

Anonymous Course Review Summaries by Semester (2017-2020)

Hannah Daru

Philosophy of Human Nature

PHIL 1000, EP 1 | FALL 2017 | TUESDAY, WEDNESDAY, FRIDAY, 8:30-9:20 A.M. | FACULTY MEMORIAL HALL 318

HANNAH DARU (BREECE) | HBREECE@FORDHAM.EDU | COLLINS HALL, B9 | OFFICE HOURS 1:00-2:00 TUES. & WED.

About This Class

What are we? Humans, yes, but what does it mean to be a human? And, why should we care? In order to begin to answer, or at least to understand, these questions pertaining to human nature, we must learn to read carefully important writings about human beings. By reading Plato and Augustine, Aristotle, Aquinas, and Descartes, as well as more modern thinkers, we will join great thinkers in grappling with questions that must be considered in order to understand who we are as human beings. We will focus on the following questions: Why should we ask what a human is? Of what do humans consist? Are humans bodies and souls? Are they only minds? Are they only bodies? Given the answers to these questions, what can we say about human freedom? These are not the only questions that can or should be asked. As the class progresses, you should feel free to raise other questions that arise.

In thinking about these questions, we will be joining what Mortimer Adler, a twentieth-century philosopher, called "the great conversation"—a conversation about important questions that spans the ages. We will consider and react to ideas that have been read and contemplated for hundreds, if not thousands, of years. In order to join this conversation, however, we must be able to communicate well through listening, speaking, and writing. Consequently, we will pay close attention to articulating and evaluating ideas and arguments for those ideas both in speaking and writing.

Required Texts

Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy
Rene Descartes
[ISBN: 978-0-87220-420-1]

Five Dialogues (second ed.)
Plato
[ISBN: 978-0-87220-633-5]

Confessions
Saint Augustine
[ISBN: 978-0-14-044114-7]

The Death of Ivan Ilyich
Leo Tolstoy
[ISBN: 978-0-553-21035-1]

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard. Please bring a **HARD COPY** of the text(s) for the day to class!

Course Objectives

1

Explain what philosophy is and why human beings should do it.

2

Read texts critically and fairly by analyzing philosophical arguments.

3

Develop and defend your own positions on philosophical topics, both in written and spoken words.

4

Enjoy being a philosopher!

PHIL 4418 ISSUES OF LIFE AND DEATH EP4 | Spring 2020



Professor: Hannah Daru
Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Fridays, 8:30-9:45 a.m.
Location: Tower 3 Salice 3-125
Email: hbreece@fordham.edu
Office Hours: Tues. & Fri. 10:00-11:00 and by appt.



Required Texts
All required texts will be posted on Blackboard in the Content section.

Description

This seminar crosses traditional boundaries between academic disciplines, bringing philosophy together with medicine and law. The course will examine philosophical issues related to human existence spanning from before conception and going all the way through death. The course is designed so that students can engage with issues at the theoretical level but also gain an appreciation for how ethical issues manifest in the practical world of health care.

Fundamental Structure

This seminar covers material that encompasses the full span of human life. Your life and the lives of your neighbors in this class and in the wider community are or often will be deeply affected by the policies and practices discussed. Some topics also carry with them deep religious and political significance for many. As such, it is essential that we abide by certain ground rules and maintain a predictable structure for our explorations in order to reduce anxiety and promote fruitful engagement with the material. We will discuss and generate more specific ground rules as a class early in the semester, but these will get us started:

Expectations

- Read relevant material carefully **before** class
- Arrive to class on time and prepared to engage
- Treat everyone in the class with respect
- Be attentive to sensitive topics of discussion
- Come prepared to encounter and understand views with which you may disagree

Typical Procedure in Class

- Map the argument(s) in the reading(s)
- Clarify confusing passages
- Discuss and/or map where different authors agree and/or conflict
- Discuss implications of arguments
- Consider methods of navigating an issue in practice

