PHIL4050 - Philosophy Honours I

Eros and Agape
Course Outline

Course Co-ordinator: Dr Joe Mintoff
Room: MC114
Ph: (02) 4921 5181
Fax: (02) 4921 6933
Email: Joseph.Mintoff@newcastle.edu.au
Consultation hours: Tue 12-1pm, Wed 2-3pm

Semester Semester 1 - 2008
Unit Weighting 20
Teaching Methods Seminar

Brief Course Description
Studied in conjunction with PHIL4060, PHIL4070 and PHIL4080, the four courses jointly constituting the honours program in philosophy - provides honours philosophy students with an opportunity to participate in an intensive in-depth study seminar on a major area, theme or problem in philosophy based in extensive reading and extended critical discussion.

Contact Hours
Seminar for 2 Hours per Week for the Full Term

Learning Materials/Texts

Course Objectives
The objectives of the honours program in philosophy are:
(1) Impart to individual students mature and disciplined knowledge to honours level of philosophical themes, problems or areas.
(2) Impart to students critical skills, to honours level, to deal with the issues involved and employ the knowledge and methods involved in their assessment of their own culture and societal life, and in thinking about their own personal lives.

Course Outline Issued and Correct as at: Week 1, Semester 1 - 2008
CTS Download Date: 4 Feb 2008
(3) Develop high level written and oral skills in analysing and presenting philosophical issues.

(4) Develop a capacity to appreciate the philosophical positions involved in how people approach ways of living and evaluating life situations.

**Course Content**
The philosophy honours program comprises 4 seminars on 4 distinct aspects of philosophy and a written thesis. The specific content of a seminar will vary with the expertise of the staff member preparing the seminar; the thesis topic will be chosen in the light of the student's interests, abilities and experience, in relation to those of the supervising staff. Seminars have, e.g., recently included studies of scientific rationality, the rise of virtue ethics, and the rational basis of sociality.

**Assessment Items**

| Essays / Written Assignments | Assessment for the honours program in philosophy comprises 5000 words of written work for each of 4 seminars plus a written thesis of 12000 words, for a total of 32000 words. Assessment for each seminar will be by written work that will be individually structured to suit the subject matter. It will normally be by 2 essays, one of 2000 words, 40%, the other of 3000 words, 60%, but this may be varied to include more frequent, smaller case studies, summaries and the like earlier on, to equivalent value, as the subject matter requires. These essays will require the student to demonstrate mastery of the central concepts, principles and arguments of the material studied. Independent research will be required, guided by the assigned readings and seminar discussions, the latter providing continual assessment and feedback on individual student ability to properly engage the subject matter. Approximately 25% of this course will relate to issues in the methodology of philosophical work. |

---

**Assumed Knowledge**
110 units of successfully completed Philosophy course, or equivalent, plus qualification for entry to the B.A. pass degree, or equivalent.

**Callaghan Campus Timetable**
PHIL4050
PHILOSOPHY HONOURS I
Enquiries: School of Humanities and Social Science
Semester 1 - 2008
Seminar Friday 15:00 - 17:00 [MC110]

**Plagiarism**
University policy prohibits students plagiarising any material under any circumstances. A student plagiarises if he or she presents the thoughts or works of another as one's own. Without limiting the generality of this definition, it may include:

- copying or paraphrasing material from any source without due acknowledgment;
- using another's ideas without due acknowledgment;
- working with others without permission and presenting the resulting work as though it was completed independently.

Plagiarism is not only related to written works, but also to material such as data, images, music, formulae, websites and computer programs.

Aiding another student to plagiarise is also a violation of the Plagiarism Policy and may invoke a penalty.

For further information on the University policy on plagiarism, please refer to the Policy on Student Academic Integrity at the following link -

The University has established a software plagiarism detection system called Turnitin. When you submit assessment items please be aware that for the purpose of assessing any assessment item the University may -

- Reproduce this assessment item and provide a copy to another member of the University; and/or
- Communicate a copy of this assessment item to a plagiarism checking service (which may then retain a copy of the item on its database for the purpose of future plagiarism checking).
- Submit the assessment item to other forms of plagiarism checking

Written Assessment Items

Students may be required to provide written assessment items in electronic form as well as hard copy.

Extension of Time for Assessment Items, Deferred Assessment and Special Consideration for Assessment Items or Formal Written Examinations

Students are required to submit assessment items by the due date, as advised in the Course Outline, unless the Course Coordinator approves an extension of time for submission of the item. University policy is that an assessment item submitted after the due date, without an approved extension, will be penalised.

