

# Teaching Dossier

Kimberly Dill

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## I. Teaching Statement

Three of the distinguishing features that mark my educational style (as evidenced by my teaching evaluations, below) include my ability to convey information in a way that is engaging, relevant, and inclusive. Overall, students have best summarized this approach by consistently using the term 'passionate'. This, I think, reflects the fact that I am motivated by a deep interest in the literature and aim to inspire a driving sense of curiosity in all whom I teach. In what follows, I will provide some insight into my teaching ethic by briefly describing some of the pedagogical techniques that I utilize to create fruitful, communal, and intellectually stimulating learning environments.

As an Instructor at the University of Texas at Austin, I regularly employ sociopolitically relevant examples to illustrate complex philosophical concepts and claims. This ensures that the technical terms that we discuss are easily committed to memory. I then invite students to apply the logical, argumentative, and conceptual tools that they cultivate to assess and formulate potential solutions to pressing global concerns (e.g., climate change and disproportionate representation in media). This enables them to think widely, critically, and systematically about a variety of (theoretical and applied) issues. By making myself available for one-on-one consultations during and outside of scheduled office hours, I also work to ensure that each student's unique set of interests is brought to the fore. I complement this strategy by encouraging students to propose creative writing prompts (which require pre-approval) so that they can develop papers that best suit their unique interests.

In addition, I work to facilitate safe classroom environments by ensuring that a diversity of student voices are highlighted in conversational contexts. I do this by actively discussing implicit bias, stereotype threat, and disproportionate academic representation, thereby helping to minimize their harmful effects in (and outside of) the classroom. In addition, I construct my syllabi with an eye toward equal representation by including works authored by e.g., self-identifying women, people of color, and persons with disabilities. I remain sensitive to student participation and, when noting asymmetries, make an active effort to engage students belonging to demographics that are (traditionally) less vocal in the classroom. To do so, I mediate classroom involvement and formulate and distribute surveys throughout each semester, the results of which I use to craft questions and assignments that will pique a diversity of interests. This enables me to signal to students the fact that I both perceive and value their unique insights and academic promise. In addition, I work to build communal environments by assigning in-class group work that stimulates lively intellectual exchange. For example, when I divide each class into groups, I ask one student per pair to articulate a positive philosophical thesis, while the other student articulates a negative, philosophical objection. I then ask students to switch roles. This ensures that students learn both to articulate the philosophical theses of the authors whom we cover, while clearly identifying perceived argumentative faults. I then take the time to personally interact with each group, thereby modeling vulnerability, which helps to alleviate any social anxiety that may negatively affect classroom involvement. Aiming for inclusivity is therefore a guiding principle of my teaching ethic.

Outside of the classroom, I work to develop meaningful mentoring relationships with current and former undergraduate students by, for example, advising them on how to refine their senior theses, directing them toward additional resources (when relevant), and by providing seniors with opportunities to guest lecture in my classes. Similarly, I host informal workshops at the conclusion of each semester for students interested in applying to graduate programs in philosophy. In these workshops, I discuss the application process (e.g., the importance of a solid writing sample, above-average GRE scores, and strong letters of recommendation), articulate a few core reasons to pursue a graduate degree in philosophy, and make the academic and psychological hurdles of graduate school transparent, though surmountable.

As both an Instructor and Teaching Assistant, I frequently encounter students who report struggles with mental illnesses (and other invisible disabilities), which they feel prevent them from achieving their academic goals. These students, I have found, are at a disproportionately high risk of dropping their classes, despite their hard work and potential for academic achievement. I take these student concerns seriously and maintain active contact so that together we can work to secure the proper accommodations that will enable them to succeed. In addition, I encourage students to view their academic progress from the perspective of a growth-based mindset, which transforms challenges into opportunities for expansion.

Similarly, studies indicate that graduate students are at a disproportionately high risk of struggling with depression, anxiety, and other mood-based disorders. To curb the effects of graduate school stress, I founded UT Austin's first Meditation and Philosophy Group. During our weekly meetings, we pair practical breathing and mindfulness techniques with investigations into the philosophical and psychological mechanisms that may explain their efficacy.

Outside of university halls, I serve as a public philosopher by teaching workshops on environmental philosophy, environmental psychology, and basic principles of philosophical reasoning to non-academic audiences throughout the United States and Canada. In Austin, I am responsible for having founded a local outreach project called 'Philosotea,' wherein I and volunteer graduate students teach introductory logic, game theory, and basic Bayesian probability to the general public. Each lecture is accompanied by a traditional Chinese tea service (*gong fu cha*) in order to garner broad appeal. I also serve periodically as an Education Coordinator with the USDA Forest Service, a role which allows me to share my curiosity and reverence for the broader-than-human world with the general public through an interdisciplinary teaching approach that synthesizes philosophical analysis, practical outdoor ethics, and the natural and life sciences. Suffice it to say, my students' general assessment is correct: my passion for philosophy and commitment to education is driving and extends far beyond the classroom.

