

## **Ethics of Communication**

**PHI 3693 (04B7), 3 credits**

**MWF 3:00-3:50 on Zoom**

**Synchronous Format**

**Instructor: Dr. Thomas Auxter**

**Office hours: MW 4:00-4:50pm**

**115C Griffin-Floyd**

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**Philosophy office: 392-2084**

**In this course we will cover themes and topics in philosophical discussions of the ethics of communication. We will read both classical and contemporary texts in the European, African, and Latin American traditions.**

### **Topics:**

- **Across cultures, languages, geographies, and histories, what counts as communication? What is the significance of dialogue?**
- **What are the limits of the universe of discourse?**
- **What are the parameters and minimum conditions of meaningful communication?**
- **Do souls communicate with souls across the boundaries of life and death?**
- **Is communication only human to human? Animal to animal?**
- **How do answers to these questions affect choices we make about the possibilities for interaction and the development of relations?**
- **What values are at stake? How are choices defined?**

**This course counts toward the Humanities (H) general education requirement.**

## IMPORTANT NOTE:

Details about grading policies and scale, as well as course policy, can be found at the end of this syllabus. Students are also invited to visit the Canvas site to familiarize themselves with details concerning grading and course policies. Grades and comments on graded work will be available only on the Canvas site.

For communication on most issues, contact instructor at [tauxter@ufl.edu](mailto:tauxter@ufl.edu). Communication requiring confidentiality is restricted to Canvas.

## Required Texts

Plato, *Republic*, Cornford translation. (ISBN 0195003640. Amazon cost online new \$8.98.)

Mill, *On Liberty* (ISBN 014144147X. Amazon cost online: new \$11.20; used \$4.29. *On Liberty* is free online from [socialsciences.mcmaster.ca](http://socialsciences.mcmaster.ca))

Tsenay Serequeberhan, ed., *African Philosophy: The Essential Readings* (ISBN 1557783098. Amazon cost online new: \$15.25; used \$6.95)

Jorge Luis Borges, *Conversations* (ISBN 1-57806-076-1. Amazon cost online: new \$25; used \$7.51)

## Readings

### August

#### 31 Introduction

### September

#### 2 Introduction

4 Plato, *Republic* 327-336 (margin numbers)

7 Labor Day – no class

9 Plato, *Republic* 336-354 (margin numbers)

11 “ “ 357-367

14 “ “ 445-455

16 “ “ 456-465

18 “ “ 466-473

21 “ “ 473-487

23 “ “ 514-521

25 “ “ 588-592

28 Thomas Auxter, “Immanuel Kant” - lecture

30 J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter One

## October

2 Discussion

5 J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter Two summary, last four pages (“We have now recognized”)

7 “ “ “ Chapter Three

9 “ “ “ “ “

12 “ “ “ Chapter Four, first twelve pages (up to “As a first instance...”)

