

Introduction to the Philosophy of Love

PHIL 10005
Summer Session

Class times: M-F, 9am-11:30am and 1pm-3pm.

Location: Cobb 103

Course Instructor: Claudia Hogg-Blake (she, her, hers)

Email: claudiahoggblake@uchicago.edu

Office hours: 3-4pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays

Course Assistant: Maggie Sandholm (she, her, hers)

Email: msandholm@uchicago.edu

Office hours: TBD

Course description

Love is one of the most important, profound things in life; and yet, it is notoriously hard to articulate just what love is. In this course, we will inquire about the nature of love, addressing some of the central questions that have occupied philosophers of love. In the first part of the course, we will consider various philosophical accounts of the nature of love. We will seek an understanding of love that can account, in particular, for the central role that love plays in human life – the sense in which it is “what makes the world go ‘round.’” In the second part of the course, we will consider love’s reasons, asking “why do we love what we love?”, “what does love demand of us?” and “do love’s demands ever conflict with the demands of morality?” In the final part of the course, we will consider love’s objects, asking “Who and what can we love, and what does this teach us about the nature of love?” In the course of our inquiry, we will consider the ways that philosophical reflection – with its focus on conceptual clarity, rational argumentation, and communicative precision – can be enriched by literature and film while, in turn, helping us to better understand themes from literature, film, and life.

Texts

You do not need to purchase any texts. All readings will be available on Canvas. See “Schedule of Readings” below.

Course Objectives

By taking this course, students will gain familiarity with and understanding of some of the key questions and debates about love that have concerned philosophers. By engaging with these

questions and debates, students will be introduced to and practice the skills required for philosophical inquiry:

- Identification, reconstruction, analysis, and critical evaluation of philosophical arguments
- Framing philosophical problems/puzzles in a clear and compelling way
- Developing one's own philosophical arguments with clarity and precision
- Displaying these skills in writing and in dialogue with classmates

Expectations

Class Structure

Classes will meet Mon-Fri, in the morning and afternoon. Morning sessions are 9am-11:30am and afternoon sessions are 1pm-3pm. I will spend some of the time lecturing, in which case you should listen carefully, take notes and be ready to ask questions about anything you don't understand. Occasionally, we will watch a movie. For most of the time, though, you will be engaged in activities, either alone, in small groups, or with the whole class. For example, you might work in a small group to reconstruct an argument from the text and then discuss your work with the rest of the class.

Four and a half hours is a lot of time to spend doing philosophy! Activities will be varied, and we will take a short (~10 minute) break roughly halfway through each session to help you to stay focused and engaged throughout the day.

Engagement with the Texts

You are expected to carefully read, think about, and take notes on the assigned reading(s) **before class**. Be sure to set aside ample time to do this. Reading philosophy is hard and takes time! Read slowly.

Attendance

You are expected to attend every class session unless you are unwell. If you are sick you should:

- Email me in advance of class to let me know that you cannot attend.
- If you feel well enough to do so, you may participate over Zoom, but you must let me know at least one hour in advance of class (so, by 8am).
- If you are not well enough to participate via Zoom, you should ask one of your classmates for lecture notes and will be given a make-up assignment to complete once you are well enough.

Participation and Engagement in Class

You are expected to be engaged during class time and to participation in class discussion. During discussion, we should approach one another's contributions with curiosity and respect. Please follow

these departmental norms of discussion (<https://philosophy.uchicago.edu/about/who-we-are/diversity-and-inclusion>):

1. Be **collaborative**. Don't dominate conversation; give others the space to contribute.
2. Be **charitable**. Acknowledge the reasons for, and insights in, what other people have to say.
3. Be **courteous**. Avoid condescension, dismissiveness and other varieties of rudeness.
4. Be **judicious**. When weighing whether, or how long, to press a given line, keep in mind the stakes of the discussion. Don't nitpick for the sake of nitpicking.
5. **Avoid giving needless offense**, such as in the description of cases or thought experiments.
6. **Keep in mind that tentativeness is not a confession of ignorance**, nor self-assurance a guarantee of truth.

Communication

You are responsible for keeping up with all communications, via email and Canvas notifications, about the course. If you are having difficulties with the course, for whatever reason, please get in touch with me sooner rather than later, so that we can work together to find a solution.

Read the Syllabus!

You are expected to read the syllabus for the course. You cannot fully engage with the course if you do not know what is expected of you. **I will not respond to emails that ask questions that are already answered in the syllabus.**

Assessment

1. **Attendance and engagement in class, 30% (10% per week).** You are expected to:
 - a. Be present and engaged in each class session.
 - b. Listen attentively to lectures.
 - c. Have completed the reading(s) for that day prior to the start of the morning session.
 - d. Have thought carefully about the readings and be ready to talk about them.
 - e. Participate meaningfully in class activities and discussions.
 - f. Follow the departmental norms of discussion.
2. **Short, in-class, multiple choice quizzes, 10% (ten quizzes in total, 1% each).** These quizzes will test your understanding of key concepts and arguments from our course readings.
3. **Weekly take-home exams, 30% (three exams in total, 10% each).** These exams will cover each of the readings we do for class. There will be two stages to these exams:
 - a. **In class:** At the start of each class session, you will be given some questions about that session's readings and some time to work on them. You should make note of anything you are unsure of or any difficulties you are having. We will then go over

the reading together and you will have chance to ask questions. This is your chance to clear up any confusions!