## II. Teaching Evaluations

### 1. *Evaluations as Course Instructor*

As a course instructor, I have taught two classes, both in the Philosophy of the Arts. The University of Texas administers surveys at the end of each semester, which prompts students to rate instructor performance using nine measures on a **5 point scale** (1 denoting ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 denoting ‘strongly agree’). Students are also encouraged to provide written comments. I have listed average scores and a selection of student comments, below. Please note that the completion of student surveys is optional (though strongly encouraged).

**A:** Introduction to the Philosophy of the Arts, Spring 2018

**B:** Introduction to the Philosophy of the Arts, Spring 2017

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>
Course objectives defined-explained	4.5	4.5
Instructor prepared	4.7	4.5
Communicated information effectively	4.6	4.7
Students encouraged—active role	4.6	4.6
Instructor availability	4.4	4.4
Course well-organized	4.4	4.3
Student freedom of expression	4.7	4.3
Helpful course materials	4.5	4.3
Student perception of amount learned	4.5	4.3
Surveys returned	29	12

“I loved your class! Keep being dynamic and bubbly - I think seeing your enthusiasm for this subject helped me grow. While at first I wanted access to your power point presentation, not having access to them before the first test helped me pay attention and come to class more often.”

“I really enjoyed the class. The content was very interesting and related to issues I am already interested in (sex and race issues, and music). All of the content was delivered well by the instructor, giving lots of examples to ensure clarity as well as making the lessons engaging and entertaining.”

“Professor Dill did a wonderful job conveying philosophical ideas. Class was always interesting and I enjoyed the creativity involved in class discussions and assignments.”

“Kimberly was such an awesome instructor this semester. I came into this class not knowing what to expect and immediately fell in love with the course. Kimberly’s energy is amazing. She’s always very

charismatic. Her lectures are incredibly interesting and she incorporates a lot of her cool personality into them.”

“I enjoyed the content of the course and the teaching style. The instructor was very engaging and passionate about the material, creating a more interesting and personable learning experience.”

“I enjoyed the content and the way in which the content was delivered. Overall, the course and instructor were very enriching.”

“The instructor was very passionate about each topic and the course which made it very informative and interesting throughout the whole semester.”

## 2. *Evaluations as Teaching Assistant*

Below, I have listed student evaluations for a few courses in which I have served as a Teaching Assistant. The University of Texas administers surveys at the end of each semester, which prompts students to rate instructor performance using nine measures on a **5 point scale** (1 denoting ‘strongly disagree’ and 5 denoting ‘strongly agree’). Students are also encouraged to provide written comments. I have listed average scores and a selection of student comments, below. Please note that the completion of student surveys is optional (though strongly encouraged).

**A:** Introduction to the Philosophy of the Arts, Fall 2016

**B:** Ideas of the Twentieth Century, Fall 2014

**C:** Introduction to Philosophy of Religion, Fall 2017

**D:** Discovery of Freedom, Spring 2015

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
TA available for scheduled office hours	4.6	4.4	4.1	4.3
TA knowledgeable about subject material	5	4.9	4.7	4.4
TA interested in subject matter	5	4.9	5	4.9
TA explained material clearly	5	4.6	4.6	4.6
TA kind and respectful	4.9	4.7	4.4	4.6
TA patient with questions	4.9	4.6	4.4	4.7
TA receptive to questions	5	4.7	3.9	4.6

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
<b>TA gave helpful feedback on assignments</b>	4.5	4.3	3.9	4.4
<b>Number of respondents</b>	22	19	7	9

"Kimberly was the best TA I have ever had, not just in the Philosophy department, but at UT. Her knowledge in philosophy was as extensive as the list of reasons why she made the best possible TA. All this aside, it was also extremely empowering to have such an unapologetic, feminist teaching team in this course. In a department that individuals with marginalized identities are constantly being intimidated into silence during class lectures and discussion, this TA was an incredibly brilliant and socially attentive [woke] change of pace."

"This TA was the best TA I have ever had. She was very knowledgeable about the subject, and did whatever she could to help us overall. She explained assignments clearly and gave us tips on how to succeed. I really liked her as my TA, she was very helpful."

"Kimberly Dill is sooo passionate about Philosophy which made her TA sessions so interesting. Before an essay was due she always held a class about what we were thinking about writing and how we could improve. She is funny and energetic and a very enjoyable TA."

"She could've taught the class herself. No disrespect to Dr. [X] since he's an accomplished scholar, but Kimberly is a better lecturer. Her lectures had structure, good clarity, and she asked the right questions which encouraged participation. She also gave good comments on the writing assignments which lets the student know what they need to work on."

"She not only expanded on the lectures in class but she was passionate about the information as well even though it did not directly relate to what she is studying in grad school. I learned a lot about how to complete assignments in our discussion sections from her and she encouraged participation from the class. She also was open to any ideas and was never rude or boring. Excellent TA and I am so glad I had her."

"Very passionate about the material. She made the course material engaging and always left me feeling empowered after Discussion sessions. Awesome TA overall."

### III. Two Course Ideas

Below, I have written two descriptions for courses that I would be delighted to teach in the future. The first course is aimed at second through fourth year undergraduate students. The second is aimed at graduate students. Both courses are interdisciplinary in nature and carry a broad appeal across philosophical, medical, anthropological, and STEM disciplines.

