



The unexamined life is not worth living.
— Plato, *Apology*



Philosophy 1000 is one of a group of five courses that we call the foundation courses. The courses make a Villanova education distinctive and work together to answer a series of related questions:

WHO AM I?

Augustine and Culture Seminar 1000 (Ancients) and 1001 (Moderns)

WHAT CAN I KNOW?

Philosophy 1000:
Knowledge, Reality, Self

WHAT DO I BELIEVE?

Theology and Religious Studies 1000:
Faith, Reason, and Culture

HOW SHOULD I LIVE?

Ethics 2050:
The Good Life—
Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems

By seeking answers to these questions, you will conduct an interdisciplinary inquiry that is informed by Augustinian and Catholic intellectual traditions, develop your skills in critical thinking and communication, deepen your understanding of yourself and the world, and engage with issues of personal responsibility and social justice.

Philosophy 1000
Knowledge, Reality, Self
Foundation Question
What can I know?

VILLANOVA UNIVERSITY

Fall 2018

PHI_1000_H03

Knowledge, Reality, Self

TR 1:00-2:15 pm

Instructor: Delia POPA

delia.popa@villanova.edu

<https://villanova.academia.edu/DeliaPopa>

Office location: St. Augustine Center for the Liberal Arts, Room 167

Office hours: TBA

Office phone: (610) 519-4698

Course Description

Wisdom is pursued in common with all humanity and is achieved by open, intelligent, responsible, and mutually respectful interaction of points of view
(Augustine: Sermon 117, 11)

Studying philosophy is a beautiful opportunity to learn about a long tradition of thought full of striking ideas about the world we live in and about our possibilities to explore it. But philosophy is much more than that: it is an *experience* through which each of us can try to find something more about who we really are. The promises of this experience depend a lot on how we understand what we encounter. Giving a sustainable meaning to our living experience becomes then a specific philosophical challenge.

The course will focus on our relation to the reality of our experience. What makes something real for us? What makes it unreal? How do we set apart reality from fiction in our everyday life? Instead of taking one determined reality for granted, we will progressively understand reality as a multiple process challenging each of us to work continuously on ourselves while being responsively engaged with the others.

Through intensive readings, discussions and reflection, this course invites you to get involved with issues arising at different moments in the history of philosophy. We will start with the study of some of Plato's Dialogues investigating the means of our knowledge of reality and then follow the variations of this topic as it develops in Medieval, Modern and Contemporary Philosophy. As we will approach Modern and Contemporary philosophies, we will see that the knowledge of reality is inseparable from an inquiry about self and identity.

Learning goals

The course is an invitation to explore the philosophical tradition and to get familiar with (sometimes very) difficult philosophical texts. If you read carefully, if you do your writings truthfully and if you get highly involved in the group discussions, you can reasonably expect to:

- learn how to use philosophical concepts and arguments;
- manage to express your thoughts and opinions with clarity;
- develop and refine your critical thinking skills;
- cultivate the capacity to think by yourself;
- improve your communication skills.

Requested readings

Plato, **Phaedrus**, 1995: Hackett Classics.

Descartes, **Meditations on First Philosophy**, 1993: Hackett Classics.

Other Readings

(Excerpts delivered on Blackboard)

Augustine, **The City of God**, 1995: Penguin Classics.

Russell A. Butkus and Steven A. Kolmes, **Integral Ecology, Epigenetics and the Common Good: Reflections on Laudato Si and Flint, Michigan** in *Journal of Catholic Social Thought*, 14:2, 2017, 291-320.

Gilles Deleuze and Felix Guattari, **What is Philosophy?** 1994: Columbia University Press.

Paul Klee, **On Modern Art**, 1966: Faber and Faber Ltd.

Jacques Maritain, **The Person and the Common Good** in *The Review of Politics*, 419-455.

Linda Martin Alcoff, **Visible Identities**, 2006: Oxford University Press.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty, **Phenomenology of Perception**, 1962: Routledge Classics.

Emmanuel Levinas, **Time and the Other**, 1987: Duquesne University Press.

Plato, **Republic**, 1992: Hackett Publishing Company.

Plotinus, **Enneads**, 1984: Harvard University Press.

Jean-Paul Sartre, **Being and Nothingness**, 1992: Washington Square Press.

D.W. Winnicott, **Ego Distorsion in Terms of True and False Self** (1960) in *The Maturation Processes and the Facilitating Environment. Studies in the Theory of Emotional Development*, 1974: International Universities Press.