Any student:

1. who is applying for an extension of time for submission of an assessment item on the basis of medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment; or

2. whose attendance at or performance in an assessment item or formal written examination has been or will be affected by medical, compassionate, hardship/trauma or unavoidable commitment;

must report the circumstances, with supporting documentation, to the appropriate officer following the instructions provided in the Special Circumstances Affecting Assessment Procedure - Policy 000641.

Note: different procedures apply for minor and major assessment tasks.

Please go to the Policy at [http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html](http://www.newcastle.edu.au/policylibrary/000641.html) for further information, particularly for information on the options available to you.

Students should be aware of the following important deadlines:

- **Requests for Special Consideration** must be lodged no later than 3 working days after the due date of submission or examination.
- **Requests for Extensions of Time on Assessment Items** must be lodged no later than the due date of the item.
- **Requests for Rescheduling Exams** must be received in the Student Hub no later than ten working days prior the first date of the examination period

Your application may not be accepted if it is received after the deadline. Students who are unable to meet the above deadlines due to extenuating circumstances should speak to their Program Officer in the first instance.

Changing your Enrolment

The last dates to withdraw without financial or academic penalty (called the HECS Census Dates) are:

For semester 1 courses: 31 March 2008
For semester 2 courses: 31 August 2008
For Trimester 1 courses: 18 February 2008
For Trimester 2 courses: 9 June 2008
For Trimester 3 courses: 22 September 2008
For Trimester 1 Singapore courses: 3 February 2008
For Trimester 2 Singapore courses: 25 May 2008

Students may withdraw from a course without academic penalty on or before the last day of semester. Any withdrawal from a course after the last day of semester will result in a fail grade.

Students cannot enrol in a new course after the second week of semester/trimester, except under exceptional circumstances. Any application to add a course after the second week of semester/trimester must be on the appropriate form, and should be discussed with staff in the Student Hubs.

To check or change your enrolment online, please refer to myHub - Self Service for Students

https://myhub.newcastle.edu.au

Faculty Information

The Student Hubs are a one-stop shop for the delivery of student related services and are the first point of contact for students on campus.

The four Student Hubs are located at:

Callaghan campus
• Shortland Hub: Level 3, Shortland Union Building
• Hunter Hub: Student Services Centre, Hunter side of campus

City Precinct
• City Hub & Information Common: University House, ground floor in combination with an Information Common for the City Precinct

Ourimbah campus
• Ourimbah Hub: Administration Building

Faculty websites

Faculty of Business and Law

Faculty of Education and Arts
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/education-arts/

Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/engineering/

Faculty of Health
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/health/

Faculty of Science and Information Technology
http://www.newcastle.edu.au/faculty/science-it/
Contact details

Callaghan, City and Port Macquarie
Phone: 02 4921 5000
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

Ourimbah
Phone: 02 4348 4030
Email: EnquiryCentre@newcastle.edu.au

The Dean of Students
Resolution Precinct
Phone: 02 4921 5806  Fax: 02 4921 7151
Email: resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Deputy Dean of Students (Ourimbah)
Phone: 02 4348 4123  Fax: 02 4348 4145
Email: resolutionprecinct@newcastle.edu.au

Various services are offered by the University Student Support Unit:

Alteration of this Course Outline

No change to this course outline will be permitted after the end of the second week of the term except in exceptional circumstances and with Head of School approval. Students will be notified in advance of any approved changes to this outline.

Web Address for Rules Governing Undergraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Postgraduate Academic Awards

Web Address for Rules Governing Professional Doctorate Awards

STUDENTS WITH A DISABILITY OR CHRONIC ILLNESS

The University is committed to providing a range of support services for students with a disability or chronic illness.

If you have a disability or chronic illness which you feel may impact on your studies, please feel free to discuss your support needs with your lecturer or course coordinator.

Disability Support may also be provided by the Student Support Service ( Disability). Students must be registered to receive this type of support. To register please contact the Disability Liaison Officer on 02 4921 5766, or via email at: student-disability@newcastle.edu.au

As some forms of support can take a few weeks to implement it is extremely important that you discuss your needs with your lecturer, course coordinator or Student Support Service staff at the beginning of each semester.

For more information related to confidentiality and documentation please visit the Student Support Service (Disability) website at: www.newcastle.edu.au/services/disability

End of CTS Entry
Online Tutorial Registration:

Students are required to enrol in the Lecture and a specific Tutorial time for this course via the Online Registration system. Refer - [http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm](http://studinfo1.newcastle.edu.au/rego/stud_choose_login.cfm)

NB: Registrations close at the end of week 2 of semester.