#### 1. Medicine, Ethics, and Society<sup>1</sup>

**Course Description:** In this course, students will be introduced to a range of literature in the philosophy of medicine and social policy. We will discuss conceptual and normative questions, including e.g., how best to delineate the distinction between health and disease. We will also investigate questions pertaining to the role of evidence in medical contexts, problems associated with medicalized conceptions of race (historical and contemporary), genetic modification, eugenics, vaccination, sterilization, diseases of poverty, and mental illness. Our general focus will be on the relationship that obtains between the epistemology of health and relevant sociopolitical issues.

#### Possible Readings:

- Alexandrova (2018) “Can the Science of Well-being Be Objective?”
- Kukla (2014) “Medicalization, ‘Normal Function’, and the Definition of Health”
- Boorse (1977) “Health as a Theoretical Concept”
- Schwartz (2007) “Defining Dysfunction: Natural Selection, Design, and Drawing a Line”
- Ereshefsky (2009) “Defining ‘Health’ and ‘Disease’”
- Duster (2015) “A Postgenomic Surprise: the Molecular Reinscription of Race in Science, Law, and Medicine”
- Frawley (2015) “Medicalization of Social Problems”
- Kaczmarek (in press) “How to Distinguish Medicalization from Over-medicalization?”
- Stramondo (2016) “Why Bioethics Needs a Disability Moral Psychology”
- Horowitz and Wakefield (2007) *The Loss of Sadness* (excerpt)
- Arpaly (2005) “Why It’s Not ‘Just Like Diabetes: Mental Health and the Moral Psychologist’”
- Dusenbery, “Is Medicine’s Gender Bias Killing Young Women?”
- Cartwright (2010) What are Randomised Controlled Trials Good For?)
- Glover (2006) *Choosing Children: Genes, Disability, and Design* (excerpt)
- Washington (2006) *Medical Apartheid: The Dark History of Medical Experimentation on Black Americans from Colonial Times to the Present.* (excerpt)

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<sup>1</sup> A huge thanks to Sahotra Sarkar and Elizabeth Barnes, whose syllabi inspired some of the listed readings.

## 2. Introspection and the Philosophy of Psychology

**Course description:** Pre-theoretically, many of us assume that introspection gives us privileged access to our own mental states. In other words, many of us presuppose that introspection allows one to learn about one's own mental states in a way that no one else can—from the perspective of the first-person.

In Western philosophy of mind, inquiries into the nature of introspection and its targets are often tied to considerations about consciousness, emotion, personal identity, thought, belief, perception, and free will. In addition, Western epistemologists have traditionally posited that introspective knowledge is uniquely secure—perhaps even immune to skeptical doubt. Recently, however, some philosophers have pushed back against this claim, arguing instead that introspection in some important sense unreliable. Consider, for example, concerns pertaining to implicit bias or the cognitive penetrability of perceptual experience.

Our goal in this course is to develop an understanding of the philosophical lay of the introspective land. With an eye towards this goal, we will first survey an array of articles and excerpts, ranging from Locke and Kant, to Shoemaker and Siegel. We will then deepen our understanding of the topic by looking at particular applications within e.g., the philosophy of emotion. We will conclude this course by investigating conceptual analogues to introspection within a few Eastern philosophical traditions. We will focus, in particular, on the concept of mindfulness (Pali, trans. *sati*), as it arises within Buddhist and Vedantan traditions.

**Course Goals:** In this course, our primary goal is to hone a set of philosophical tools that will allow students to critically engage and grapple with a variety of very difficult conceptual problems pertaining to the reliability (or unreliability) of introspective practice. With this overarching goal in mind, by the end of this course, students will have:

- Learned to critically evaluate philosophical claims, arguments, and their implications.
- Developed and articulated your own philosophical theses and arguments.
- Gained an understanding of the philosophical literature on introspection in the philosophy of mind, epistemology, and in a few Eastern philosophical traditions.
- Learned to critically evaluate empirical studies (in e.g., psychology and neuroscience) through a philosophical lens.

### Possible Readings:

- Schwitzgebel (2012) “Introspection, What?”
- Locke (1960/1975) *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (excerpt)
- Shoemaker (1994) “Self-knowledge and ‘Inner Sense’” (Lecture I and II)
- Brentano (1874/1973) *Psychology From An Empirical Standpoint* (excerpt)
- Montague (2017) “Cognitive Phenomenology”
- Chalmers (2003) “The Content and Epistemology of Phenomenal Belief”
- Tye (2009) “Consciousness Revisited” (excerpt)
- Siegel (2011) “Cognitive Penetrability and Perceptual Justification”
- Rorty (1970) “Incorrigibility as the Mark of the Mental”
- Dennet (2002) “How Could I Be Wrong? How Wrong Could I Be?”

