

Course Outline

PHIL 231

The Philosophy of Love and Friendship

Course Introduction: Love and friendship are important parts of the well-lived and happy life. This course will provide students with the opportunity to investigate the philosophical issues concerned with love and friendship. Through the study of some classic literature plus recent articles on the subject, the class will try to answer questions such as: What is the nature of love and friendship? Are they in fact necessary to happiness? Are they philosophical concepts with a significance that goes beyond an analysis of human relationships? Are they a kind of knowledge or rather feelings? Delving into the nature of love and friendship should help us discuss with greater acumen some of the ethical issues associated with them, such as whether we should be solitary, monogamous or polygamous, or even whether we should love all people equally. Other moral topics to be examined in this course include hate, adultery, prostitution, the role of eroticism in the good life, and whether love promotes equality or inequality.

Schedule:

Date	Readings	Assignments Due
Jan. 3	Introduction to course materials	
Jan. 8	Plato, <i>Lysis</i>	
Jan. 15	Plato, <i>Lysis</i>	
Jan. 22	Plato, <i>Symposium</i>	
Jan. 29	Plato, <i>Symposium</i>	1 st Essay 1 st Outline due
Feb. 5	Montaigne, <i>Of Friendship</i>	1 st Essay 2 nd Outline due
Feb. 12	Schopenhauer, <i>Metaphysics of Love</i>	1 st Essay due
Feb. 26	Edyvane, "Against Unconditional Love"	
Mar. 5	Keller, "How Do I Love Thee? Let Me Count the Properties"	
Mar. 12	Whiting, "Impersonal Friends"	2 nd Essay 2 nd Outline due
Mar. 19	Landrum, "Persons as Objects of Love"	2 nd Essay 2 nd Outline due
Mar. 26	Levy, "Perversion and the Unnatural as Moral Categories"	2 nd Essay due
Apr. 2	Review/Catch-up	

Method of Evaluation:

Students will be required to complete 3 assignments:

1) Six argument outlines, each of which summarizes the argument put forward in one of the articles (starting with the Montaigne) listed in the assigned readings. These argument outlines are due at the start of Monday's class on the week in which the readings are assigned. Each outline is worth 4% of the final mark, and will be marked holistically out of ten based on how well I think you have captured what the author is arguing. The structure of the argument outline itself is covered in the accompanying handout, "The Logic of Essays". Students are required to read through the handout and to complete the exercises contained therein. We shall discuss the handout briefly in the first class, and there will be a review session scheduled where I will take up a selection of the exercises. The outlines will be marked holistically, the chief criterion being how well the outline summarizes the main arguments that are made in the assigned reading.

2) Two essays (questions given below). The first essay should be 1500 words (~5 pages) and will be worth 15%, the second essay should be 2500 words in length (~8 pages) and will be worth 30% of the final mark. Each essay requires its own argument outline to be handed in two weeks prior to the essay deadline. Due dates are listed in the class schedule.

3) A final exam worth 31% of the final mark. Students will be required to write a final exam consisting of essays questions that cover the various concepts we will have examined during the course.

Essay Questions:

First Essay:

Can bad people be friends? In answering this question, you must make reference to the arguments presented in the *Lysis*, both for and against, and then add something of your own to show how you deal with those issues.

Second Essay:

What is the role of beauty in friendship and love? In answering the second question, try to form a thesis that allows you to answer secondary questions related to it, such as whether or not the role of beauty is the same in friendship and love, whether there can be love where beauty is absent, etc. In this second essay you must make substantial use of readings other than the *Lysis*.

Technical Considerations for Written Assignments:

1) All written assignments must be typed (black ink, please) and double-spaced on pages with at most 1 inch margins. No extra line spaces between paragraphs. Indent the first line of a paragraph. Printing on both sides of a sheet of paper is quite acceptable.

2) Please no title pages. Also no "Works Cited" or "Bibliography" pages referring to one work; do bibliographic references in a footnote if you must. Please no enormously large-fonted things like titles, names, dates, course numbers, student numbers, phone numbers, or due dates that take up half a page of space. Your title, name, and student number at the top of the first page is quite sufficient. Please visibly number any multiple-page assignments. If for some reason you must hand in the assignment to the office, please include my name at the top of the assignment as well.

3) No duo-tangs, folders, binders, or paperclips. Loose sheets are acceptable, but do remember to number them.

4) Under no circumstances will emailed assignments be accepted. Please hand in your assignments at the start of class on the day they are due.

5) For help on writing humanities papers, please consult the handout, "The Logic of Essays".

6) The final page of this outline is the evaluation form that will be used in the assessment of your writing. This evaluation form provides the clearest explanation of my requirements for an essay. Please, study it carefully before you write your work.

7) The late policy is a deduction of 3% per day that the assignment is handed in late. No comments will be given to late assignments. This course outline lets you know when assignments are due, and you have been given plenty of time to complete them. Consequently last minute excuses for not completing assignments on time will be met with skepticism.

7) Many of the above requirements are arbitrary demands on my part, but they really do facilitate the assessment of your work. If you do not follow these guidelines, YOUR MARK FOR ORGANIZATION ON THE EVALUATION FORM WILL SUFFER DRASTICALLY.

8) Plagiarism is completely unacceptable. If you make use of an idea that is not of your own devising, you must cite the source of that idea. Failure to properly cite sources may result in removal from the course and expulsion from the school. I very much prefer it if you do not make use of secondary literature; at this point, I am much more interested in you coming up with your own ideas and interpretations of ideas and texts.

9) You are responsible for keeping an accessible copy of all the work you hand in. It is unlikely that anything untoward will happen to your assignment, but if it should, the best response is to simply have another copy of it available.

EVALUATION FORM

(Late assignments will not receive comments)

Style:

Grammar: Are the sentences understandable? Are there any spelling mistakes? Is the diction clear and concise? Can the thought behind each sentence easily be grasped?
/10

Organization: Do the ideas logically follow each other, or are they haphazardly strewn together? Are there explicit premises deductively producing conclusions? Are the arguments connected at all, showing a chain of reasoning?
/10

Content:

Argument Outline: /10

Thesis: Does the assignment give an answer to a question or problem put forward? Is the answer more than a simple “yes” or “no”? Is the answer insightful, being an interpretive idea itself? Is the thesis explicitly stated?
/10

Arguments: Are there arguments presented in the paper? Are the arguments interesting or banal? Are the arguments incisive or superficial? Do the arguments explicitly outline broad premises that act as guides to understanding and reveal the unquestioned perspectives adopted in the paper?
/20

Originality: Does the student provide input into the conceptual debates the text engages in? Is there evidence of insight on the student’s part into the topic? Are there any new ideas being explored in the assignment? Is the student able to go beyond ideas raised in class discussion?
/20

Evaluation: Does the student give a fair summation of the ideas contained in the texts used? Are passages from the text cited? Does the use of these ideas meaningfully contribute to the thesis of the essay, or is the use of material a mere addendum to the main arguments of the paper?
/20

TOTAL /100