Studentmail and Blackboard: Refer - [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

This course uses Blackboard and studentmail to contact students, so you are advised to keep your email accounts within the quota to ensure you receive essential messages. To receive an expedited response to queries, post questions on the Blackboard discussion forum if there is one, or if emailing staff directly use the course code in the subject line of your email. Students are advised to check their studentmail and the course Blackboard site on a weekly basis.

Important Additional Information

Details about the following topics are available on your course Blackboard site (where relevant). Refer - [www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/](http://www.blackboard.newcastle.edu.au/)

- Written Assignment Presentation and Submission Details
- Online copy submission to Turnitin
- Penalties for Late Assignments
- Special Circumstances
- No Assignment Re-submission
- Re-marks & Moderations
- Return of Assignments
- Preferred Referencing Style
- Student Representatives
- Student Communication
- Essential Online Information for Students
Outline:
This course addresses issues raised by the contrast between two important forms of love, erosic love (such as romantic love) and agape (such as Christian neighbor love). The course addresses four questions in particular: What is erosic love? What (if anything) makes erosic love valuable, and what are the most worthwhile forms of erosic love? What is agape? Not assuming the existence of God, what contribution (if any) does agape make to a worthwhile life? Discussion of these questions will be focused upon both ancient and modern sources.

Week 1a. Lecture: Eros and Agape

PART I – EROS DEFINED

Week 1b. Lecture: Aristophanes on Love as the Desire for One’s Other Half

Week 2a. Seminar

Seminar Question: What literal truth (if any) is there in Aristophanes’ myth about love in Plato’s Symposium? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 2b. Lecture: Diotima on Love as the Desire to Procreate in Beauty

Week 3a. Seminar

Seminar Question: Explain in your own terms Diotima’s claim that love is procreation in the beautiful, whether physical or mental. Explain as well why she thinks that love, so defined, is valuable. How good is this account of love and how good is her argument for it? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 3b. Lecture: Moderns on Romantic Love as the Passion for Union

Week 4a. Seminar

Seminar Question: What is Soble’s analysis of romantic love, and his arguments for that analysis? What are Caraway’s objections to that analysis? How convincing do you find Soble’s account? Consider in relation to the readings.

PART II – EROS EVALUATED

Week 4b. Lecture: Plato and the Ascent of Love

Week 5a. Seminar

Seminar Question: Explain in your own terms Diotima’s argument for the claim that the proper development of one’s erotic love is to progress from the love of bodies and minds to the love of Beauty Itself. How good is this argument? Are there forms of love better than the merely physical? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 5b. Lecture: Lucretius on the Irrationality of Love
Week 6a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: What are Lucretius’ criticisms of romantic love, and how good are they? What attitude towards one’s beloved does Lucretius recommend, and do you think this attitude is indeed more desirable? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 6b. Lecture: Schopenhauer on Love and the Will to Life  

Week 7a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: What is Schopenhauer’s explanation of the phenomenon of sexual or romantic love? How plausible is this explanation? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 7b. Lecture: Contemporary Discussions of Romantic Love  

Week 8a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: Explain in your own terms Nozick's and Delaney's accounts of romantic love. Which do you find more plausible? How central is it to happiness and a well-lived life? Consider in relation to this week's readings, and all the readings in the first two sections of the course.

PART III – AGAPE DEFINED

Week 8b. Lecture: God's Love and Neighbor Love  

Week 9a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: Explain in your own terms, and with examples, Nygren's account of the difference between eros and agape. Do the same for Outka's account. What substantial differences are there between these two accounts and which do you think is more plausible? Consider these questions in relation to the readings.

PART IV – AGAPE JUSTIFIED

Week 9b. Lecture: Aristotle on the Virtue of Generosity  

Week 10a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: What's is Aristotle's argument for the claim that being a benefactor is a thing to be chosen and loved? How good is this argument? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 10b. Lecture: Kant on Humans as Ends-in-Themselves  

Week 11a. Seminar  
Seminar Question: What does it mean to say that humans are ends-in-themselves, and what practical implications would there be if we are? How plausible is the view that all humans are ends-in-themselves? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 11b. Lecture: Nagel on the Possibility of Altruism  

Week 12a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: Nagel claims in *The Possibility of Altruism* that "the only acceptable reasons [for action] are objective ones" (p 96), and that this is in effect an argument for altruism (p 97). Carefully explain his argument for this claim in your own terms. How good is this argument? Consider these questions in relation to the readings.

Week 12b. Lecture: Singer on Finding Meaning in Doing Good  

Week 13a. Seminar  

Seminar Question: Peter Singer claims in *How are we to Live?* that living an ethical life – for example, working against injustice and exploitation – is the best way open to us of making our lives meaningful. Is he right? Consider in relation to the readings.

Week 13b. Lecture: No Lecture