Iris Marion Young, **Justice and the Politics of Difference**, 1999: Princeton University Press.

Course Requirements and Policies

A common task: look for clarity and challenges

The class sections will follow a calendar of readings that you are invited to check closely. Our common task in class will be to make all the readings sound clear and challenging for each of us. You are all expected to be a part of this exercise of collective learning, so please always come in class prepared, having read carefully and having thought deeply about the questions you want to raise. *Always take notes for yourself while reading and bring a hard copy of your readings with you.*

The question you care about and a connected attention

Come in class with at least one question you really care about, proving that you have read the excerpts and that you are interested in the problems they cover. Connect the attention you pay to your readings with the willingness to hear what the others have discovered in them. Try to express yourself as concisely and clearly as you can, having in mind that your questions are not only yours, but also a resource of thought for the whole group.

Reading and writing for a community of thinking people

The class sections will require an important amount of written assignments. Your success in philosophical writing will depend on the energy you are ready to invest in reading and discussing what you have read in class. Never forget that you do not read and write only for yourself but also for a community of pairs to which you owe clear explanations and an argumentation rigorously focused on the philosophical problems we are dealing with in this course.

The writing assignments will be organized as follows:

- Four Response Papers of approx. 1000 words each due for: **August 30, September 13, September 27, November 20**
- One Midterm Paper of approx. 2000 words due for **October 23**
- One Final Paper of approx. 3000 words due for **December 6**

Response Papers

Each response paper will be attached to a section of readings and to a determined task, such as answering a question, explaining a concept or applying a philosophical method.

As the difficulty of the required tasks will increase, you will be expected to make use of the skills you have already developed in the former papers you wrote. Also, you are strongly encouraged to use your response papers as a support for the day's class discussion.

You are invited to send your response papers as a word document to delia.popa@villanova.edu . Please include "PHI1000" in your subject line. You will receive *by email* a confirmation of receipt. If you have not received this confirmation, please let me know when we see each other in class.

Midterm Paper and Final Paper

The mid-term paper and the final paper are short philosophical essays drawing upon at least two of the course readings we have already discussed. Specific requirements concerning the art of writing short philosophical essays will be given in class.

You are invited to send your midterm paper and your final paper as a word document to delia.popa@villanova.edu. Please include "PHI1000" in your subject line. You will receive *by email* a confirmation of receipt. If you have not received this confirmation, please let me know when we see each other in class.

For your final paper, you will also receive *by email a question concerning your writing*. You will be invited to answer the question within a group discussion taking place at the beginning of/during the last class.

Paper Submission Policy

Please send your papers when they are due. There will be no late assignments allowed, unless you have valid documents proving emergency. Lateness in sending your papers will have a direct negative impact on your grade.

If you fail to submit the requested writings (the four response papers, the midterm paper, and the final paper) you will fail the course.

Evaluation

Your grade will be distributed as follows:

20% Participation to class discussions, which also include the discussion on final papers

10% Participation to small group discussions, projects, and presentations

20% Response Papers

20% Midterm Paper

30% Final Paper

Grades

A range: outstanding ideas and strong arguments, creative, insightful, well structured, well written.

B range: insightful, well structured, well written, but not so creative.

C range: well structured, well written, but lacking insightfulness and creativity.

D range: insufficiently structured, lacking creativity and insightfulness.

F range: missed assignment, severe misunderstandings of the requested tasks.

Attendance

You are expected to be present to all classes. If you foresee the impossibility to be present at a class, *please always let me know about it in advance*. If you have missed more than two classes, please come see me.

Please arrive on time at each class.

Electronic devices

For the sake of our philosophical discussions, the use of electronic devices is not allowed in class, be it tablets, laptops or phones.

Please make sure that you have switched off all your electronic devices when you enter the class and that you do not turn them on unless asked to do so by your instructor.

Office hours and e-mail policy

If you want to discuss further about your philosophical readings you are warmly welcome during my office hours and/or at another moment by appointment. If you have any difficulties in following the class discussions or understanding specific readings, please come and discuss them with me at my office.

I will use email only for *administrative purposes* and only during weekdays.

Office of Disabilities and Learning Support Services

It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. You must present verification and register with the Learning Support Office by contacting 610-519-5176 or at learning.support.services@villanova.edu or for physical access or temporary disabling conditions, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 610-519- 4095 or email Stephen.mcwilliams@villanova.edu Registration is needed in order to receive accommodations.

