TEACHING PORTFOLIO
Adam Waggoner

CONTENTS

1 STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY 2

2 TEACHING INTERESTS 4

3 TEACHING EVALUATIONS 5

3.1 QUANTITATIVE 5

3.2 QUALITATIVE 7

3.2.1 PPE 300 (INTRO TO POLITICAL ECONOMY), FALL 2020 – GSI FOR ELIZABETH ANDERSON 7

3.2.2 PHIL 340 (MINDS AND MACHINES), WINTER 2021 – GSI FOR ERIC SWANSON 8

3.2.3 PHIL 183 (CRITICAL REASONING), FALL 2021 – GSI FOR ANNA EDMONDS 9

3.2.4 PHIL 444 (GROUPS AND CHOICES), WINTER 2022 – GSI FOR BRIAN WEATHERSON 11

3.2.5 PHIL 151 (FRIENDSHIP), SPRING 2023 – PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR 13

4 SAMPLE SYLLABI 14

4.1 RECENT ETHICAL THEORY 15

4.2 ETHICAL ISSUES IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE 19

4.3 PHILOSOPHY OF FRIENDSHIP 23

In my first semester teaching, I learned that one of my students was in a desperate spot: she regularly drove two hours to care for her terminally ill father and her younger brother. She drove back the same night for a resident assistance job. Then she came to my 8am class. My student shared this with me in an ethics class focused on justice, human flourishing, and treating people with dignity at the end of life. For her, and increasingly for me, these were not just theoretical questions.

My experience working with this student has deeply influenced my teaching approach. I now think of each course in terms of creating philosophical sanctuaries. This means creating spaces where (i) students feel safe working on their philosophical skills; (ii) they are free to be curious; and (iii) they are emboldened to pursue these goals together.

I pursue the first goal through low-stakes, completion-based reflections. These provide students with opportunities to practice skills like raising good questions, articulating examples, and reflecting on something that changed their minds. Students often respond to individualized and encouraging feedback by practicing progressively more difficult skills throughout the course. Reflections also encourage curiosity because they are open-ended; they embolden collaboration because I focus discussion on a reflection from each student at least once during the term.

Inspired by my very first class, I work to ensure that students have opportunities to practice applying these philosophical skills to pressing issues. For example, in a class on friendship, I opened with a stark picture of rising rates of loneliness, isolation, and polarization—problems that deeply resonated with students. Our guiding question then was how friendship could be an antidote to these social problems. I was delighted to hear from students that the class made them more reflective about friendship; some even reported talking to their friends about the nature and value of those friendships.

I pursue the second pillar of philosophical sanctuaries by encouraging students to be curious about whatever interests them, regardless of whether it is deemed important by society. I promote detours from the main topic of discussion, encourage students to contribute their own resources to discussion, and offer great flexibility their projects. One memorable project taught me more than I ever expected to learn about interpretive dance. There is ripe opportunity for cultivating philosophical sanctuaries outside of higher education. In fact, much of what I have learned about curiosity stems from my work outside higher education: coaching high school ethics bowl; leading a summer philosophy camp for high schoolers; and doing philosophy with elementary schoolers.

Young people are models of curiosity that inspire me to be more curious and cultivate curious classrooms.

A philosophical sanctuary gives students time and space to think, so nearly every class period I teach involves quiet writing or reflection. But I also emphasize in my classes that we have a lot to learn from practicing philosophical skills and being curious together. I thus think of philosophical sanctuaries as a collaborative project and encourage students to give each other feedback, for instance through encouraging them to cite one another in their projects.

For this collaborative effort to succeed, it is vital for students to feel respected and valued by one another. I model this by emphasizing distinct contributions from each person in the class. In doing so, I aim to provide students with some security to be curious and vulnerable, since they are more confident in their own ability to contribute. When each student knows they are valued as an important contributor, we can together create and cultivate a philosophical sanctuary.

2 TEACHING INTERESTS

Below is a sample of classes that I am happy to teach at the undergraduate level. I have included sample syllabi for the three bolded courses.

VALUE THEORY

Metaethics
Ethical Theory
Moral Psychology
Biomedical Ethics
Business Ethics
Ethical Issues in Artificial Intelligence
Social and Political Philosophy
Philosophy of Emotions
Philosophy of Friendship

HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY

Ancient Greek and Roman Philosophy
Medieval Philosophy
Modern Philosophy

OTHER

Political Economy
Game Theory
Symbolic Logic

3 TEACHING EVALUATIONS

I am currently teaching at Purdue University, taught five different courses at the University of Michigan, and taught three different courses at Western Michigan University, all of which are listed below. As Primary Instructor, I designed the syllabi, gave lectures, and led in-class discussions. As Graduate Instructor (GSI)/Teaching Assistant, I taught discussion sections, helped create assignments, graded exams, and held office hours.

