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1 STATEMENT OF TEACHING PHILOSOPHY

I love philosophy. The first philosophy course I took in college felt like a breath of fresh air. I had always been scientifically- and mathematically-oriented, and in philosophy I found a discipline that allowed me to direct my analytical strengths toward ethical, metaphysical, and epistemological questions I cared deeply about. Now, as a philosophy teacher, my aim is to share the joy and value of philosophical thinking with my students, including students who do not go on to major in philosophy, and especially students from traditionally underrepresented backgrounds in academia. In this statement, I elaborate on my approach to course planning and how I share my love for philosophy with my students.

My teaching practices are grounded in evidence-based, learner-centered pedagogy that I learned from training at the the University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching. I use "backward planning" techniques to design lessons: first, I identify the knowledge and skills I want students to gain by the end of the class; next, I decide on assessments that measure the extent to which students have attained those knowledge and skills; finally, I decide on readings and in-class activities that enable to students to attain those knowledge and skills and prepare them for assessments. By designing my courses around goals, I give my students a clearer idea of what is expected of them in the course (which helps reduce inequities in students' varying levels of preparation) and give myself the flexibility to adapt in-class activities in ways that enhance student learning. For instance, some of the key concepts students learn in introductory logic are proof by induction and the soundness and completeness theorems. In my experience, however, these are the concepts that students struggle with most. I adapt in-class activities accordingly: I begin with short multiple choice quizzes to check for students' understanding of the proofs, and only later ask more fine-grained computational questions on problem sets and exams. This gives students an opportunity to gain confidence in their understanding, and gives me an opportunity to gauge how students are handling the material before presenting them with more challenging assessments.

My teaching has spanned value theory and formal methods: I have taught upper-level courses in ethics, philosophy of law, logic, decision theory, and game theory. In my experience, accessibility is a particularly pronounced issue in formal courses, as students tend to have vastly different levels of mathematical preparation. Some students take these courses simply to fulfill a quantitative distribution requirement and struggle with the formal aspects the course, while others with strong backgrounds in math or computer science breeze through problem sets and exams. Each group of students requires different forms of support, and I try to adapt my teaching accordingly by, for instance, providing different pathways for student to demonstrate their learning and achievement of the course goals. However, I have found that in some important respects, the kind of support students in each group need is the same: both need to keep in mind the *point* of formal methods in order to excel at the material. Students with humanities backgrounds benefit from learning about the formal underpinnings of philosophical argumentation, while students with formal backgrounds benefit from thinking about the applications of

concepts they might take for granted. When I teach logic, I start every class with a segment called "What's the Point?" where I facilitate a discussion with students about why we should *care* about the material we are covering that day. For instance, when I teach sentential logic, I ask students to symbolize arguments that are made in ethical debates they care about to start a conversation about formal flaws in everyday reasoning. (On another note, when I teach the soundness theorem for sentential logic, I initiate a discussion about the dangers of a logical system that is not truth-preserving, sometimes eliciting audible gasps from students as I describe its horrors!) Taking time to motivate the material we are learning and explaining what's at stake are some ways that I try to share the joy of philosophy with my students.

My students are often surprised to learn that philosophical research often consists simply in *thinking*. One of my aims as a teacher is to show my students that careful, systematic thinking can yield remarkable insights into questions worth asking in every discipline. It is important to me that students who do not go on to major in philosophy nevertheless leave my classes with an aptitude for philosophical reasoning and critical thinking. One way I do this is by sharing stories about my own academic background: in college, I majored in architecture, and for many years aspired to be an architect. My philosophical training undoubtedly made me a better, more scrupulous architect, as it gave me the analytical and writing skills to justify my architectural designs.

When I design a course syllabus, I strive to share the joy of philosophy with my students by selecting readings I believe will leave a lasting impact on them. To do this, I employ what I call the "Marie Kondo criterion": I ask, of every text I put on a syllabus, whether it "sparks joy." There are a few ways a text might do this: it might elucidate a common but underexamined phenomenon (in a course I designed on the philosophy of art, for instance, there is a unit on snobbery and bullshit, topics that students feel strongly about but might not have realized can be analyzed through a philosophical lens); it might give voice to the oppressed (in that course, there is also a unit on artworld hegemony that includes readings on imperialism and sexism in the artworld); or it might say something profound about how we can make meaning in our lives (the course ends with a unit on why we should care about art, and what consolations beauty might offer us). One of the things I love most about philosophy—and why I chose to make it my career—is that it provides us with the tools to examine our lives and what we care about, and ultimately make our lives more meaningful. I try to pass on this insight to my students in every course I teach.