- Schwitzgebel (2008) “The Unreliability of Naive Introspection”
- Hatfield and Rapson (1994) *Emotional Contagion: Studies in Emotion and Social Interaction* (excerpt)
- Seager (2002) “Emotional Introspection”
- Bishop et al. (2004) “Mindfulness: A Proposed Definition”
- Fox et al. (2012) “Meditation Experience Predicts Introspective Accuracy”
- James (1890) *The Principles of Psychology* (excerpt) IV. Sample Syllabus: Introduction to the Philosophy of the Arts

# PHL 325C

## Environmental Philosophy and Ethics

Spring 2018  
The University of Texas at Austin  
T/TH 2:00pm-3:30pm  
CLA 0.128

**Instructor Information:** Kimberly Dill

**Email:** kmdill@utexas.edu

**Office:** WAG 319

**Office Hours:** TH 12:00pm-1:50pm

### Course Description:

In this course, students will engage in a broad survey of the environmental philosophy and ethics literature. We will cover a variety of topics, including biodiversity conservation, indigenous philosophy and justice, climate change, intrinsic value vs instrumental value, ecofeminism, wilderness preservation, food sovereignty, and genetic modification. We will approach these issues by employing methodologies articulated in epistemology, aesthetics, the philosophy of psychology, and the philosophy of science. We will pay particular mind to the tricky socio-political contexts that affect how theories are formulated and conservation practices are implemented (e.g., how are they mediated by one's cultural context?)

### Course Objectives:

Our primary goal is to hone a set of philosophical tools that will allow students to critically engage with a variety of very difficult problems pertaining to environmental philosophy and ethics, conservation, and social justice. With this overarching goal in mind, by the end of this course, students will have:

- Learned to critically evaluate philosophical claims, arguments, and their implications.
- Developed and articulated their own philosophical theses and arguments.
- Gained an understanding of the philosophical literature in environmental philosophy and ethics.
- Learned to critically evaluate empirical, psychological, and anthropological studies through a philosophical lens.

### Required Materials:

- There is **one required text** in this course, which is available through the university bookstore or on Amazon: Sarkar, S. (2012) *Environmental Philosophy: From Theory to Practice*, Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- All other texts will be available online either via Canvas or through the University of Texas library.

### Helpful Materials

- The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <https://plato.stanford.edu/>
- The Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: <http://www.iep.utm.edu/>

### Policies:

- **Attendance** is **mandatory**.

- **Late assignments** will receive **ten fewer percentage** points for every day late. Late assignments will not be accepted more than one week after the due date. The final project (and any other late assignments) will not be accepted after the last day of class.
- Makeup exams or extensions must be approved by the instructor and will only be allowed in the case of an emergency, illness, or other serious circumstances. The instructor may ask for evidence (i.e., proper documentation).
- Check your Canvas email regularly. You will be held responsible for any information distributed via email.
- Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259.

### **How to Write a Philosophy Paper**

For information about how to write a successful philosophy paper, please visit: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

### **Plagiarism:**

The following is an excerpt from the Office of the Dean of Students regarding academic integrity:

“Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and / or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.”

For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.”

### **Grading:**

- Grades will be recorded on Canvas.
- Grades will be computed using the following system:

A+	97-100
A	92-96
A-	90-91
B+	87-89
B	82-86
B-	80-81
C+	77-79
C	72-76
C-	70-71
D+	67-69
D	62-66
D-	60-61
F	0-59

### **Assignments**

- **February 13th — Short paper 1 — 10%**
  - 4 page paper; prompts to be distributed in advance.
- **March 8th — Midterm — 20%**
  - In-class bluebook exam. Students must bring bluebooks to class.

- **April 3rd — Short Paper 2 — 10%**  
- 4 page paper; prompts to be distributed in advance.
- **April 17th — Long Paper, Proposal — 10%**  
- Short (1 page) description of final project; prompts to be distributed in advance.
- **May 3rd — Long Paper, Final (no late assignments accepted) — 20%**  
- 6 page paper, expanding on student's proposal; prompt to be distributed in advance.
- **Throughout term — Participation — 10%**  
- Participation includes lecture attendance (logged via Squarecap), in-class discussion, in-class quizzes, etc.
- **TBD by University Scheduling System — Final Exam — 20%**  
- In-class bluebook exam. Students must bring bluebooks to class.

## Schedule

### UNIT 1: Key Historical Texts

#### **Week 1 Setting the Groundwork: An Introduction to the Issues**

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Tuesday, January 16th — *Syllabus and Course Objectives*

- Reading: Sarkar (2012) Chapter 1

Thursday, January 18th — *What Is the Environment?*

- Reading 1: Sarkar (2012) Chapter 2

#### **WEEK 2 — An Introduction to Environmental Ethics**

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Tuesday, January 23rd — Introduction

- Reading 1: Sarkar (2012) Chapter 3

- Reading 2: TBD

Thursday, January 25th — *Anthropocentrism vs. Non-anthropocentrism*

- Reading: McShane, Katie “Anthropocentrism vs. Nonanthropocentrism: Why Should We Care?”