- PHIL 42400 (Recent Ethical Theory), Fall 2025 – Primary Instructor
- PHIL 151 (Philosophy of Friendship), Spring 2023 – Primary Instructor
- PHIL 444 (Groups and Choices), Winter 2022 – GSI for Brian Weatherson
- PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning), Fall 2021 – GSI for Anna Edmonds
- PHIL 340 (Minds and Machines), Winter 2021 – GSI for Eric Swanson
- PPE 300 (Intro to Political Economy), Fall 2020 – GSI for Elizabeth Anderson
- PHIL 3340 (Biomedical Ethics), Spring 2019 – Primary Instructor
- PHIL 3000 (Ancient and Medieval Philosophy), Spring 2019 – Primary Instructor
- PHIL 2010 (Intro to Ethics), Fall 2018 – Primary Instructor
- PHIL 2010 (Intro to Ethics), Spring 2018 – TA for James Martin
- PHIL 3340 (Biomedical Ethics), Fall 2017 – TA for David Paul

Below are quantitative and qualitative teaching evaluations for the five most recent courses I have taught.

3.1 QUANTITATIVE

The table on the following pages summarizes the quantitative feedback from all students who responded to my most recent teaching evaluation surveys. The course I am teaching at Purdue is currently in progress, so all five of the courses are from my time at the University of Michigan. For each claim, students were asked to quantify their agreement by selecting a number from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). I have included the interpolated median scores for a representative selection of statements from my course evaluations, alongside the university median for comparison.

Statement	Class	My Median	University Median
Overall, this was an excellent course.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.7 4.7 NA 4.3 4.4	4.4 4.4 NA NA NA
This course advanced my understanding of the subject matter.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.8 4.7 4.7 4.4 4.6	4.6 4.6 4.5 4.6 4.6
Overall, the instructor was an excellent teacher.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.9 4.9 NA 4.8 4.8	4.7 4.7 NA NA NA
The instructor seemed well-prepared for class meetings.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	5 5 4.9 4.9 4.8	4.8 4.8 4.8 4.8 4.8
The instructor explained material clearly.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	5 4.9 4.9 4.9 4.9	4.7 4.7 4.7 4.7 4.7
The instructor treated students with respect.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	5 5 4.9 5 5.0	4.9 4.9 4.9 4.8 4.8
The instructor put material across in an interesting way.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.9 4.8 4.6 NA 4.6	4.6 4.6 NA NA NA
The instructor appeared to have a thorough knowledge of the subject	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.9 4.9 4.9 4.9 4.9	4.9 4.9 NA NA NA

The instructor was sensitive to student difficulty with coursework.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.9 4.8 4.8 4.9 4.7	4.8 4.8 NA NA NA
The instructor acknowledged all questions insofar as possible	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.9 4.9 4.9 4.8 4.9	4.8 4.8 NA NA NA
Students in this course were free to disagree and ask questions.	PPE 300 (Political Economy) PHIL 340 (Minds & Machines) PHIL 183 (Critical Reasoning) PHIL 444 (Groups & Choices) PHIL 151 (Friendship)	4.9 4.8 4.8 4.6 5.0	4.7 4.7 NA NA NA

3.2 QUALITATIVE

Below are complete and unedited sets of written comments from the above five classes. There is a lot here, so I have bolded comments that I feel especially speak to my strengths. In all cases, students were asked to respond to the following prompts: "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course."

3.2.1 PPE 300 (INTRO TO POLITICAL ECONOMY), FALL 2020 – GSI FOR ELIZABETH ANDERSON

Excellent instructor, bright future ahead for Adam Waggoner

Adam was an amazing GSI who truly put his students first. Always wanted to make sure we had an adequate understanding of the material we were studying and challenged us to think about it in new perspectives.

Best GSI really understanding during these times

Adam was an excellent instructor. He was a great discussion facilitator and gave meaningful and helpful feedback. He was a great gsi who really deepened my understanding of the course.

Adam has been hands–down one of the best GSIs I've had at Michigan. He is genuinely interested in helping students, respectful of different ideas and opinions, and makes discussion engaging and fun.

I thought Adam was a terrific GSI. His dedication to helping students was very high, and he moderated the sections very well.

Adam was the best PPE GSI I could have asked for. He was helpful in his feedback, and he was very thoughtful in how he guided his discussion.

It was good, I just wish discussions were more focused on the material from lecture.

Adam was an extremely caring, thoughtful, and knowledgeable instructor. He was always extremely available to his students, meeting with students during office hours, as well as organizing additional meetings for those that needed it.

All assignments were graded and returned promptly. He was also extremely understanding of extensions and was willing to work with me until I had a better understanding of the material.

Adam did a great job at facilitating discussion when necessary, and provided interesting feedback. **He clearly cares deeply about his students and frequently asked for feedback for how to better structure the class in a way that best fits the students.**

This course was well–instructed despite the challenges of an online semester.

Adam was extremely kind and helpful. He was always willing to help and always kept class interesting and on topic.