Objectives

Develop skills necessary to write a philosophy paper

Develop the ability to engage in philosophical discussion with peers

Develop the ability to critically engage with philosophical texts/debates

Consider some of the issues that arise in contemporary health care contexts, especially surrounding end-of-life decisions

Consider concepts central to ethical reasoning about life, dying, and death

Gain confidence in navigating heavy, sensitive topics with charity and understanding

Develop the ability to accurately interpret and reconstruct complicated arguments

Philosophical Ethics

PHIL 3000 | FALL 2018 | MONDAY & THURSDAY, 8:30-9:45 | KEATING 114

HANNAH DARU | HBREECE@FORDHAM.EDU | OFFICE: COLLINS HALL, B23 | OFFICE HOURS: 10-11 MONDAY & THURSDAY

About This Class

To be our best selves and to truly be men and women with and for others, it is important to have some ideas about who we are and how we fit into the world. This course aims to raise questions like: What is the right thing to do? Who are our neighbors? Do we have duties and obligations?

We will explore a number of approaches to these questions that span millennia and cover the most predominant ethical theories—utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue ethics, as well as ethics of care and natural law. No life and no career is unaffected by ethical concerns or uninfluenced by the surrounding arguments (for better or for worse). In order to join this conversation, we must be able to communicate through listening, speaking, and writing. Consequently, we will pay close attention to articulating and evaluating ideas and arguments for those ideas both in speaking and in writing.

Required Texts

On Liberty & Utilitarianism
John Stuart Mill
[ISBN: 978-0-553-21414-7]

The Nicomachean Ethics
Aristotle
[ISBN: 978-0-19-921361-0]

Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals
Immanuel Kant
[ISBN: 978-0-521-62695-8]

Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?
Michael Sandel
[ISBN: 978-0-374-53250-5]

Other readings will be posted on Blackboard. Please bring a **HARD COPY** of the text(s) for the day to class!

Course Objectives

3

Develop and defend your own positions on philosophical topics, both in written and spoken words.

4

Enjoy being a philosopher!

(Pictured: Images of syllabi that I have designed for classes I have taught)

