

<https://plagiarism.arts.cornell.edu/tutorial/exercises.cfm>

For more information, consult the following pamphlet (you should also have received a hard copy in your welcome package):

<http://ccengagement.cornell.edu/new-student-programs/academic-initiatives>

2. Attendance and late submission:

I stick to the policy of penalty above for absence and late submission strictly. However, I am also aware that all of us are mortals who get sick and encounter unexpected situations from time to time. Just give me a heads-up whenever that happens! I will try my best to help.

3. Class participation:

This is a small class that heavily rely on the participation of its members. Participation in all class activities (including peer review, writing exercise, and group work) are mandatory for doing well in this class. You are strongly encouraged to speak up in class and share your thoughts/puzzles/confusions with other people any time in class. Consistent and constructive contribution to class may make a difference in one’s grade in borderline cases. (For example, I will give someone with excellent contribution to class discussion a B when his/her final grade is a borderline case between B and B-.)

4. Note for students with disabilities:

If you have need for academic adjustments or physical accommodations for this class, please let

me know in the first week of class.

**Useful Resources**:

1. The Knight Institute Writing Walk-In Service:

The WWIS provides support for individuals at any stage of the writing process. Tutors serve as

responsive listeners and readers who can address questions about the writing process or about

particular pieces of writing. The WWIS is open Sunday through Thursday from 3:30 – 5:30pm

and from 7:00 – 10:00pm. Writers can schedule appointments or drop in at a convenient time.

For more information or to schedule an appointment: <http://www.arts.cornell.edu/writing>.

2. Philosophy reference:

No outside research is necessary for this class. If you do need to consult some secondary literature for your writing, the following encyclopedia is a good starting point:

<https://plato.stanford.edu/>

For those of you who are new to philosophy, the following link contains some good advice on writing philosophy paper. I strongly recommend reading this piece when you start thinking about the final paper.

<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

**Schedule**:

\*\*Note that the following schedule is tentative. I may change reading assignment and due day of assignment based on the actual progress of our class. I will post the updated syllabus on Blackboard whenever that happens and notice you beforehand.

Week 1:

Aug 22:

Reading: read through the syllabus; Prior, “Guidelines on Reading Philosophy”

(<http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html>)

Assignment: complete the plagiarism test online. (See page 2 for the link.)

Aug 24:

Reading: *Meno* 70-80a (on Blackboard); *Protagoras* 309-319; *Style*: Lesson 1.

Writing: topic of the first writing assignment will be given in class.

Week 2:

Aug 29:

Reading: *Protagoras* 319-329

Writing: the first assignment is due by the beginning of the class.

Sep 1:

Reading: *Protagoras* 329-333; *Style*: Lesson 2

Writing: topic of the second assignment is given in class. (**Time to set up your first conference with the instructor.**)

Week 3:

Sep 4 (Labor Day; no class)

Sep 7:

Reading: *Protagoras* 333-362 (focus on the final argument from 351-360)

Writing: the second assignment is due in class.

Week 4:

Sep 12:

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I-II

Writing: proposal of the third paper is due in class.

Sep 14:

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book II (re-read); *Style*: Lesson 3.

Writing: discussion of paper proposal in class.

Week 5:

Sep 19:

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book VI, VII

Writing: start drafting for the third paper.

Sep 21:

Reading: *Nicomachean Ethics,* Book VI, VII (re-read); *Style*: Lesson 4.

Writing: draft of the third paper is due.

Week 6:

Sep 26:

Reading: section 2.3.3 from *A Treatise of Human Nature* (on Blackboard).

Writing: Revision of the third paper.

Sep 28:

Reading: section 3.1.1 from *A Treatise of Human Nature* (on Blackboard); *Style*: Lesson 5.

Writing: in-class peer review of the third paper and continue working on the revision.

Week 7:

Oct 3:

Reading: selection 3.1.2 from *A Treatise of Human Nature* (on Blackboard)

Writing: response to peer review.

Oct 5:

Reading: primary literature related to one’s chosen paper topic; *Style*: Lesson 6.

Writing: the final version of the third paper is due.

Week 8:

Oct 10 (Fall Break; no class)

Oct 12:

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section I

Writing: proposal for the fourth paper is due in class.

Week 9:

Oct 17:

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section I (re-read).

Writing: outline of the fourth paper is due in class.

Oct 19:

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section II; *Style*: Lesson 7.

Writing: draft of the fourth paper is due in class.

Week 10:

Oct 24:

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section II (re-read).

Writing: in-class peer review.

Oct 26:

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section III; *Style*: Lesson 8.

Writing: first revision of the fourth paper is due in class. (**Time to set up your second conference with the instructor**.)

Week 11:

Oct 31:

Reading: *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section III (re-read).

Writing: topic of the final paper is given in class.

Nov 2:

Reading: selection from Hume’s *Essays* (on Blackboard); *Style*: Lesson 9

Writing: proposal of the final paper is due.

Week 12:

Nov 7:

Reading: the primary literature of one’s chosen paper topic; secondary literature by recommendation.

Writing: the outline of the final paper is due.

Nov 9:

Reading: secondary literature by recommendation (re-read); *Style*: Lesson 10.

Writing: peer review of paper outlines in class.

Week 13:

Nov 14:

Reading: the primary literature of one’s chosen paper topic (re-read);

Writing: first draft of the final paper is due.

Nov 16:

Reading: the secondary literature by recommendation (re-read); *Style*: Lesson 11.

Writing: peer review of the first draft in class.

Week 14:

Nov 21:

Reading: the primary literature of one’s chosen paper topic (re-read); *Style*: Lesson 12.

Writing: second draft of the final paper is due in class.

Nov 23 (Thanksgiving; no class)

Week 15:

Nov 28:

No reading.

Writing: the third draft of the final paper is due in class.

Nov 30:

No reading.

Writing: the final paper is due by 5pm.