Adam made the two hours fly by quickly in making the time we spent on different activities and engaging. I would look forward to going to this discussion. There was diversity in who spoke during section and all opinions were respected.

Great

3.2.2 PHIL 340 (MINDS AND MACHINES), WINTER 2021 – GSI FOR ERIC SWANSON

Adam was always well–prepared and discussions aided my understanding of content parallel and extending outside of lecture.

Professor Waggoner was extremely interested and knowledgeable about the subject, and it definitely shone through in his teaching style.

The course was well taught. Adam Waggoner was fair and understanding.

Adam was great and kept the conversation going even during the awkward Zoom class silences, which is really commendable. The way he asked questions and started discussions was in general very good and engaging.

I think the instruction was done extremely well and had lots of engagement. **I always knew what was expected of me and I felt very engaged at all times in class.**

It was well instructed

Very nice and well versed on the topics.

The quality of instruction was very good

This was a great semester, and I enjoyed participating in our interesting, weekly topics during discussion

He was an awesome GSI, was very helpful and supportive, explained things well.

Very great teacher!

I think that Adam was a great GSI. He was knowledgeable about the subject for every section meeting and was consistently able to keep discussions flowing smoothly. His grading was timely and fair throughout the semester and he always seemed super understanding and willing to give extensions if needed during the pandemic. Also, our discussions were always helpful for thinking through the paper topics.

Well done!

Mr. Waggoner did a great job at keeping students involved somehow. Use of the Google Doc and Breakout rooms allowed people to participate even if they didn't like the large group setting.

Very interesting and complicated ideas presented in an easy–to–understand way. It's also very thought–provoking regardless of the stance we came into the course with. Highly recommend.

Discussion was great! I got to understand things we talked about in class and think about upcoming assignments, which was idea.

very good

The quality of instruction in the discussion was very high. Adam tried to open up the floor and never pressured anyone to speak. He also tried to get to know his students :)

Amazing

Great

This was fantastic instruction

Adam Waggoner = Goat

Its great. Really appreciate everything.

3.2.3 PHIL 183 (CRITICAL REASONING), FALL 2021 – GSI FOR ANNA EDMONDS

Very clear, effective instruction. Helped facilitate good learning environment.

It was good

Waggoner was one of the best GSI's I have ever had. Very approachable, and it was obvious that he cared about his students.

The course material was interesting and helped me learn a lot more about the mind and its processes.

Adam was a really great instructor. I think he's extremely knowledgeable and invested in his students. Everything he does supplements either TopHat work, the quizzes, or lecture, so it really helps to sit down with him to let things connect to each other.

Overall, Adam is a great GSI! He is clearly very knowledgeable about the course materials, and is excited to teach/help students.

His explanations of tricky course concepts and quiz/test/tophat questions are also really easy to understand. Not only that, Adam cares a lot about the success of his students. He frequently encourages us to ask questions, and holds office hours at times that are most convenient for us. I really appreciate that Adam returns our assessments/assignments with detailed feedback so quickly as well.

I think overall this course was taught very well

I think the discussion courses were handled very well.

very well done

Adam was a great instructor, who always respected all the questions students had and made an effort to make sure we all were prepared for everything in this class. He was super nice and engaging in all the discussions as well.

It was great!

The quality of instruction was very good! Hard to keep students awake during a Friday class, but Adam definitely made it interesting!

Mr. Waggoner was a very personable and patient instructor.

Adam was a great teacher – very passionate about the subject and always had humorous stories!

I really liked how you put definitions up on the board at the beginning of each class and took into account our feedback on the Google survey sent out.

Adam was a great GSI, and is a great guy. He makes discussion enjoyable yet productive, and always has a friendly and helpful attitude toward his students.

Adam was awesome and really understood all of the material and was extremely thorough in his explanations

Adam is a great gsi who help us with understanding materials during recitation and also he helps us with our problems in quiz and homework which help us to have a better grade. He is very kind and patient to students.

I really enjoyed having Adam as a GSI. The instruction was very helpful and easy to understand; **I always left discussion with minimal confusion about the material for that week.**

Great quality

I really enjoyed my section. Everyone seemed to have a very positive energy that promoted learning, and I think that was primarily due to Adam.

I think instruction in section was great. Adam did a great job of summarizing lecture material briefly, and helped students approach worksheet problems illustrating learned concepts.

Adam was always prompt to help students during our discussion meeting, email, and during office hours.

Adam was very helpful.

Adam is a great GSI that has provided me with a lot of help in this course. His office hours are always useful and insightful to attend.

Students are also encouraged to ask questions and discuss with each other in the discussion section.

It was high quality. The GSI used both materials provided from Professor Edmonds and adapted to the different needs of students every week. It was a well–balanced class.

I think Adam did a great job as GSI for this course.

3.2.4 PHIL 444 (GROUPS AND CHOICES), WINTER 2022 – GSI FOR BRIAN WEATHERSON

Discussion sections were very helpful for understanding the course.

