Jesus Luzardo  
JLuzardo@Fordham.edu  
Class Times: Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 9:00 AM – 12:00 AM in Leon Lowenstein Bldg. 914  
Office: TBA  
Office Hours: Thursday 12:15 PM – 2:15 PM  

Course Description  
While the phrase “human nature” is one that we make constant appeals to, in order to explain, to justify, or to excuse some event, phenomenon, or act, the very concept of a human nature is extremely ripe with underlying assumptions, terms, and relationships. In this class, we will undergo a general survey of the history of Western philosophy — from antiquity to the present — in order to glean some of these relationships and concepts, such as that of the soul, of knowledge, of truth, of love, of the body, and of subjectivity, amongst many others.

Course Objectives  
In this course, students will:
1. Learn how to properly organize and express – in speech and in writing – one’s thoughts and how to read, assess, and build coherent arguments. Additionally, students will use their critical skills to discern, detect, interpret, and synthesize arguments through textual analyses. Most importantly, these skills should cultivate respect for and charitability towards texts, cultures, and differing points of view.
2. Gain an understanding of some of the main strands of philosophical and political thought in the history of Western civilization. Throughout the course, students will be guided (and will be asked) to make logical and creative connections between events, movements, and personages in history, and furthermore to connect these to their own time, culture, and their very own way of thinking.
3. Apply critical and creative thinking, logical rigor, and historical knowledge to their very own lives, views, cultures, and historical situations — for this is precisely what philosophy demands and what it ultimately consists of.

Required Texts  
(Other texts and selections will be posted on Blackboard)
Grades
Your final grade will be composed and determined in the following way:

- Participation/Attendance………………………………20%
- Reading Responses…………………………………….25% (total)
- Short Papers……………………………………………7.5% (2x)
- Exams………………………………………….……….10% (2x)
- Prospectus/Final Paper…………………………………20%

Attendance
Our class sessions will largely consist of the exploration, explication, and discussion of the texts and themes assigned. Thus, it is crucial to your success that you attend class and that you arrive on time so as to not disrupt the class. If you must be absent, please let me know in person or via email as early as possible, so that we can arrange for you to catch up on any lost work or missed lessons. Regardless of the nature of your absence, I will accept any assigned work if it is emailed before or during the class period in which it is due.

Attendance will constitute 7.5% of your grade and 2 unannounced and unexplained absence will result in a failing grade. Furthermore, I will only allow for late or make-up work in the case of excused absences — that is, absences about which you have informed me beforehand or sudden emergencies barring you from making it to class. However, even if you inform me of a possible absence beforehand, it is fully within my discretion to determine whether an absence should count as “excused,” and therefore whether it warrants the possibility of make-up work. In the case of unexcused absences, I will accept work due for the day if you email it to me before class time.

Reading
The study of philosophy depends, above all else, in the reading and analysis of texts. Thus, no task is more important to your ability to perform well in the class than doing the assigned readings before class. Our required texts may be particularly different from and more complex than what is normally required in other disciplines and prior to university-level classes. You must therefore give yourself an appropriate amount of time to read the text carefully and thoroughly before class. Many philosophers have spent their whole lives attempting to make sense of the texts we will be reading, so you should never worry if you’re having a hard time understanding an assigned reading. What matters is that you work your way through the entirety of the assigned reading and that you come to class with reactions, opinions, and, most importantly, questions about the text. Such discussions are significantly improved when everyone has the text available during class. Thus, you must bring the relevant text to class. Failure to do so will result in a deduction to your participation grade and, if it happens repeatedly, will result in the student being marked absent for class. If, for any reason, you are
having a hard time obtaining any of the text, please let me know and I will make sure that you get a copy.

**Participation**
Though a lot of your time should be spent reading and thinking about the texts on your own, discussion is arguably as important (and perhaps healthier) for philosophy to succeed. You are not only encouraged, but **expected**, to participate in class discussions by asking questions, expressing your views, and engaging in productive, respectful dialogue with each other. I will conduct class based on the assumption that you have done the reading and will make a habit of calling on students to express their thoughts and ideas on the topic in question. Though attendance and participation are collapsed into a single category above, participation constitutes a significant portion of this grade. In other words, attendance alone without any participation cannot result in a grade higher than a 50.

**Reading Responses**
Given the importance of texts in the study of philosophy, the ability to think and write insightfully, creatively, and clearly is one of the most essential skills a philosopher (along with most other professions) can have. The best way to develop the skill of writing is simply to write as much and as often as possible. To that end, you will be required to write a 500-word (or more) response to the readings for any **two** class session per week (any of the four days in which we meet).

While your response should make it clear that you have done the reading (must contain some reference to the text’s thesis statement and main arguments), what is most important for these responses is that you treat it as a space in which to offer your immediate thoughts and reactions to the reading (so you cannot simply summarize the reading). This includes but is not limited to exploring questions arising from the text and connecting the text with other texts we’ve read (or that have read on your own), to current events, and to your beliefs and life experiences. This will have the added benefit that it will give you a starting point from which to think about, discuss, and write about the text. It must be written in Times New Roman, 12 point font, and **must include a word count at the bottom of the page**. Responses must be turned in in a hard copy at the beginning of class and will be graded on a three-point scale (it should be very difficult **not** to get the full points). Grammar and syntax will be taken into account.