Issues of Life and Death

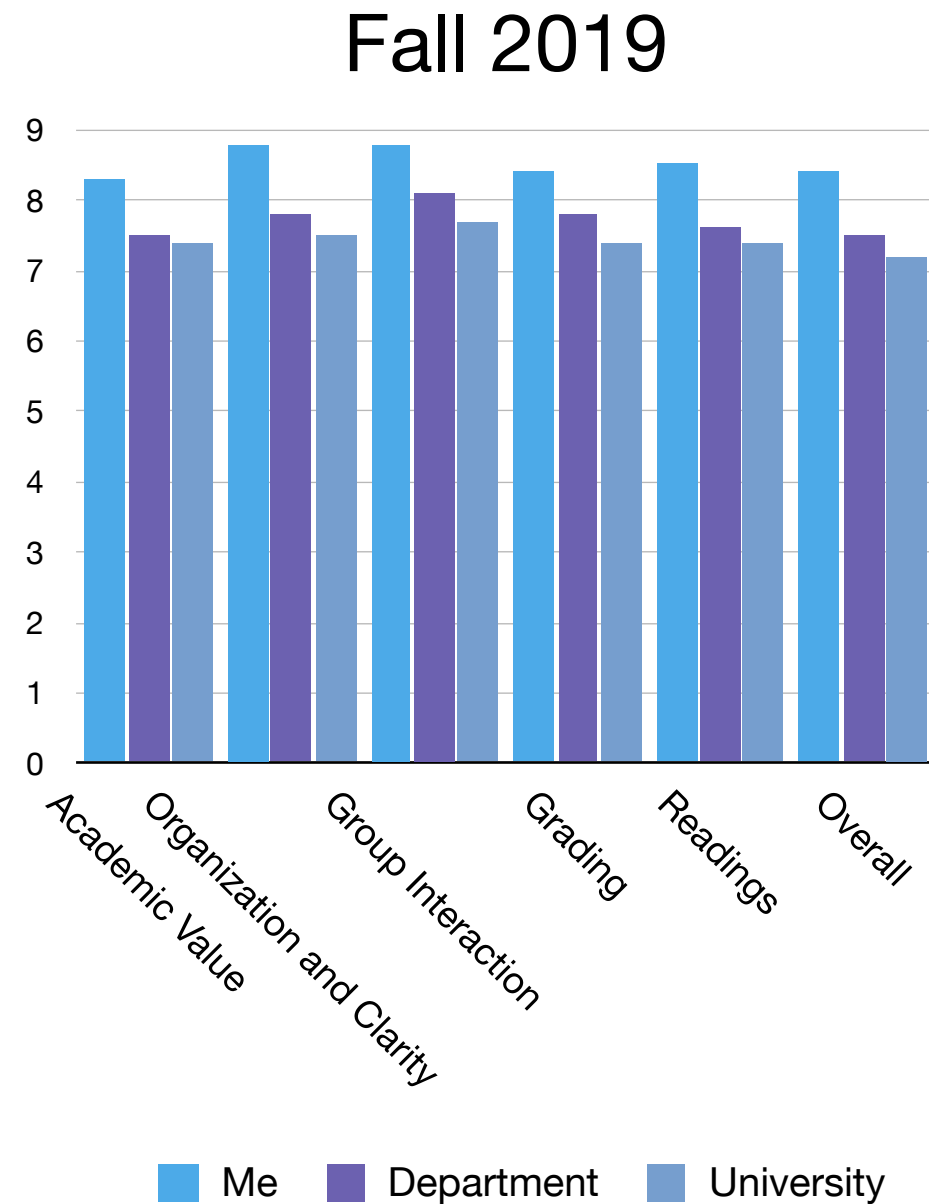
Fall 2019

Bulletin Description: “The objective of this course is to make students aware of several issues in biology and medicine that require moral reflection, judgment, or decision, while also indicating how justified moral conclusions are reached.”

Note: I also taught this in the spring of 2020, but because of COVID-19 closures, end-of-semester anonymous surveys were administered differently, and matching data is unavailable.

Philosophy class cross-listed with: Diversity and Difference concentration; Power, Politics and Institutions concentration; Bioethics courses; History/Social Science requirement; American Catholic Studies; Religion/Philosophy requirement; Values requirement; *Eloquentia Perfecta* 4 requirement; History, Philosophy, and Anthropology requirement; Humanitarian Studies courses; Healthcare Policy concentration

*All scores are out of 9.



Comments
The halloween class – very different and by far the most enjoyable and interactive lecture I have been a part of during my time at Fordham.
The group discussion was very well handled. It created an excellent way to learn and participate.
I genuinely felt the professor had a really comprehensive knowledge of the content, so I trusted she would not only be able to answer any questions there might be but do so in a way that was helpful for the whole class. I really appreciated all the preparation that the professor put into the course, I noticed it and was thankful every time.
I really liked the variety of the class, it never felt like we were doing the same thing each day and each different activity helped with understanding the different topics.
I really enjoyed the readings and the content of the course. I thought the content was interesting and relevant.
Abortion and genetic editing are definitely the most interesting topics. These topics led me to contemplate about human rights and how human beings develops in the future.
Professor was and very professional, encouraging and helpful, class was engaging and materials were realistic to prepare for. Professor also did not miss class nor was ever late. She dressed and acted with a sense of professionalism with a touch of personal style that encouraged me to come to class prepared.
The way that the paper assignment was organized was very good. I like how Professor Daru modeled it after the academic writing process, and even went as far to model our research after an academic conference presentation.
I liked the emphasis on debate and understanding the arguments behind the readings. I thought the readings were helpful and enjoyed how the units of the course were broken up.
I enjoyed most of the readings, they were generally good length and written towards our level of knowledge. The in class debates and discussions were extremely effective in fleshing out the readings.
I believe the constant group work and seminar–style of this class was very effective in terms of letting us absorb the information that was being taught. It kept me and my peers engaged and made the class very fun and I wanted to be there.

These are samples of comments. Full reports for this class and others are available to hiring committees upon request.