Adam helped me understand the course a lot! He was always open to answering any questions I had on an assignment, met with me outside of his scheduled office hours, and encouraged me to do my best in the course and on the tough assignments.

Adam was very good at explaining and making sure we understood the course material and what was required of us. I think discussion is where I truly learned much of the course material and Adam was very good at teaching in a way that I understood.

Office hours was very helpful and he was happy to meet outside of the scheduled office hours when needed.

The way that this discussion was structured was super helpful for the rest of the class. I appreciate the attention you gave to each discussion.

Helped clear up topics from lecture, making concepts easier to understand

Really good.

Overall this course helped greatly in my understanding where professor weatherson was unclear.

Adam was really helpful in making these concepts easier to understand and recognize within the real world and his activities during discussion were great!

Adam was a great GSI who was always flexible with his schedule to make time for students to discuss essays and written assignments and would often take time out to ensure that I was understanding the course context fully.

very qualified and passionate GSI. always prepared, flexible (esp with covid related concerns). section adequately prepared me for the assignments

Adam made things pertaining to lecture much more clear compared to what was presented in the primary lecture

Adam always came to discussion prepared and willing to adapt to whatever the class wanted to discuss most. I found the handouts that Adam always sent the day before discussion to be helpful in preparing for discussion and better understanding the material.

He was always open to questions and validated/discussed each students' contributions in class. His feedback on assignments

was always timely, detailed, and positive while still critiquing. He created a friendly environment where it felt comfortable to contribute in discussions even if I was unsure of answers. I didn't have to contact him outside of class, but he always made it clear that we could email him with questions or set up appointments with him if we couldn't make it to office hours.

Mr. Waggoner did a great job teaching the material and gave different examples or outlooks than those presented during lectures.

This made it easier to grasp ideas or concepts that slipped through my understanding when originally brought up in lecture

As a senior about to graduate, Adam has been the best GSI I've ever had. He was quick with responding to email, thoroughly answered any and all questions, and explained material to help me better understand.

adam was great

This course was made better because our GSI, Adam. He always made the work more understand enjoyable.

Adam was an incredible GSI who was always prepared, always available, and always understanding. **Without Adam, this course would have been overly esoteric and difficult to grasp, but Adam always conveyed lecture material is a very easy to understand way.**

Adam is a fantastic GSI and did everything you would want a GSI to be/do. Adam is patient, knowledgeable of the topic and made it welcoming to participate in class. Definitely make him a GSI in the future again!

Adam was a great GSI

Adam was always great at fostering group discussion and developing engaging lesson plans during our discussion sections.

Very good, Adam was super helpful and was very knowledgeable about the subject

Adam was very kind and understanding to all students. Was very well–knowledged of the subject and wish the lectures ran a little more as our discussions did.

Adam was a great GSI and really helped me to understand the course material! He would make an excellent professor in the future as he has a knack for explained difficult material

3.2.5 PHIL 151 (PHILOSOPHY OF FRIENDSHIP), SPRING 2023 – PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR

Professor Waggoner always answered questions and was supportive of class discussions. He facilitated the class discussions well. **The feedback on the assignments also was thought–provoking and constructive.**

I think that the quality of instruction in this course was incredible. I feel that it was honestly one of the best classes I have taken during my time at Michigan. It was very clear that Adam understand the material and how to best get it across to the students. Alongside this, I feel that the way the assignments were organized to best test the students knowledge was amazing. Overall, I really enjoyed this class and hope the next philosophy one I take is equally as great!

Adam is really nice and friendly, which was helpful. I don't feel like I learned much from this class though. It didn't really make me rethink much.

As a holistic experience, **I found that the instruction of the course materials balanced utility and fun quite well in that my conceptual and everyday understanding of the theories discussed feels quite complete.**

Instruction in this course was very good. Professor Waggoner was very receptive to student input, and always ensured that student voices were heard. Moreover, he took special care to give each student's thoughts adequate consideration. In addition to his general enthusiasm for discussion of the course material, professor **Waggoner created a welcoming classroom which encouraged discussion and involvement.**

Adam was very friendly and taught in a manner that was supportive of different views, as well as encouraging in a safe space where we could make mistakes (I'm thinking of not feeling so much pressure when presenting).

The quality of instruction in this course was great. Adam allowed for students to chime in all the time which allowed for richer conversations. Adam also clearly explained all the topics with examples and had questions prepared for the readings.

4 SAMPLE SYLLABI

Below I have included sample syllabi for the following three courses:

1. Recent Ethical Theory
2. Ethical Issues in Artificial Intelligence
3. Philosophy of Friendship

4.1 RECENT ETHICAL THEORY

Course Description:

A philosophical examination of significant issues in recent ethical theory and metaethics, such as the nature of value, obligation, virtue, rationality, moral knowledge, the status of ethical sentences, practical applications, and the relationship between ethics and natural science or religion. This semester we will focus on issues central to Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue*, including moral disagreement, attempts to justify morality, and the resurgence of virtue ethics in recent ethical theory.