**Papers**
You will have two major writing assignments in the semester, which must demonstrate a clear familiarity with and grasp of the relevant texts and must furthermore make clear, coherent, logical arguments regarding the subject matter/text. These will consist of 1) a simple 600 to 750 word argument analysis for which I will provide prompts, along with a revision and 2) a short research paper of ~2,250-2,500 words on a relevant topic developed by you and approved by me.
A few classes before the end of the semester, you will write a brief prospectus detailing the topic and trajectory of your paper, though you are very much encouraged to come talk to me when considering paper topics. The final paper must incorporate at least one external source and must contain proper, consistent citations. Further information about the exact criteria for grading the paper, approval or disapproval of topics, or formatting will be provided later on in the semester.

**Exams**
There will be a midterm and a final exam, which will operate according to the schedule provided by Fordham University. Both exams will require a blue book (which I will provide on the day of the exam) and will consist entirely of written questions, both short and long, which will ask for detailed definitions of concepts, descriptions of arguments, and critical engagement with one or more thinkers or texts. While the midterm exam will only cover the first half of the semester, the final exam will be cumulative (though any questions in the final exam about material from the first half of the semester will treat of the topic differently, in light of the readings and discussions of the second half of the semester). More information about the kinds of questions in the exam and the topics to be studied will be provided some time before each exam.

**Inclusive language in the classroom, exams, and papers**
Across the semester we'll constantly be referring to everyday experiences to illustrate points and support arguments, in discussion and in writing. When doing this, it's very easy to fall into stereotypical thinking and expressions that can cause offense to other people. For example, we might assume that marriage is always between a man and a woman, or that people of certain religious or ethnic backgrounds have always had certain tastes or preferences. We often do this without any conscious thought or intention.

So I ask that you reflect on your use of language, and endeavor to make it as inclusive as possible, in discussion and in writing. Sometimes this is as easy as saying "he or she," (or even more gender-ambiguous language beyond this dichotomy) rather than just "he," when referring to an unspecified person in an example. And if anything anyone says, myself included (above all myself!), makes you feel uncomfortable, please let me know and I'll do my best to respond appropriately. There's no getting around the fact that a philosophy classroom can sometimes be a strange place to be in, but I'd like everyone in the room, without exception, to feel as at home here as possible.

**Plagiarism**
As per the Fordham University Undergraduate Handbook:

“Plagiarism occurs when individuals attempt to present as their own what has come from another source. Plagiarism takes place whether such theft is accidental or deliberate. It is no defense to claim that one has “forgotten” to document ideas or material taken from another source.”
Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

i. Using the ideas of another person, whether or not such ideas are paraphrased, from whatever source including oral, print, broadcast, or computer-mediated communication;

ii. Rewriting borrowed material by simply dropping a word here and there, substituting a few words for others, or moving around words or sentence;

iii. Presenting borrowed material, whether a phrase, sentence, or whole paragraphs without placing quotation marks around the borrowed material in the approved style;

iv. Presenting, as one’s own an assignment, paper, or computer program partially or wholly prepared by another person, whether by another student, friend, or by a business or on-line service that sells or distributes such papers and programs;

v. Failing to use proper citation for information obtained from print sources or the internet, according to citation criteria specified by the instructor or in cases where instructor guidance is not given, by standard manuals of style (e.g. The Chicago Manual of Style).

Plagiarism is a serious offense which, if discovered, will lead to a report made to the Dean’s office and possibly a failing grade for the assignment in question or the class as a whole. Given the prevalence of plagiarism of various kinds in contemporary academic settings, major assignment must be submitted through the SafeAssign application on Blackboard and I fully reserve the right to inquire further — even by requesting a personal meeting with the student — when a work is suspected of containing plagiarized content.

Disabilities
Under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973, all students, with or without disabilities, are entitled to equal access to the programs and activities of Fordham University. If you believe that you have a disabling condition that may interfere with your ability to participate in the activities, coursework, or assessment of the object of this course, you may be entitled to accommodations. Please schedule an appointment to speak with someone at the Office of Disability Services (Rose Hill - O’Hare Hall, Lower Level, x0655 or at Lincoln Center – Lowenstein 207, x6282).

Technology
No electronic devices are permitted during class, including laptops, tablets, phones, smartwatches, and/or any other new device that fundamentally changes the way in which we engage the universe by expanding our ability to put a screen and an internet connection in a new place. If you believe that an exception should be made for you, come speak with me or send me an email.
Faculty & Staff Role: Mandatory Reporting and Obligations

All faculty and staff members MUST report the following incidents when a student is a victim / survivor and they observe, obtain knowledge, learn of, or reasonably suspect:

- Any form of sexual harassment (verbal or physical)
- Rape/Sexual Assault
- Dating and Domestic Violence
- Stalking
- Sexual exploitation, including forcible touching
- Other sexual misconduct

The only Fordham employees who are exceptions to the Mandatory Reporting requirement are: clinical counselors and pastoral counselors working as such at the University's Counseling & Psychological Services (or) in Campus Ministry.

Course Schedule

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<td>1-Jun</td>
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<td>Plato, <em>The Republic</em> (excerpt), <em>Symposium</em> (excerpt)</td>
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<td>Aristotle, <em>De Anima</em>, <em>Ethics</em></td>
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<td>Augustine, <em>Confessions</em>; Midterm Review; First Paper Due</td>
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<td>13-Jun</td>
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<td>Midterm Exam; Descartes, <em>Meditations 1-2</em></td>
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<td>14-Jun</td>
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<td>Descartes, <em>Meditations 3-5</em></td>
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<td>20-Jun</td>
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<td>Sartre, <em>Existentialism is a Humanism</em></td>
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<td>Friedman, <em>Capitalism and Freedom</em>; Marx, &quot;Alienated Labor&quot;; Prospectus Due</td>
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