Comments
She encouraged everyone to participate on the debates based on the readings.
Her enthusiasm and knowledge were very impressive.
I thought the introduction of group and class lead discussions were valuable to the topics. It allowed students to see different points of view and construct sound arguments, as well as increased our understanding of the complexity of the philosophical and practical applications.
Like I mentioned earlier, I really could sense that there was prep behind each class, not in excess, but in a way that I felt comfortable coming to class expecting a thorough lesson.
It wasn't all lecture, there was a mix of different activities, everything was organized and clear.
She was very organized with how she conducted the class and was clear about how much time we had to complete discussions, this kept us on track. It was obvious that Professor Breece cared about us and wanted us to succeed. Her enthusiasm about the subjects made me want to read and learn more about topics. She made everyone feel comfortable to participate in class and respected all comments. She took our feedback seriously and spent a lot of time making activities that would facilitate discussion and debate that got all class members engaged. I also really liked having the palliative care expert come in to speak to us.
Dicussion heavy and responding to every topic in very insightful ways. She let us prepare and discuss about various topics and gives sufficient feedbacks in lecture.
She made the material easy to understand by explaining the concepts simplistically.
I liked how Professor Daru included many different techniques to engage us with the material and arguments. These included informal debates, group discussion, and presentations.
Professor Daru is such a sweet and caring professor. She truly wants her students to succeed, and puts so much effort into her lesson plans. She is very knowledgeable of philosophy. I would definitely take her again.
Professor Daru was extremely professional in her running of the class, but always understanding and considerate.
I found her interactive teaching style very refreshing and it made philosophy very enjoyable for me, and I'm someone who doesn't enjoy philosophy very much.
Instructor was great. Always makes time for office hours. Came in early several times just to meet with me to help me turn in a better paper. Also adapts the class to incorporate our suggestions.

Philosophical Ethics

Fall 2018 and Spring 2019

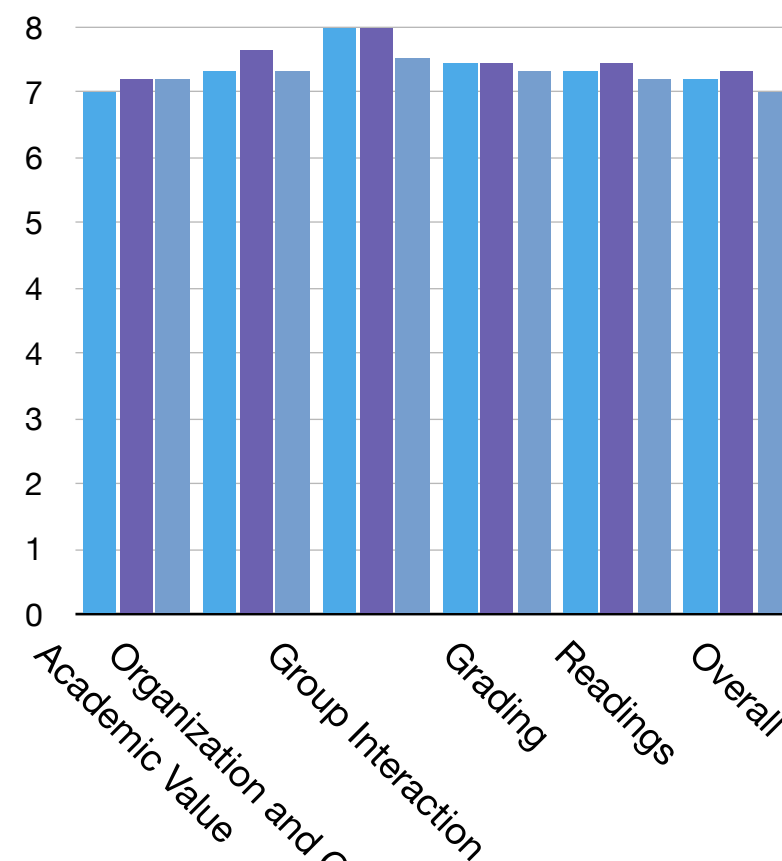
■ Me ■ Department ■ University

Bulletin Description: “This course involves philosophical reflection on the major normative ethical theories underlying moral decision making in our everyday lives. The principal focus of the course is a systematic introduction to the main normative ethical theories, i.e., eudaimonism, natural law ethics, deontological ethics, utilitarianism, virtue ethics, and feminism. The differences among these approaches are illuminated by studying various moral issues. In each section of the course, at least half the readings will be selected from Aristotle and Kant. Each section will include writings by at least one contemporary figure.”