Required Books:

- *After Virtue* (Notre Dame, Third Edition), Alasdair MacIntyre, ISBN 9780268035044
- Please bring a *printed copy* of our other readings to class.

Assignments:

Reading Responses (10%): Except for the first class and Sept 3, reading responses are due at midnight on the Sunday before each Monday reading (marked with an asterisk below). For full points, reading responses should make it clear that you did the reading and thought about it. Reading responses should **reference page numbers,** be ~250 words, and can

- point out something you found puzzling, explaining why it was puzzling
- point out something you found interesting, explaining why you found it interesting
- make a connection to the reading (e.g. personal experiences, media, other readings)
- briefly explain a point of disagreement with the author

Participation & Attendance (15%): Good participation includes quality completion of in-class handouts, which is how I track attendance. Two absences will be excused without any justification. **If you must be absent from class,** please email me with a brief explanation of your absence and a ~250 word reading response (in addition to any scheduled reading responses).

Good participation also requires contributing to in-class philosophical conversation. Here is a helpful guide on different ways to contribute. I want you to feel free to contribute, so you will not be graded on the philosophical quality of your contributions.

Midterm Essay Exam (25%): Essay prompts will be provided ahead of time and discussed in class.

Project Proposal (5%): Proposals will include an outline of a proposed research project. We will meet together to discuss the project.

Presentation (20%)*:* ~15-minute presentation to the class on the topic of your research project. More details will be provided in class.

Final Paper (25%): The final paper will be on the same topic as your presentation and incorporate feedback provided after the presentation.

Grading:

A+: [99-100]	B+: [87, 90)	C+: [77, 80)	D+: [67, 70)	F: [0, 60)
A: [94, 99)	B: [83, 87)	C: [73, 77)	D: [63, 67)	
A-: [90, 94)	B-: [80, 83)	C-: [70, 77)	D-: [60, 63)	

Accommodations:

Any student with a disability that may prevent them from fully demonstrating their abilities should contact me personally as soon as possible so that we can discuss any accommodations necessary to ensure full participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Disability Resource Center at: drc@purdue.edu or by phone: 765-494-1247.

Academic Integrity:

You can find Purdue's policy on academic dishonesty here. For this class, submitting work produced by generative AI, such as ChatGPT, is prohibited. The goals of this class include developing your own ideas through critical reflection and exercising your creativity. Outsourcing writing tasks to generative AI is much more likely to hinder rather than help with the achievement of these goals.

Electronic Device Policy:

The use of laptops, tablets, and cell phones in class is forbidden, unless they are required for class participation due to a disability. Please bring a *printed copy* of readings to class

Other University Policies:

Some other University policies that may be helpful to consult include the Purdue University Bill of Student Rights, Purdue's Statement of Commitment to Freedom of Expression, and Purdue's Nondiscrimination Policy Statement.

Schedule and Readings:

Part 1: Morality and Disagreement

M, Aug 25: Mary Midgley, "Trying Out One's New Sword"

W, Aug 27: Henry Sidgwick, *The Methods of Ethics*, 7th ed., 1.3.1-1.3.3

M, Sept 1: No class, Labor Day

W, Sept 3*: John Doris and Alexandra Plakias, "How to Argue about Disagreement: Evaluative Diversity and Moral Realism"

M, Sept 8*: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chapter 2; Simon Blackburn, excerpt from *Spreading the Word* (starting w/final paragraph on page 187)

W, Sept 10: T.M. Scanlon, "Motivation and the Appeal of Expressivism" in *Being Realistic about Reasons*

Part 2: Justifying Morality

M, Sept 15*: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue,* Chapter 4

W, Sept 17: Simon Blackburn, "Self-Control, Reason, and Freedom" in *Ruling Passions*, **pages 238-256**

M, Sept 22*: Christine Korsgaard, "The Authority of Reflection, 3.1.1-3.3.6" in *The Sources of Normativity*, **pages 90-112**.

W, Sept 24: Christine Korsgaard, "The Authority of Reflection, 3.3.7-3.6.1" in *The Sources of Normativity*, **pages 112-130**

M, Sept 29*: Simon Blackburn, "Self-Control, Reason, and Freedom" in *Ruling Passions*, **pages 256-278**

W, Oct 1: No Reading, Midterm Review

M, Oct 6: Midterm Exam

W, Oct 8: No Reading, In-Class Discussion

M, Oct 13: No Class (Fall Break)

Part 3: Virtue Ethics and Human Flourishing

W, Oct 15: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chapter 5; G.E.M Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy"

M, Oct 20:* Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chapter 6 (pages 62-66) & J.S. Mill, excerpt from *Utilitarianism*

W, Oct 22: Giving Exercise

M, Oct 27*: Peter Geach, "Good and Evil"

W, Oct 29: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chapter 12

M, Nov 3*: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chapter 14

W, Nov 5: Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, Chapter 15 (**Project Proposals due Nov 7**)

M, Nov 10*: Martha Nussbaum, "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach"

Part 4: What Does Virtue Look Like?

