

PHI 100¹
Concepts of the Person

Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:30–12:50 p.m.
Hall

Professor Robert Harvey
office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 2:30–3:45 p.m.
241 Harriman Hall

teaching assistants:
office hours:
Hall

Here is how *the generic, catalogue descriptor* for PHI 100 reads: “an introduction to philosophy through readings and discussion on topics such as human identity, human understanding, and human values.” But let’s look first at the course title. Where do we get the term “person”? What does that mean? Does being a person entail responsibilities? What is it that we call an individual? ... a subject? ... the self? ... the ego? The premise of this course is that the line of questioning just opened, above, is a fruitful way of introducing ourselves to the world we call “philosophy” and exploring one of the many domains of this species’ experience that concerns it.

Required Readings

William O. Stephens, *The Person: Readings in Human Nature*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson–Prentice Hall, 2006.

Recommended Reading

René Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy*
Plato, *Symposium, Apology*
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*
W.E.B. DuBois, “Double-Consciousness”
Jean-Paul Sartre, “Bad Faith”
Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych*
Jorge Luís Borges, “Borges and I”
David Hume, *Treatise of Human Nature*
Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 7-34
Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 163-68 (on the “they”), 299-303 (on death)
Jacques Derrida, “Adieu: to Emmanuel Levinas”
Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*, 19-30 (on mourning and poitics)
Maurice Merleau-Ponty *Phenomenology of Perception*, 78-85 (on the phantom limb)
—, “Cezanne’s Doubt”
Friedrich Nietzsche, “Truth and Lying in the Non-Moral Sense”

¹ DEC category B or SBC categories CER & HUM.

Augustine, *Confessions*, Book X
 Michel Foucault, "Christianity and Confession"
 Sigmund Freud, "The Unconscious"
 Karl Marx, "Introduction to the *Grundrisse*
 Simone de Beauvoir, "Introduction" to *The Second Sex* (1947)
 Audre Lorde, "Age, Race, Class and Sex: Women Redefining Difference" (1984)
 Donna Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology, and Socialist Feminism in the 1980s" (1987)
 Hobbes, *Leviathan*
 John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*
 Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus*
 Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
 Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Intruder*
 Gloria Anzadúa, *Borderlands/La Frontera*
 Sigmund Freud, *The Ego and the Id*

Course Requirements

- ~~ungraded reading responses to be submitted on BlackBoard by midnight each Sunday (10%)~~
 Part of the class discussions in the week following submission of your reading responses will be based on a selection of them. What, to your view, is the most salient or productive point made by the philosopher in the assigned reading? Attempt to formulate a question regarding the point. If there is space and if you're inclined, you may comment on how the reading addresses the concerns I express in the second paragraph at the top of this syllabus. Length: 200-300 words.
- ~~three short answer quizzes (25%)~~
- ~~a short answer midterm, including a short essay (20%)~~
- ~~a short answer final, including two short essays (35%)~~
- ~~attendance and active participation in discussions (10%). Attending class supposes preparation and a commitment to being attentive to the thoughts and words of others as well as one's own participation.~~

Official University Statements²

Responsibilities in the Classroom

Students are expected to attend class regularly unless other arrangements are made; arrive for class on time and leave the classroom only at the end of class; engage in class discussions and activities when appropriate; exhibit classroom behavior that is not disruptive of the learning environment; secure and turn off all electronic communications and entertainment devices during class time unless otherwise directed by the course instructor. Any use of a cell phone or other unauthorized electronic device during an examination may lead to an accusation of academic dishonesty.

Absentee Policy

² for further information, see https://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/provost/faculty/handbook/academic_policies/minimal_instructional_and_student_responsibilities.php

Students are expected to report for their examinations and major graded coursework as scheduled. If a student is unable to report for any examination or to complete major graded coursework on time, the student must contact the faculty member immediately. If the student cannot reach the faculty member, then s/he should contact the Director of Undergraduate Studies.

Academic Integrity

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic judiciary website at <http://www.stonybrook.edu/uaa/academicjudiciary/>

Disability Support Services (DSS)

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building, Room 128 (631-632-6748). They will determine with you what accommodations, if any, are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Semester Program

N.B. — I shall endeavor to keep to the following schedule of readings and discussions. However, I reserve the possibility of modifications in order to favor critical thinking over the compulsion to complete.

27 August

29 August

3 September

5 September

10 September

12 September

17 September

19 September (Berkeley)

24 September

26 September

1 October

3 October

8 October

10 October

15 October (Fall Break)

17 October

22 October

24 October

29 October

31 October

5 November

7 November

12 November

14 November

19 November

21 November

26 November

3 December

5 December

(27 sessions – intro/conclusion = 25 sessions)

DRAFT