#### **WEEK 3 — The Land Ethic**

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Tuesday, January 30th — *Aldo Leopold*

- Reading: Leopold, A. (1949) *A Sand County Almanac* (excerpt)

Thursday, February 1st — *Extending the Land Ethic*

- Reading: Callicott, Baird (1989) *In Defense of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (excerpt)

#### **WEEK 4 — Deep Ecology and Environmental Aesthetics**

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Tuesday, February 6th — *Deep Ecology*

- Reading 1: Naess (1973) “The Shallow and the Deep, Long-Range Ecology

Movement” (<http://www.wildsreprisal.com/PDF's/Cascadia%20Rising/>

[The%20shallow%20and%20the%20deep,%20long-range%20ecology%20movement.pdf](http://www.wildsreprisal.com/PDF's/Cascadia%20Rising/The%20shallow%20and%20the%20deep,%20long-range%20ecology%20movement.pdf))

Thursday, February 8th — *Natural Beauty*

- R.W. Hepburn, "Contemporary Aesthetics and the Neglect of Natural Beauty" (*online: [http://hettingern.people.cofc.edu/Env\\_Aes\\_2012/r\\_w\\_hepburn\\_contemporary\\_aesthetics.pdf](http://hettingern.people.cofc.edu/Env_Aes_2012/r_w_hepburn_contemporary_aesthetics.pdf)*)

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### **WEEK 5 — Humanism and Pragmatism**

Tuesday, February 13th — *Western Environmental Humanism*

- Reading 1: Passmore, J. (1974) *Man's Responsibility for Nature* (excerpt)
- **SHORT PAPER 1 DUE**

Thursday, February 15th — *Environmental Pragmatism:*

- Reading: Katz and Light (1996) *Environmental Pragmatism: Environmental Philosophies*

## **UNIT 2: Eco-feminism**

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### **WEEK 6 — Eco-feminism**

Tuesday, February 20th — *An Introduction to Eco-feminism*

- Reading 1: Plumwood, V. (1993) *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature* (excerpt) ([https://takku.net/mediagallery/mediaobjects/orig/f/f\\_val-plumwood-feminism-and-the-mastery-of-nature-pdf.pdf](https://takku.net/mediagallery/mediaobjects/orig/f/f_val-plumwood-feminism-and-the-mastery-of-nature-pdf.pdf))
- Reading 2: Cuomo, C. (1994) "Ecofeminism, Deep Ecology, and Human Population", in *Ecological Feminism*, K.J. Warren (ed.), New York: Routledge: 88-105.

Thursday, February 22nd — Eco-feminism, Western Patriarchy, Forest Conservation

- Reading 1: Shiva, V. (1988) *Staying Alive*, Ch. 1 (<https://gyanpedia.in/Portals/0/Toys%20from%20Trash/Resources/books/stayingalive.pdf>)
- Reading 2: Shiva, V. (1988) *Staying Alive*, Ch. 4

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### **WEEK 7 — Eco-feminism (continued).**

Tuesday, February 27th — *Eco-feminism and Water Conservation*

- Reading: Shiva, V. (1988) *Staying Alive*, Ch. 6

Thursday, March 1st — *Women's Issues Intimately Connected to Environmental Problems*

- Reading: Greta Gaard and Lori Gruen (2005) "Ecofeminism: Toward Global Justice and Planetary Health", in Zimmerman et al. 2005: 155–157.

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### **WEEK 8 — Midterm Exam and Review**

Tuesday, March 6th — Review

Thursday, March 8th — **MIDTERM EXAM**

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### **WEEK 9 — SPRING BREAK**

Tuesday, March 13th — NO CLASS

Thursday, March 15th — NO CLASS

## UNIT 3:

### **WEEK 10 — Biodiversity**

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Tuesday, March 20th — *Biodiversity Conservation*

- Reading 1: Sarkar (2012) *Environmental Philosophy...* Ch. 5

Thursday, March 22nd — *Biodiversity and Transformative Value*

- Reading 1: Norton (1987) *Why Preserve Natural Variety?* (excerpts)

### **WEEK 11 — Wilderness Conservation**

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Tuesday, March 27th — *The Value of Wilderness*

- Reading 1: Rolston (1996) “Feeding People versus Saving Nature?”
- Reading 2: Attfield (1998)
- Reading 3: Selected Muir quotes (online)

Thursday, March 29th — *Problems with Traditional Wilderness Conservation*

- Reading 1: Guha (1999)
- Reading 2: Martinez-Alier (2002)
- Pyne, S. (1997) *Fire in America* (excerpt)

### **WEEK 12 — Environmental Restoration**

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Tuesday, April 3rd — *An Introduction*

- Reading 1: Sarkar (2012) Ch. 6
- Reading 2: Desjardins (2015) “Historicity and Ecological Restoration”
- **SHORT PAPER 2 DUE**

Thursday, April 5th — *Worries Associated with Environmental Restoration*

- Reading: Elliot (1982) *Faking Nature* (excerpt)

### **WEEK 13 — Climate Change and Conservation Practices**

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Tuesday, April 10th — *Climate Change and its Solutions*

- Reading 1: Klein (2014) *This Changes Everything: Capitalism vs. the Climate*, pp. 419-466

Thursday, April 12th — *Gene Drives in Conservation Contexts*

- Reading 1: Rohwer, Y. (forthcoming) “A Duty to Cognitively Enhance Animals” in *Environmental Values*.
- Reading 2: Margules and Pressey (2000) “Systematic Conservation Planning” (<https://www.nature.com/articles/35012251>)