W, Nov 12: Susan Wolf, "Moral Saints"

M, Nov 17*: Vanessa Carbonell, "What Moral Saints Look Like"

W, Nov 19: Presentations

M, Nov 24: Presentations

W, Nov 26: No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

M, Dec 1: Presentations

W, Dec 3: Presentations

M, Dec 8: No Class, extra office hours to discuss presentation feedback/final paper

W, Dec 10: No Class, extra office hours to discuss presentation feedback/final paper

4.2 Ethical Issues in Artificial Intelligence

Course Description

The aim of this course is to use philosophical methods to investigate applied ethical issues in artificial intelligence. The course is divided into three parts, each of which develops a core ethical concept and its application to a particular issue in artificial intelligence. The first section focuses on justice (1A) and algorithmic bias in policing and sentencing (1B). The second section focuses on beneficence, or doing good, (2B) and asks how tools in artificial intelligence can help do good in the fields of health care and transportation (2A), as well as general risks of harm posed by artificial intelligence (2C). The third section focuses on virtue (3A) and how algorithms used in media can help and hinder us in becoming better people (3B). More generally, the course aims to understand ethical issues in artificial intelligence and make more informed decisions in the way we interact with artificial intelligence in our personal, professional, and political lives.

Assessments

Attendance & Participation 10% (maximum x points)

Each class students attend is worth x attendance and participation points. Students are expected to actively participate in class. See this helpful guide from Olivia Bailey on 21 ways to participate in philosophical conversation. The rest of the attendance and participation points come from quality participation in class. Students who attend almost all (-2, -3?) classes and have excellent participation can expect full points.

Media Responses 15% (maximum x points)

Media responses are due 24 hours before class meets. They can be on required or optional readings or podcasts listed on the syllabus. Responses should include one constructive remark (e.g. a potential problem or an application) and one question you had about what you read or listened to. There is no strict word limit, but a rough guideline for responses is 200 words. Media responses can either receive no points, half points, or full points. Half points or no points will be given in cases where there is not a constructive comment, not a question, or it is unclear whether the reading was read or the podcast was listened to. Since I use these responses to help structure class discussion, late responses will not be accepted, but the maximum number of points allows for missing x responses.

First Writing Assignment 20% (maximum x points, due beginning of 2.A)

Write a clear, concise, and informative summary for one of the readings in 1.B. The summary should be between 250 and 400 words, summarizing the key information in the reading in a way that is accessible to someone who has not read what you are summarizing.

Second Writing Assignment 20% (1000-1500 words, maximum x points)

The second writing assignment has two parts. First, and drawing from at least one of the readings under 2.A on the syllabus, charitably explain why one of the technologies discussed has the potential to do a lot of good in the world. Second, and drawing on one of the readings under 2.A, develop a compelling reason why someone might think the use of these technologies would lead to some injustice.

Flash Talk 5% (maximum x points)

The flash talks will be a ~4 minute presentation of your research project presented to the class in week 15.

Final Project 35% (maximum x points)

OPTION 1: Research Paper (3000-3500 words)

The research paper will discuss an ethical issue in artificial intelligence. It may (i) focus on one of the technologies and issues we discussed in class in more detail or (ii) discuss some other ethical issue in artificial intelligence. The paper should clearly explain the technology in a way that is accessible to a general audience, lay out an ethical problem, raise potential solutions to that problem, and consider problems with those solutions. More information in class.

OPTION 2: Podcast (30-40 minutes)

The podcast will discuss an ethical issue in artificial intelligence. It may (i) focus on one of the technologies and issues we discussed in class in more detail or (ii) discuss some other ethical issue in artificial intelligence. The podcast should clearly explain the technology in a way that is accessible to a general audience, lay out an ethical problem, raise potential solutions to that problem, and consider objections to those solutions.

There are a variety of potential formats for the podcast:

- Interviewing someone with expertise relevant to the issue focused on in the podcast
- Having another person not in the class interview you about a topic you've researched
- Have a joint conversation with another student in the class about the ethical issue

Readings: Section 1A

Week 1

Tuesday: Organizational Meeting

Thursday: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (3, 11-12)

Week 2

Tuesday: Mills, "Ideal Theory as Ideology," *Hypatia*

Thursday: Thompson, "Imposing Risks"

Section 1B

Week 3

Tuesday: Roth & Kearns "Introduction," *The Ethical Algorithm*; (10 pages) O'Neil, "Chapter 5, Civilian Casualties," *Weapons of Math Destruction* (16 pages)

Thursday: ProPublica, "Machine Bias" (2016); "Response to ProPublica"

Week 4

Tuesday: "How hidden bias affects the criminal justice system," *The Future of Everything* w/Sharad Goel; "Algorithmic Injustices and Relational Ethics w/Abeba Birhane

Thursday: Jorgensen, "Algorithms and the Individual in Criminal Law"

Section 2A

Week 5

Tuesday: Davenport & Kalekota (2019), "The potential for artificial intelligence in healthcare;" Podcast: The Business of Healthcare, Episode 84, An Intro to Healthcare Related AI, ML, Data Analytics

Thursday: Self-Driving Car/Automation Selection from Woolridge; Zipper, "Companies are Racing to make self-driving cars. But why?"