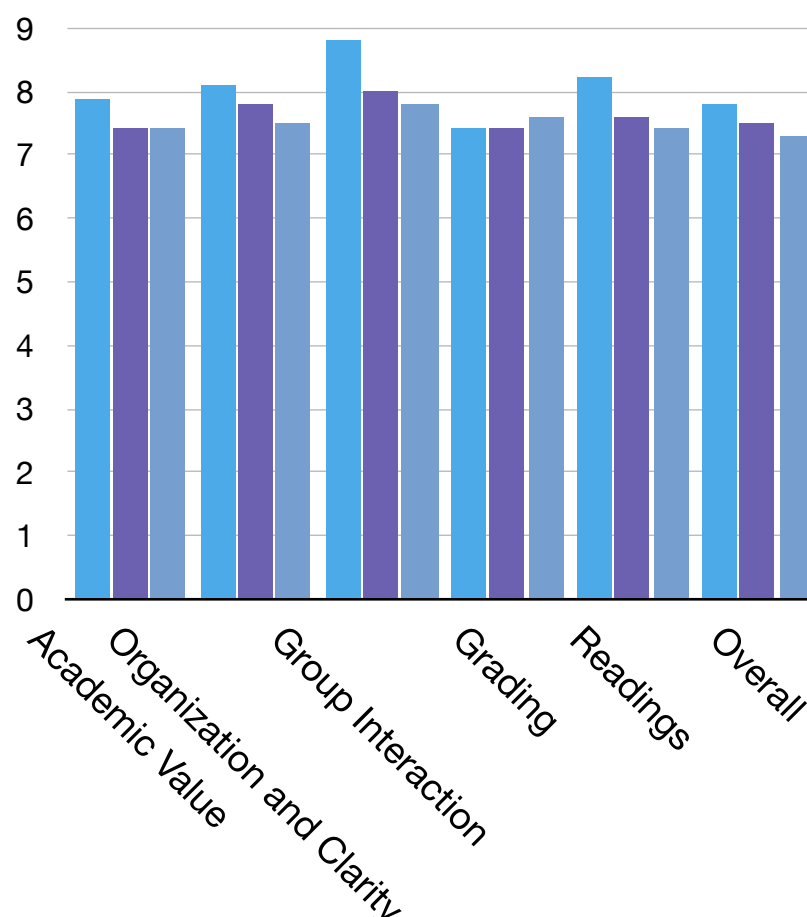
Note: I also taught this in the summer of 2018 and the summer of 2020. However, course review data is only released to the instructor when enough students participate, and the data are reported differently. Summer 2018 data was not made available to me because of small class size and subsequently small completion totals. Summer 2020 results were shared with me but do not include department- and university-wide data to share that are consistent with other charts in this file.

*All scores are out of 9.

Fall 2018



Spring 2019



Comments
I liked this course better than the freshman philosophy core course
I like the different readings that we have because they help me better understand the material. I also like the creative project that she has us do at the end of the semester. I also think that the presentations that she has us do are valuable because they helped me with public speaking.
The final was probably the most creative and entertaining one I have taken thus far at Fordham. I believe I learned more being able to apply the philosophies in a real-life situation than I would have on a regular exam, and I enjoyed that it got the whole class to come together to work towards an agreement. I would definitely recommend using that format for future classes. It also took a lot of stress away because I did not have to memorize or study for hours to prepare for it.
N/A
The group discussions of this course were extremely helpful.
Summaries of readings and going over major points of the philosophy unit was helpful to me
I learned a lot in this course.
Professor Daru really engaged with us, allowed us to use our creativity to try to reckon with the subjects at hand. She even made the Fordham-mandated learnings worth while!!! Excellent instructor of Philosophy.
I enjoy the final project Professor Breece assigns. It gives freedom for students to take what has been taught in class for the semester and apply it to some interest that they hold. It makes the learning seep in deeper when it can be personalized and seemingly made more relevant. Also, the fact she allows for creativity is very exciting— in bring art or some other medium into the project.
N/a