### **WEEK 14 — Well-being and the Environment**

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Tuesday, April 17th — *Wealth, Well-being, and the Environment*

- Reading: Dasgupta (2001) *Human Well-being and the Natural Environment*, Ch. 9 (“Wealth and Well-being”)
- **FINAL PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

Thursday, April 19th — *Harms to the Global Poor*

- Reading 1: Diegues (1999) “Human Populations in Coastal Wetlands: Conservation and Management in Brazil”

- Reading 2: Martinez- Alier ( ) *The Environmentalism of the Poor: A Study in Ecological Conflicts and Valuation* (excerpt)

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### **WEEK 15 — Environmentalism and the Economically Disadvantaged**

Tuesday, April 24th — *Harms to Economically Disadvantaged Populations*

- Reading: Okonta (2003) *Where Vultures Feast: Shell, Human Rights, and Oil* (excerpt)

- Reading 2: Martinez-Alier, J. (1995) “The Environment as a Luxury Good or “Too Poor to Be Green?”” (<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/092180099400062Z>)

Thursday, April 26th — *Food Sovereignty and Settler Colonialism*

- Reading 1: Kyle Whyte (2018) “Food Sovereignty, Justice and Indigenous Peoples: An Essay on Settler Colonialism and Collective Continuance”

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### **WEEK 16 — Environmental Animism and Folk Theories**

Tuesday, May 1st — *The Psychology of Animism*

Reading 1: ojalehto, b. Medin, D., & Garcia, S. (2017) “Grounding Principles for Inferring Agency: Two Cultural Perspectives”, in *Cognitive Psychology*, 95, pp. 50-78. (<https://cpb-us-e1.wpmucdn.com/sites.northwestern.edu/dist/9/630/files/2015/09/ojalehto-et-al.-2015-Seeing-cooperation-or-competition-q5e3p9.pdf>)

Thursday, May 3rd — *Animism, Reciprocity, and the Language of our World*

- Reading 1: Kimmerer (2013) *Braiding Sweetgrass* (excerpts)

- Reading 2: Abram ( ) *The Spell of the Sensuous* (excerpts)

- **FINAL PAPER DUE**

- **FINAL EXAM — DATE TBD BY UNIVERSITY SCHEDULING**

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# PHL 317K

## Introduction to Philosophy of the Arts

Spring 2017  
The University of Texas at Austin  
MWF 9:00am-10:00am  
WAG 302

### **Instructor Information:**

Kimberly Dill  
Email: kmdill@utexas.edu  
Office: WAG 319  
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 10:00am-12:00pm

### **Reader Information:**

[...]  
Email:  
Office:  
Office Hours:

### **Course Description:**

In this course, we will evaluate a variety of texts in the Western philosophical tradition pertaining to the nature of beauty, art, and aesthetic experience broadly construed. We will also evaluate a selection of texts from Japanese and Indian aesthetic traditions. Some of the questions that we will evaluate include:

- What is the nature of aesthetic experience?
- What is the nature of art?
- What role does the artist play in determining the nature of the art that they produce?
- Is there such a thing as 'artistic genius'?
- What is the difference between natural and artistic aesthetic experience?

We will also examine the interplay between ethics and aesthetics:

- Does ethical content determine (whether partially, wholly, or not at all) the aesthetic value of a work of art?
- For example, are works of art with morally reprehensible content less aesthetically valuable than works of art with praiseworthy ethical content?

With these questions in mind, we will examine a variety of art forms in more depth, including:

- Film as philosophy; film and philosophy
- Painting
- Photography
- Literature
- Music
- Humor

### **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, students will:

- Be familiar with key, historical texts within the philosophy of the arts.

- Be able to articulate the central conclusions (and their arguments) within competing philosophical theories of art and aesthetics.
- Be able to articulate their own philosophical views about art.
- Be able to understand these theories within the context of specific art forms (e.g., film, music, painting).
- Be able to engage more fully with a variety of art forms, natural features, and aesthetic experiences generally.
- Have refined their abilities to write philosophical essays.
- Be able to articulate clear philosophical arguments.

### **Required Materials:**

- There is **one required text** in this course, which is available through the university bookstore or on Amazon: *Aesthetics: A Reader in Philosophy of the Arts*, 3rd Edition, ed. Goldblatt and Brown.
- All other texts will be available online through the University of Texas library.
- This course includes a few film and video assignments. You must watch these films \*prior\* to attending class on the day that they are assigned.

### **Policies:**

- **Attendance** is **mandatory**.
- **Late assignments** will receive **ten less percentage** points for every day late. Late assignments will not be accepted more than one week after the due date. Late assignments will not be accepted after the last day of class.
- Makeup exams or extensions must be approved by the instructor and will only be allowed in the case of an emergency, illness, or other serious circumstances. The instructor may ask for evidence.
- Check your Canvas email regularly. You will be held responsible for any information distributed via email.
- Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 512-471-6259.

### **How to Write a Philosophy Paper**

For information about how to write a successful philosophy paper, please visit: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>

### **Plagiarism:**

The following is an excerpt from the Office of the Dean of Students regarding academic integrity:

“Students who violate University rules on academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and / or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.”