Section 2B

Week 6

Tuesday: Mill, "Chapter 2," *Utilitarianism*; Assignment 1 due

Thursday: Rawls, "Classical Utilitarianism" from Justice as Fairness; Chappell, "Naïve vs. Prudent Utilitarianism"

Section 2C

Week 7

Tuesday: Greaves and MacAskill, "The Case for Strong Longtermism"

Thursday: Setiya, https://www.bostonreview.net/articles/the-new-moral-mathematics/;

Week 8

Tuesday: Amodei, et. al, "Concrete Problems in AI Safety"

Thursday: Podcast: "Katja Grace on Slowing Down AI, AI Expert Surveys, And Estimating Risk," Inside View; Optional: Grace, et. al, "When Will AI Exceed Human Performance? Evidence from AI Experts,"

Writing & Research Time

Week 9

Tuesday: Writing Workshop for Assignment 2 (still have to figure out how to do this, planning for peer review type thing in class)

Thursday: Making a Podcast (guest speaker); media response for this day will be listening to a podcast of your own choosing on AI and writing ~200 words on what you found interesting

Section 3A

Week 10

Tuesday: Aristotle II.1-6 (Habits, Virtues, Mean); Assignment 2 Due

Thursday: Annas, "Being Virtuous and Doing the Right Thing"

Week 11

Tuesday: Doris, "Character and Consistency," *Lack of Character,* Chapter 2

Thursday: Selections from Tessman, *Burdened Virtues*

Section 3B

Week 12

Tuesday: O'Neil: Chapter 4, Propaganda Machine

Thursday: Nguyen, How Twitter Gamifies Communication

Week 13

Tuesday: Selections from Noble, "Algorithms of Oppression"

Thursday: Railton (2020), "Ethical Learning, Natural and Artificial"

Writing & Research

Week 14

No Class, Attendance Points for Signing up for x minute meeting with me to discuss final project

Week 15

Tuesday: Flash Talks (3-4 minutes, 5% of final project grade)

Thursday: Flash Talks (3-4 minutes, 5% of final project grade)

Week 16

Tuesday: Final Class Discussion (topic voted on by class)

4.3 PHILOSOPHY OF FRIENDSHIP

Course Description

Our friends are at the center of many of our most difficult personal decisions. We often face difficult decisions about our friends; we often make difficult decisions with our friends. In this course, we will focus on philosophical dimensions of friendship like the following: What is friendship, and why is it valuable? Should we be biased toward our friends? If so, how? How should friendship intersect with politics? Students will learn to critically engage with philosophical arguments and ideas, to construct and defend their own arguments (verbally and in writing), and to reflect on the significance of these topics in their own lives.

To pursue these questions, we will draw from the history of philosophy, contemporary philosophy, discussions of friendship in popular media, and insights we have gathered in our own experiences of friendship.

Course Goals

In this course, you will

1) explore, articulate, and critically evaluate your own views on friendship

2) integrate philosophical ideas to your experiences of friendship and draw on experiences of friendship to make philosophical progress

3) develop further understanding of some historical and contemporary views on friendship

You will also develop and improve the following general skills:

4) noticing puzzling phenomena in everyday personal decisions and relationships

5) charitably interpreting, summarizing, and collaboratively discussing others' views

6) effectively communicating complex ideas in writing

Course Materials

All readings will be available on Canvas.

Assignments

Friendship Survey (3%): The friendship survey aims to understand your views on friendship before taking this course. It's designed to get your initial reaction without requiring any research or time spent polishing the answers. The survey is graded based entirely on completion, so everyone who submits it will receive full credit. The survey is **due before class on Tuesday, May 2,** but there will be a 24-hour grace period.

Participation (12%): This course is heavily discussion-based. Your contributions are a key part—they make the course more interesting, fun, and help others develop collaborative philosophical

skills. The participation grade is designed to recognize your contributions to our course community. There are various ways to contribute:

- **large-group discussion** (e.g. by raising questions, providing examples, asking for a definition or clarification, summarizing what's been discussed, or any of these examples)
- **small-group discussions** (e.g. any of the above examples, facilitating, drawing others into the conversation, bringing insights from small-groups to the large-group)
- **coming to class prepared** (e.g. doing the readings, coming with questions)
- **sharing resources and insights outside of class time** (e.g. sharing discussions of friendship in popular media on Canvas or in office hours, raising helpful questions and offering feedback about the course)

There will be a brief midterm (due 5/21) and final (due 6/21) self-assessment of your participation. The purpose of these assessments is (a) to prompt reflection on your own participation in the course and (b) to help me understand how you have contributed to the course. **I will have final say on the participation grade**, but the grade will be heavily informed by your self-assessments. See the Assignments tab on Canvas for the participation rubric and self-assessments.