Comments
Unique teaching style, really enjoyed
Very enthusiastic
I like how friendly and approachable she is. I think that her style of teaching is very easy to follow.
She used creativity in order to help us learn the material better, which I found very helpful. In our final creative project, I was very interested to see how philosophy could relate to the growing abundance of plastic in our oceans that affects marine life and I enjoyed designing a mini brochure about the topic. Applying our topics to real-life situations was more informative than writing a straightforward essay.
I liked how our lectures were very discussion based. I believe that was helpful in keeping everyone engaged.
The group discussion aspect.
She was interested in solidifying our understanding and was very active in helping in and out of class.
Very enthusiastic about the course
Everything! Professor Breece is one of the best instructors that I have had at Fordham.
She was the moderator, the class were the debaters! Excellent teaching style that allows the students to truly take command of the subject matter at hand.
I love the discussions she facilitates and encourages in class. She is very quick to help students who are more confused, especially outside of class.
Reviewing readings in class and opening the discussion up to how things apply to real life.
Available for one on one meetings Gave good feedback on where to improve

Comments

The argument exercises were helpful in understanding the material we were reading. They also made the main points of the text clear and helped us narrow down what we should really know.

I loved the focus on Mill and Kant.

I really enjoyed the group participation aspect of the course along with the civil discourse prompts which encouraged group discussion.

I thought all of the topics we discussed were very meaningful and applicable to our own lives, especially when we discussed certain moral dilemmas.

The civil discourse assignment

There was a lot of in-class small group discussions which allowed everyone to have a discussion about their own opinions on the relevant topic which was very helpful and made the class flow better I think.

I liked the activities

I think the final project was a great addition to this class, as it allowed students to be creative and also gave them an opportunity to raise their grades.

The slides were thoughtfully arranged, provided sufficient content that allows for discussion and analysis, and pretty to look at.

Argument exercises on blackboard as well as civil discourses were very positive because they were good for understanding particular topics and philosophers that were studied throughout the semester.

She was very nice during office hours.

I think the topics we studied were valuable and applicable to real life, which I did like.

I found that the final assignment was a very good idea because it allows us as a student to bring a creative touch into the project.

I enjoyed all of the readings, particularly the three major philosophers that we read. Small groups discussions were quite successful.

Comments

I liked how the lectures facilitated notes and that it was organized. I generally take very thorough notes in my classes and I found it very easy to in this class which is helpful when reviewing for assignments.

I thought she was very clear and made an otherwise confusing subject very clear and relevant.

Professor daru really knew what she was doing. Very organized and on top of the class.

I found the powerpoint presentations to be very helpful in terms of taking notes, as I learn best by writing things down. All of the slides included valuable information and I never felt that time was being wasted.

The powerpoint for each class

I really enjoyed the encouragement to have everyone participate by having small-group discussions in almost every class.

I liked her power points because they were very helpful

I really liked the way she presented the information. Every class, the information was repeated using different words and in different formats. That made learning and remembering things much easier.

She gave a wide range of viewpoints and objective possibilities for arguments. This allowed students to see and consider all aspects of the claim as well as compare it to alternative viewpoints.

Her enthusiasm to teach philosophy as well as many class group work among students. Blackboard assignments and group projects were helpful to grasp the course material as well.

I liked her Blackboard assignments for some readings. They included all types of questions.

I found her presentations/powerpoints helpful with how I understood the course material.

She was very group oriented which I found to be helpful and make the class more interesting.