- b. After class:** You should then go back over your responses after class. On Friday evening of each week, you will submit all of that week's responses in a single document and you will be graded on it. You will be given a grading rubric in advance.
4. **Final project, 30%.** Your final project will involve developing (in writing) your own philosophical argument and then revising or developing your argument in response to dialogue with a classmate. More details for this assignment, including prompts and a grading rubric, will be given in Week 2 of the course.
5. **Extra credit:** Each week, there will be a team competition in the style of a "pub quiz." The winning team will get **1.5%** extra credit. There will be three quizzes in total, so a possible **4.5%** of extra credit in total.

Sickness and Class Etiquette

Please do not come to class if you are sick, or suspect you might be sick, with something contagious, including (but not limited to): cold, flu, coronavirus, stomach virus. This is to prevent you from getting your classmates or instructors sick.

Thank you for helping to ensure that the classroom is a safe and accessible space!

Accessibility

Please let me know if you have a disability and require accommodations. We can work together to make sure that the course is accessible to you. If you encounter obstacles to learning, as a result of, for example, personal or life circumstances or dynamics within the classroom, please come and talk to me so that I can either address the issue or provide accommodations to help you to get the most out of this course.

Please let me know if you need to miss class or adjust deadlines to accommodate religious observance.

Citing Sources, Academic Honesty, and Plagiarism

When you are writing a paper, be sure to distinguish between when you are presenting your own ideas or thoughts and when you are presenting or drawing on somebody else's ideas or thoughts or writings. When you are presenting, drawing on, or developing somebody else's ideas, say so. You should always cite your sources, whether you are directly quoting from them or only paraphrasing. Here is some useful information on how to cite your sources from our campus library: [Home – How do I cite resources? – Library Guides at UChicago](#)

And from the Purdue Writing Lab:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html

Passing another's work off as one's own constitutes plagiarism and will not be tolerated. Students found to be plagiarizing another's work will receive an F grade for the course. Students who are unsure about what constitutes plagiarism should ask the instructor. See here for more information: <https://studentmanual.uchicago.edu/academic-policies/academic-honesty-plagiarism/>.

You should not use AI (Chat GPT, etc.) during this course. Using AI to generate material for your written assignments, exams, in-class participation, or quizzes, constitutes academic dishonesty. Anyone found to be using AI in this way will receive an F grade for the course.

Schedule of Readings

Note: All readings should be done *in advance* of class. So, for example, if a reading is listed for Friday, you should read it on Thursday evening and come to class on Friday prepared to discuss it.

All readings will be posted to Canvas.

There may be slight changes to the reading/movie schedule, in which case you will be notified in advance.

Part 1: Love's Nature

Wk 1	M	Anne Lamott, <i>Somebody: Thoughts on Love</i> , selections. Susan Wolf, "Love: The Basic Questions"
	T	Harry Frankfurt, "On Caring"
	W	Monique Wonderly "Love and Attachment"
	Th	Raymond Carver, <i>What We Talk About When We Talk About Love</i> Watch in class: <i>The Philadelphia Story</i>
	F	Susan Wolf, "Loving Attention: Lessons in Love from <i>The Philadelphia Story</i> "
Wk 2	M	Robert Nozick, "Love's Bond" Plato, <i>Symposium</i> , Speech of Aristophanes Marylin Friedman, "Romantic Love and Personal Autonomy"

Part 2: Love's Reasons

T	Harry Frankfurt, <i>The Reasons of Love</i> , Chapter 2 "On Love, and Its Reasons"
W	Niko Kolodny, "Love as Valuing a Relationship." <i>You may skip sections 6, 7, and 8.</i>

Th Troy Jollimore, "Love as 'Something In Between'"

F David Velleman, "Love as a Moral Emotion. *You can skip the section called "Respect for the law and respect for persons," pp. 344-348, though you may want to look at the first two paragraphs of that section (p. 344) and the final paragraph (p. 348), to get a rough idea of the point. Don't worry about reading all of the footnotes, especially those that go into detail about interpretation of Kant.*

Optional: Bernard Williams, "Persons, Character, and Morality," pp. 17-18.

Part 3: Love's Objects

Wk 3 M Hilde Lindemann, "Miscarriage and the Stories We Live By"
Francesca Segal, *Mother Ship* excerpt

T No reading
Watch in class: *Lars and the Real Girl*

W Tony Milligan, "Animals and the Capacity for Love"
Barbara King, *How Animals Grieve*, excerpts
Watch in class: *Dogs* Season 1 Episode 2 "Bravo, Zeus"

Th Macalester Bell, "Grizzly Man, Sentimentality, and Our Relations with Other Animals"

F No reading