Writing Center

The Villanova Writing Center offers efficient resources and tutorial support for writing. You are encouraged to ask for help and assistance at any moment in your writing process. For further information, please visit <http://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/provost/writingcenter.html>

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to uphold Villanova's Academic Integrity Policy and Code. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for disciplinary action. For the College's statement on Academic Integrity, you should consult the *Enchiridion*. You may view the university's Academic Integrity Policy and Code, as well as other useful information related to writing papers, at the Academic Integrity Gateway web site: <http://library.villanova.edu/Help/AcademicIntegrity>

Weekly Schedule

Week 1	What is Philosophy ?
Week 2	The Double Nature of the Soul
Week 3	The Principle of Reality for our Knowledge
Week 4	Self and Reality
Week 5	Knowledge and Reality
Week 6	Phenomenology of Knowledge
Week 7	Knowledge as Perception
Week 8	Selfhood and Otherness
Week 9	Visibility and Identity
Week 10	True Self and False Self
Week 11	Identity and Otherness
Week 12	Otherness and Justice
Week 13	Social Identity and Integral Ecology
Week 14	Small Group Activity and Final Discussion

Detailed Course Schedule (Readings and Assignments)

Day	Readings Movies	Paper Due
Tu Aug 28	Deleuze & Guattari Introduction to “What is Philosophy?”, p. 7 (Excerpt 1)	
Thu Aug 30	MOVIE + discussion: Plato, Republic VII, 518a-518d (Excerpt 2)	Response Paper 1: What is Philosophy for you?
Tu Sept 4	Plato, Phaedrus, 245b-252c	
Thu Sept 6	Plato, Phaedrus, 245b-252c	
Tu Sept 11	Plotinus, Enneads, V, 1, “On the Three Primary Hypostasis” (Excerpt 3)	
Thu Sept 13	Augustine: Sermon 117 (Excerpt 4) and The City of God (Excerpt 5)	Response Paper 2: Focus on one philosophical concept
Tu Sept 18	Augustine: Confessions (Excerpt 6)	
Thu Sept 20	René Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy, I & II	
Tu Sept 25	René Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy, III & IV	
Thu Sept 27	René Descartes, Meditations on First Philosophy, V&VI	Response Paper 3: Experience philosophical doubt
Tu Oct 2	Edmund Husserl, Cartesian Meditations (Excerpt 7)	
Thu Oct 4	Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Phenomenology of Perception, I, IV, “The Synthesis of One’s Own Body”, p. 171-177 (Excerpt 8)	
Tu Oct 9	Paul Klee, On Modern Art (Excerpt 9)	
Thu Oct 11	<i>Group presentations</i>	
Oct 15-21	Fall Break – no classes	
Tu Oct 23	<i>Discussion on Midterm Papers</i>	Midterm Paper
Thu Oct 25	Jean-Paul Sartre, Being and Nothingness, III, 1, IV, “The Look”, (Excerpt 10)	
Tu Oct 30	Linda Martin Alcoff, Visible Identities, pp. 91-94 (Excerpt 11)	
Thu Nov 1	Linda Martin Alcoff, Visible Identities, pp. 195-204 (Excerpt 12)	
Tu Nov 6	D. W. Winnicott, Ego Distorsion in Terms of True and False Self (Excerpt 13)	

Thu Nov 8	MOVIE+ discussion Raoul Peck, I am not your negro	
Tu Nov 13	MOVIE+ discussion Raoul Peck, I am not your negro	
Thu Nov 15	DISCUSSION on I am not your negro	
Tu Nov 20	Jacques Maritain, The Person and the Common Good (Excerpt 14)	Response Paper 4: What is our identity made of?
Nov 21-25	<i>Thanksgiving Recess – no classes</i>	
Tu Nov 27	Emmanuel Levinas, Time and the Other (Excerpt 15)	
Thu Nov 29	Iris Marion Young, Justice and the Politics of Difference, pp. 39-65 (Excerpt 16)	
Tu Dec 4	Small group activity: social groups	
Thu Dec 6	Russell A. Butkus and Steven A. Kolmes, Integral Ecology, Epigenetics and the Common Good: Reflections on Laudato Si and Flint, Michigan (Excerpt 17)	Final Paper
Tu Dec 11	Workshop: narratives of the oppressed	
Thu Dec 13	Discussion on Final Papers	

This is a tentative course schedule. As we go faster or slower through the readings, some adjustments might be necessary, of which you will be informed in time. Detailed explanations concerning the assignments and the group projects will be given in class. If you have any question concerning an assignment, please come see me.