I found that she was very upbeat and exciting every class.

I liked the coverage of material and thought that presentations were very well organized. It was easy to follow her thought process throughout and I was never confused about a theory.

I liked how the instructor continuously went over previous material.

Philosophy of Human Nature

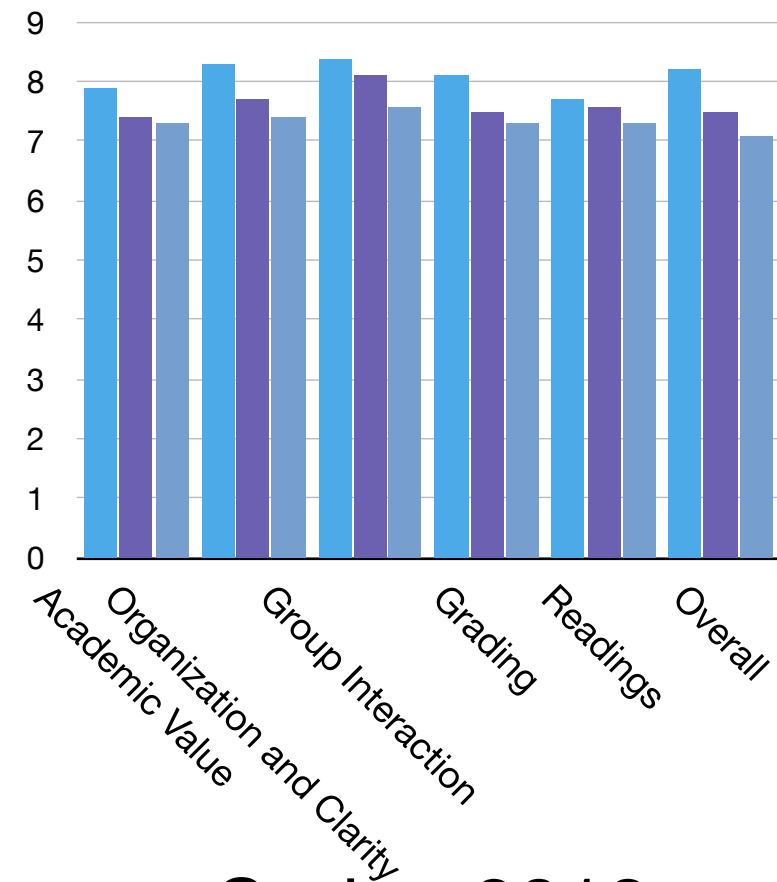
Fall 2017 and Spring 2018

■ Me ■ Department ■ University

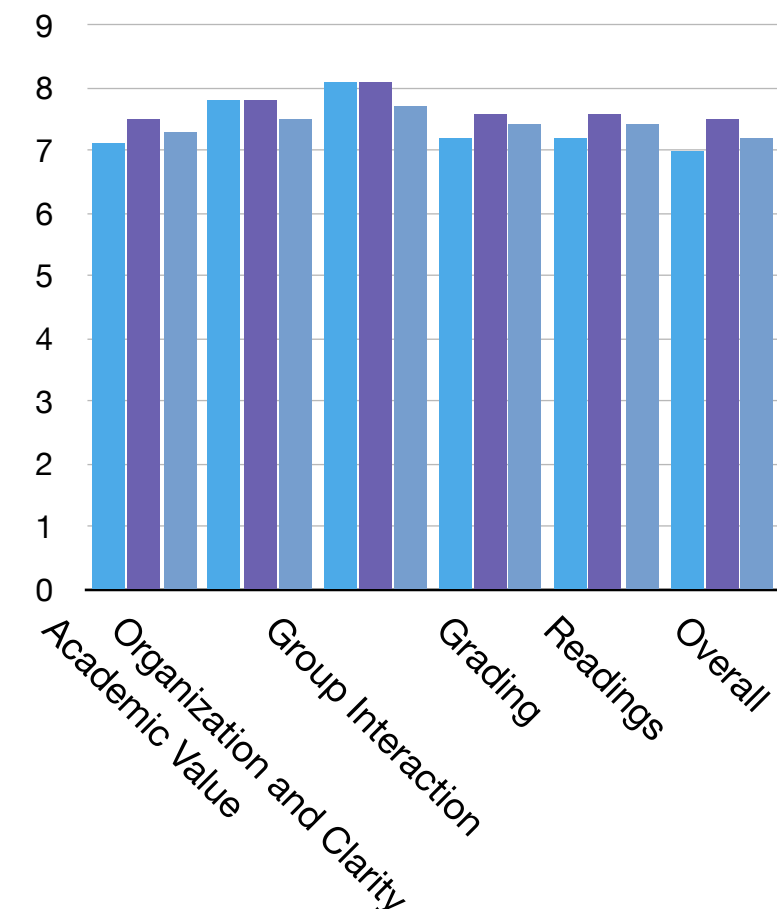
Bulletin Description: “A philosophical reflection on the central metaphysical and epistemological questions surrounding human nature, which includes discussion of some or all of the following problems: the body/soul distinction and the mind/body problem; the problem of knowledge, (relativism, skepticism, the objectivity of knowledge, faith and reason); free will and determinism; and self and society (subjectivity, personhood, sociality, historicity and tradition). At least 60 percent of each section of the course is devoted to readings from Plato, Aristotle, Augustine or Aquinas, and Descartes. Each section includes some writings by at least one contemporary figure.”