For further information, please visit the Student Conduct and Academic Integrity website at: <http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct>.”

### **Grading:**

- Grades will be recorded on Canvas.
- Grades will be computed using the following system:

A+	97-100
A	92-96
A-	90-91
B+	87-89
B	82-86
B-	80-81
C+	77-79
C	72-76
C-	70-71
D+	67-69
D	62-66
D-	60-61
F	0-59

### **Assignments:**

**February 13th — Short paper 1 — 10%**

- 4 page paper; prompts to be distributed in advance.

**March 10th — Midterm — 20%**

- In-class bluebook exam. Students must bring bluebooks to class.

**March 31st — Short Paper 2 — 10%**

- 4 page paper; prompts to be distributed in advance.

**April 14th — Long Paper, Proposal — 10%**

- Short (1 page) description of final project; prompts to be distributed in advance.

**April 21st — Exam II — 20%**

- In-class bluebook exam. Students must bring bluebooks to class.

**May 5th — Long Paper, Final (no late assignments accepted) — 20%**

- 6 page paper, expanding on student's proposal; prompt to be distributed in advance.

**Throughout term — Participation — 10%**

- Participation includes lecture attendance (logged via Squarecap), in-class discussion, in-class quizzes, etc.

## **Schedule:**

### **UNIT 1: Key Historical Texts**

**Week 1 — Introduction**

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Wednesday, January 18th — Syllabus and Course Objectives

Friday, January 20th — Setting the Groundwork: An Introduction to Plato

- Reading: Plato, 'Allegory of the Cave' (*Reader*, pp. 89-91).

**WEEK 2 — Art and Reality**

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Monday, January 23rd — Plato's Doubts About Art

- Reading: Plato, "Against Imitation" (*Reader*, pp. 4-7).

Wednesday, January 25th — Does Art Mislead Us?

- Reading: Alexander Nehamas, "Plato and the Mass Media" (*Reader*, p. 315).
- Video (optional): John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Episode 4 (<https://youtu.be/xhOVdoMxYxU>)

Friday, January 27th — A Contemporary Objection to Plato

- Reading: Arthur C. Danto, "Works of Art and Mere Real Things" (*Reader*, pp. 33-36).

### **WEEK 3 — The Psychological Role of Art**

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Monday, January 30th — Art as Cathartic

- Reading: Aristotle, "On Tragedy" (*Reader*, pp. 265-267)

Wednesday, February 1st — Apollonian and Dionysian Art

- Reading: Friedrich Nietzsche, 'The Birth of Tragedy', (*Reader*, pp. 267-275).

Friday, February 3rd — Application to Film

- Film: *Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind* (available to rent on Amazon).
- Be ready to discuss this film in connection with the theories that we've covered during class!

### **WEEK 4 — Art, Beauty, and the Sublime**

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Monday, February 6th — How Is Beauty Determined?

- Reading: David Hume, 'Of the Standard of Taste' (*Reader*, pp. 399-404)

Wednesday, February 8th — Kant's Formalism

- Reading: Immanuel Kant, 'Judgments about the Beautiful' (*Reader*, pp. 406-410).

Friday, February 10th — Natural vs Artistic Aesthetics

- Reading 1: Edmund Burke, 'The Sublime' (*Reader*, pp. 404-405).
- Reading 2: Flo Leibowitz, "The Hubble Photographs as Aesthetic Objects" (*Reader*, p. 84).

### **WEEK 5 — Artistic Genius**

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Monday, February 13th — Kant on Artistic Genius

- Reading: review Immanuel Kant, 'Judgments about the Beautiful' (*Reader*, pp. 408-410).
  - Required Film (watch over the weekend): *Amadeus* (available to rent on Amazon).
  - Be prepared to discuss this film in class!
  - Video (in class): Evan Le, piano virtuoso (<https://youtu.be/qzQSyizCxOY>)
- SHORT PAPER 1 DUE**

Wednesday, February 15th — What is artistic talent?

- Reading: Plato 'Ion' (*Reader*, pp. 258-265)

Friday, February 17th — Rejecting the Notion of Artistic Genius

- Linda Nochlin, 'Why are there no great women artists?' (*Reader*, pp. 42-47).

## UNIT 2: Ethical, Social, and Political Themes

### **WEEK 6 — Ethics and Aesthetics**

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Monday, February 20th — Ethics and Aesthetics, Pt. 1

- Reading: Mary Devereaux, “Beauty and Evil: The Case of Leni Riefenstahl” (*Reader*, pp. 102-106).

Wednesday, February 22nd — Ethics and Aesthetics, Pt. 2

- Reading: A. W. Eaton, “Painting and Ethics” (*Reader*, pp. 52-57).

Friday, February 24th — Art and Social Class: Kitsch

- Reading: Robert C. Solomon, “Kitsch” (*Reader*, pp. 342-345).
- Video: John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Episode 3 (<https://youtu.be/Z7wi8jd7aC4>)

### **WEEK 7 — How Does Art Reinforce Stereotypes?**

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Monday, February 27th — The Male Gaze

- Reading: Laura Mulvey, ‘Woman as Image, Man as Bearer of the Look’ (*Reader*, pp. 95-100)
- Devereaux, *Oppressive Texts*

Wednesday, March 1st — The White Gaze

- Reading: Paul C. Taylor, ‘The Last King of Scotland’—The Ethics of Race in Film (*Reader*, pp. 106-111).