In-Class Activities (10%, *2% each*): These activities, **due at the end of class**, are responses to in-class prompts designed to promote small-group and large-group discussions. There will be seven opportunities, with dates marked on Canvas, to submit an in-class activity. Guidelines, including assessment, will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class.

Reading Responses (10% *2% each*): Reading responses are designed to get your input on what we discuss in class, so they are **due by 12pm on day the reading** will be discussed. There will be five opportunities to submit reading responses, with dates marked on Canvas, to submit a reading response. Guidelines, including assessment, will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class.

Writing Skills Assignment #1 (17.5%): This assignment is designed to develop skills of summarizing and explaining other views. The assignment will focus on Week 2's article "Friendship and the Self" and will be **due by 11:59pm, 5/13**. More details will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class.

Writing Skills Assignment #2 (17.5%): This assignment is designed to develop skills of posing objections to other views. The assignment will focus on Week 4's article "Friendship and Belief" and will be **due by 11:59pm, 5/28**. More details will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class.

Final Project (30%): The final project has three steps: (i) an outline of your idea for the project (5%, due by **11:59pm, 6/5**); (ii) a flash talk (5%, presented in class week 7); (iii) a final paper (20%, due

by **11:59pm, 6/23**). The topic will focus on some element of friendship you have changed your mind about over the course. More details will be posted on Canvas and discussed in class.

Grading

A+: [99-100] B+: [87, 90) C+: [77, 80) D+: [67, 70) F: [0, 60)

A: [94, 99) B: [83, 87) C: [73, 77) D: [63, 67)

A-: [90, 94) B-: [80, 83) C-: [70, 77) D-: [60, 63)

Extensions

The friendship survey, participation reflections, and writing skills assignments all have a 24-hour grace period. If you need additional time, please reach out to me. There will not be extensions for the in-class activities or reading responses, but you can miss two in-class activities and one reading response and still receive full credit. The final project is due as late as I can push it back, so there will be no extensions on this assignment.

Communication

All class announcements will be made over Canvas, so please be sure your settings are adjusted to receive notifications. The best way to contact me is by email, and I'll aim to respond within 24 hours during weekdays (I'm generally off email on weekends). If you haven't heard back from me within 24 hours, please feel free to follow up. You are welcome to request a meeting time outside of normal office hours.

Accommodations

If you are experiencing or anticipating disability-related barriers to the course, please let me know at your earliest convenience and contact Services for Students with Disabilities. I am happy to adjust things wherever possible to ensure that the course is accessible to all students.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas or words as your own without proper acknowledgement or citation. It is a serious form of academic misconduct. You are responsible for making sure none of your work is plagiarized. Using the ideas or organization of a source without citing – even if you change the words – also counts as plagiarism. Be sure to cite work that you use, both direct quotations and paraphrased ideas.

Technology in Class

Laptops are permitted if you are using them to access readings or take notes. Please be mindful how using technology for non-class related purposes impacts not only your learning experience, but also those around you.

Course Schedule

Date	*Readings (to complete before class)*	*Deadlines*
Tuesday 5/2	None—Introduction to the Course	**Due Tuesday before class: Friendship Survey**
Thursday 5/4	Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book VIII (selections)	
Tuesday 5/9	Cocking & Kennett, "Friendship and the Self"	
Thursday 5/11	Tsai, "Vulnerability in Intimate Relationships"	**Due Sunday at 11:59pm: Writing Skills Assignment #1**
Tuesday 5/16	Wolf, "Moral Saints" *Optional: Reread Aristotle Nicomachean Ethics Book VIII on Virtuous Friendship*	
Thursday 5/18	Yao, "Grace and Alienation"	**Due Sunday at 11:59pm: Participation Reflection#1**
Tuesday 5/23	Keller, "Friendship and Belief"	
Thursday 5/25	None—Writing Workshop	**Due Sunday at 11:59pm: Writing Skills Assignment #2**
Tuesday 5/30	Christ and Kauff, "Intergroup Contact Theory"	
Thursday 6/1	Schwarzenbach, "Civic Friendship"	
Tuesday 6/6	Nguyen, "How Twitter Gamifies Communication"	**Due Wednesday at 11:59pm: Final Project Outline**

Thursday 6/8	Bae Brandtzaeg et. al, "My AI Friend"	
Tuesday 6/13	None—Flash Talks Presentations	
Thursday 6/15	None—Flash Talk Presentation	**Due Sunday at 11:59pm: Participation Reflection #2**
		Due Friday, 6/23 at 11:59pm: Final Project