*All scores are out of 9.

Fall 2017



Spring 2018



Comments
group dicussions
Most readings were interesting.
Questions and recaps at the beginning of class, small groups
I enjoyed learning about philosophers such as Plato and Aristotle. Their arguments were thought provoking and interesting to discuss in class.
Professor Daru seemed to be very interested in our personal growth within the class and she contributed to a very positive class environment. She was personally available to help with anything we needed, she also held study sessions for us during reading week and provided us with very helpful feedback on all of our papers.
Professor Breece was very fair in acknowledging that students have complex schedules, so she let us pick two of three essays throughout the semester. She also recognized the fact that students have different interests, so for the final project, she allowed us to pick from various project ideas or a final paper. I also enjoyed how she had us meet in small groups for peer review for our final papers and projects. That helped me manage my time better, and really do my best work.

Comments
-She geniunely liked the topic
Organized with due dates
Small groups, close readings
I appreciated the mix between lectures and group discussions, as it helped me to understand the material more thoroughly. I also enjoyed the questions discussed in class and having structured notes on powerpoints posted on blackboard.
She seemed to be interested in what each of us had to say. She was always very positive, which is something that is sometimes hard to find in a professor.
I enjoyed how she made the class more of a discussion than a lecture. It allowed me to really get involved and dig deeper into the readings. If this class were lecture-based, it would be very boring and uninteresting. She did a great job in making the content more accessible to the students.

Comment
Group discussions, Student-led discussions, and reflection papers all helped better my understanding of the course material.
papers
I particularly loved the organization of this class. It featured a clear direction, making its content significantly easier to manage.
I enjoyed the way the porfessor engaged the class through the student led discussions on Fridays. This gave us an opportunity to discuss topics we covered in class thoroughly through informational slides and truly engaging dialogue with my peers.
I was surprised at how much I actually learned in the class. The presentations and materials were interesting and expectations were clear.
The discussions were thought provoking and enjoyable.
The class discussions were beneficial because everybody contributed willingly and was engaged.

Comment
group discussion
The instructor did a wonderful job at trying to involve every student with the class discussions, and explained the material as best as possible when there was any confusion.
She made the content more relatable and demonstrated a clear ability to teach the material. She also held a high standard, consistently telling the class to treat it as we would a job. I think this is a great mix for a first-semester freshman college class, preparing students for higher-level thinking and holding them accountable.
I liked all the aspects. This was one of the classes I had this semester that truly gripped my interest.
Very positive, supportive of the class in discussions
She helped make people feel comfortable which meant that people were more willing to share their own thoughts/ideas.
She had a nice sense of humour.