Friday, March 3rd — Application to Film

- Film (required): either *Queen of Katwe*, *Hidden Figures* (if available), or *Alien* (or all three!).
- Be ready to discuss one of these films (in connection with the theories that we’ve covered) during class!
- Video: John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Episode 2 (<https://youtu.be/bZR06JJWajM>)

### **WEEK 8 — Midterm Exam and Review**

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Monday, March 6th — Review

Wednesday, March 8th — Review

Friday, March 10th — **MIDTERM EXAM**

### **WEEK 9 — SPRING BREAK**

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Monday, March 13th — NO CLASS

Wednesday, March 15th — NO CLASS

Friday, March 17th — NO CLASS

## UNIT 3: Application to Specific Genres

### **WEEK 10 — Humor and Horror**

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Monday, March 20th — Humor, Pt. 1

- Reading: Michael Philips, “Racist Acts and Racist Humor” (available online through the library).

Wednesday, March 22nd — Humor, Pt. 2

- Reading: Merrie Bergmann, “How Many Feminists Does it Take to Make a Joke?” (available online through the library).

Friday, March 24th — Why Are People Interested in Horror?

- Noel Carroll, “Why Horror?”

([http://www.blue-sunshine.com/tl\\_files/images/Week6-Carroll-WhyHorror.pdf](http://www.blue-sunshine.com/tl_files/images/Week6-Carroll-WhyHorror.pdf))

### **WEEK 11 — Literature**

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Monday, March 27th — What is Literature?

- Reading: Eagleton, “What is Literature?” (*Reader*, p. 213).

Wednesday, March 29th — Writing

- Reading 1: Collingwood, “The Poetic Expression of Emotion” (*Reader*, p. 217).

- Reading 2: Lu Chi, “The Art of Writing” (*Reader*, p. 240).

Friday, March 31st — Imagination

- Reading: Currie, “Imagination and Make-Believe” (*Reader*, p. 250).

- Video: Iris Murdoch interviews (<https://www.partiallyexaminedlife.com/2012/09/29/iris-murdoch-on-philosophy-and-literature/>)

- **SHORT PAPER 2 DUE**

### **WEEK 12 — Music**

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Monday, April 3rd — Music and Emotion

- Reading: Stephen Davies, “The Expression of Emotion in Music” (*Reader*, p. 185).

Wednesday, April 5th — What is Music?

- Reading: Levinson, “On the Concept of Music” (*Reader*, 168).

Friday, April 7th — The Ontology of Music, continued

- Reading: Caplan and Matheson, “Ontology of Music” (*Reader*, p. 171).

### **WEEK 13 — Film, Photography, and Videogames**

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Monday, April 10th — Photography

- Reading: Walter, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction” (*Reader*, pp. 66).

Wednesday, April 12th — Film, Pt. 1

- Reading: Noel Carroll, “The Power of Movies” (*Reader*, p. 91).

Friday, April 14th — In-class activity. Be prepared to share your work with your peers.

### **WEEK 14 — Science Fiction and Philosophy**

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Monday, April 17th — Science Fiction and Philosophy; The Ethics of Videogame Play

- Noel Carroll, “Science Fiction, Philosophy, and Politics: Planet of the Apes as a Thought Experiment”
- Stephanie Patridge, ‘Is It Only a Game? The Ethics of Video Game Play’ (*Reader*, p. 386-390).
- (<http://www.ethical-perspectives.be/viewpic.php?LAN=E&TABLE=EP&ID=1600>)
- **LONG PAPER PROPOSAL DUE**

Wednesday, April 19th — In-Class Review

Friday, April 21st — In-Class Review

## **UNIT 4 — Non-Western Aesthetic Traditions**

### **WEEK 15 — Indian Aesthetic Theories**

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Monday, April 24th —

- **EXAM 2**

Wednesday, April 26th — Rasa Theory

- Reading: *Rig Veda* I.46.6 (to be posted on Canvas)
- Reading: Bharata Muni, *Natyasastra*, excerpt (to be posted on Canvas)

Friday, April 28th — Rasa Theory, continued

- Guest lecturer: Aruna Kharod
- TBD

### **WEEK 16 — Japanese Aesthetics**

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Monday, May 1st — Japanese Aesthetics, Pt. 1

- Reading: Donald Keene, “Japanese Aesthetics,” *Philosophy East and West* 19:3 (1969): 293-306. (Available online through the library.)
- Film (required): *Princess Mononoke* or *Spirited Away*.
- Be prepared to discuss one of these films in class!

Wednesday, May 3rd — Japanese Aesthetics, Pt. 2

- Reading: Rea Amit, “On the Structure of Contemporary Japanese Aesthetics” in *Philosophy East and West*, 62: 2 (2012): pp. 174-185. (Available online through the library.)

Friday, May 5th — Concluding Remarks

- **FINAL PROJECT DUE**
- There is **no final exam** in this course.