14 Simone de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*, Part I: “Ambiguity and Freedom” (online)

16 “ “ “ “ “ “ “

19 Essay Test (midterm) – due at 11:59pm

21 Tsenay Serequeberhan, ed., *African Philosophy*, “African Philosophy: The Point in Question,” pp. xvi-xxii

23 Tsenay Serequeberhan, pp. 3-28

26 Innocent Onyewuenyi, “Is There an African Philosophy?” pp.29-46

28 Henry Odera Oruka, “Sagacity in African Philosophy,” pp.47-62

30 Kwasi Wiredu, “On Defining African Philosophy,” pp. 87-98

## November

2 Kwasi Wiredu, pp. 98-110

4 Steve Biko, “Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity” (online, *The InterContinental Cry*)

6 Jorge Luis Borges, *Conversations*, pp. 1-13

9 “ “ “ “ pp. 14-41

11 Veterans Day. No class

13 Jorge Luis Borges, *Conversations*, pp. 42-59

16 “ “ “ “ pp. 59-75

18 “ “ “ “ pp. 76-83

20 “ “ “ “ pp. 84-91

23 “ “ “ “ pp. 240-247

25 No class

27 No class

30 Thomas Auxter, “From Cultural Imperialism to Cultural Pluralism” - lecture

## December

2 Leopoldo Zea, “History and the Latin American Mind” - lecture

4 Jose Carlos Mariategui, “On the Indigenous Problem” - lecture

7 Conclusion

9 Conclusion

15 Final examination essays (2) are due at 11:59pm.

## References

- Plato, *Republic*  
*Apology*
- J. W. Roberts, *City of Socrates*
- C. Kerényi, *Eleusis*
- Martin Bernal, *Black Athena*
- Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion*
- Frank Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity*
- Immanuel Kant, *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer*  
*Critique of Pure Reason*  
"The End of All Things"
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*  
*The Subjection of Women*
- Richard Sennett, *The Fall of Public Man*
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*
- Simone de Beauvoir, *The Ethics of Ambiguity*  
*The Second Sex*
- Jean- Paul Sartre, *Colonialism and Neocolonialism*
- Ofelia Schutte, *Cultural Identity and Social Liberation in Latin American Thought*
- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*  
*Black Skin, White Masks*
- Albert Camus, *Resistance, Rebellion, and Death*
- Steve Biko, *I Write What I Like*
- Tsenay Serequeberhan, ed., *African Philosophy*
- Jorge Luis Borges, *A Personal Anthology*  
*Conversations*
- Jose Carlos Mariategui, *Seven Interpretive Essays on Peruvian Reality*
- Leopoldo Zea, *The Role of the Americas in History*

*Note: The University asks faculty to post information about the grading scale, academic honesty, assigned work, students with disabilities, classroom policies, and online course evaluation. That information from the University, as well as information about the criteria for grading essays in this class, follows. See also the Canvas site for this information. – T.A.*

## Graded Work and Grading Schema

**There will be a midterm essay test (due October 19 at 11:59pm) and two essays written in a final examination (due December 15 at 11:59pm). Essays are take-home exams, with choices of questions given to students at least ten days in advance. Students will choose the one question (in the midterm), or two questions (in the final exam), that they want to answer. Each of the three essays will count as one third of the grade. Grades and comments on graded work will be available only on the Canvas site.**

## CRITERIA FOR GRADING ESSAYS

**CRITERIA FOR GRADING ESSAYS ARE AS FOLLOWS: CONSISTENCY, COHERENCE, COMPREHENSIVENESS IN RELATION TO SUBJECT MATTER AND UNIVERSE OF DISCOURSE, PLAUSIBILITY OF EXAMPLES AND COUNTER-EXAMPLES, AND ANTICIPATION OF OBVIOUS OBJECTIONS. AT LEAST TWO CLASS SESSIONS (ONE BEFORE THE MIDTERM AND ONE BEFORE FINAL EXAMS) WILL BE DEVOTED TO QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE MEANING OF THE CRITERIA AND WHAT COUNTS AS MEETING THE CRITERIA.**

The following grade scale will be used to assign final letter grades for the course. See UF grading policies for assigning grade points at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Grade Scale	Grade Value
100-93=A	A=4.0
92-90=A-	A-=3.67
89-86=B+	B+=3.33
85-82=B	B=3.00
81-79=B-	B-=2.67
78-75=C+	C+=2.33
75-72=C	C=2.00
71-69=C-	C-=1.67
68-66=D+	D+=1.33
65-62=D	D=1.00
61-60=D-	D-=0.67
59-0=E	E=0.00

**STUDENTS CAN EXPECT MOST ESSAYS TO BE RETURNED IN SEVEN DAYS.**

### **Course Policy:**

- 1. Class attendance is required.**
- 2. Students will have an opportunity to raise questions at the beginning and end of each class.**
- 3. It is also permitted to ask questions during a lecture by raising a hand. This can be a request for clarification. It can also be to challenge a point that has been made.**

**4. To communicate with the instructor of most issues, email [tauxter@ufl.edu](mailto:tauxter@ufl.edu). To communicate regarding confidential issues use Canvas.**

**5. Policies on Academic Honesty, Assigned Work, Students with Disabilities, and Online Course Evaluation Follow:**

**ACADEMIC HONESTY.** UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

**ASSIGNED WORK REFLECTS THE CARNEGIE I STANDARD OF AT LEAST AT LEAST TWO HOURS OF WORK OUTSIDE OF CLASS FOR EACH CONTACT HOUR.**

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION.** Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific times when they are open.