2 TEACHING INTERESTS

Below is a list of areas that I am happy to teach at the undergraduate level. I have marked areas I would also be happy to teach at the graduate level with an asterisk, and have included sample syllabi for the five bolded courses.

VALUE THEORY

Normative ethics*

Normative powers*

Moral and practical dilemmas*

Philosophy of action*

The meaning of life*

Death*

Aesthetics and the philosophy of art*

Applied ethics*

Philosophy of law

Bioethics*

Social and political philosophy*

Oppression and Resistance*

Philosophy of race and gender

Existentialism

INTRODUCTORY

Introduction to philosophy

Critical reasoning

Introductory courses in epistemology and philosophy of language

FORMAL PHILOSOPHY

Symbolic logic

Decisions, games, and rational choice

3 TEACHING EVALUATIONS

I have taught six courses at the University of Michigan, which are listed below. As Primary Instructor, I had full control of the class, designing my own syllabi, writing problem sets and exams, giving lectures, and leading in-class discussion. As a Graduate Student Instructor (GSI), I taught discussion sections that supplemented the primary instructor's lectures, helped create assignments, graded student work, and held office hours.

- PHIL 303 (Logic), Spring 2021 — Primary instructor (online)
- PHIL 443 (Rational Choice Theory), Fall 2020 — GSI for Jim Joyce (online)
- PHIL 303 (Logic), Winter 2020 — GSI for Jamie Tappenden (in-person and online)
- PHIL 444 (Groups and Choices), Fall 2019 — GSI for Brian Weatherson (in-person)
- PHIL 361 (Ethics), Winter 2019 — GSI for Dan Lowe (in-person)
- PHIL 359 (Law and Philosophy), Fall 2018 — GSI for Ishani Maitra (in-person)

Below are quantitative and qualitative teaching evaluations from all the courses I have taught.

3.1 QUANTITATIVE

The table on the following pages summarizes the quantitative feedback from all students who responded to teaching evaluation surveys in all the courses I've taught at the University of Michigan. For each claim, students were asked to quantify their agreement by selecting a number from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree"). I have included the median scores for a representative selection of statements from my course evaluations, alongside the university median for comparison. I have also included the percentage of my students in each class who selected "agree" or "strongly agree" (4 or 5 out of 5) for each statement.

Students are not required to complete course evaluations at the University of Michigan. Here are the response rates for the evaluations reported on the following pages:

- PHIL 303 (Logic), Spring 2021 — 81%
- PHIL 443 (Rational Choice Theory), Fall 2020 — 64%
- PHIL 303 (Logic), Winter 2020 — 28%
- PHIL 444 (Groups and Choices), Fall 2019 — 55%
- PHIL 361 (Ethics), Winter 2019 — 75%
- PHIL 359 (Law and Philosophy), Fall 2018 — 67%

Statement	Class	My median	University median	% agree
Overall, this was an excellent course.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.8	4.4	95%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.7	4.4	81%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.6	4.3	93%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	4.7	4.2	93%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.8	4.2	92%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.7	4.2	94%
This course advanced my understanding of the subject matter.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.8	4.6	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.7	4.6	92%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.9	4.7	93%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	4.9	4.7	96%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.7	94%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	5.0	4.7	100%
Overall, the instructor was an excellent teacher.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.7	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	5.0	4.7	100%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.9	100%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.6	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.5	97%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.9	4.5	97%
The instructor seemed well prepared for class meetings	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.8	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.9	4.8	100%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.8	100%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.8	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.8	100%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.9	4.8	97%
The instructor explained material clearly.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.9	4.7	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.9	4.7	100%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.7	100%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.6	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.8	97%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.9	4.6	100%
The instructor treated students with respect.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.9	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	5.0	4.9	100%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.8	100%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.8	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	5.0	4.8	100%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	5.0	4.8	100%

The instructor put material across in an interesting way.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.8	4.7	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.8	4.6	97%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.9	4.5	93%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.4	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.8	4.5	100%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.9	4.5	94%
The instructor appeared to have a thorough knowledge of the subject.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.9	4.9	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.9	4.9	97%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.8	100%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.8	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.8	100%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	5.0	4.8	97%
The instructor was sensitive to student difficulty with coursework.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.9	4.8	90%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.9	4.7	100%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.6	97%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	4.9	4.5	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.5	97%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.8	4.4	91%
The instructor acknowledged all questions insofar as possible	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.4	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.8	4.8	97%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.8	100%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	5.0	4.8	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.9	4.7	100%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.9	4.7	100%
Grades were assigned fairly and impartially.	S21 PHIL 303 (Logic)	5.0	4.6	100%
	F20 PHIL 443 (Rational)	4.9	4.6	97%
	W20 PHIL 303 (Logic)	4.9	4.5	93%
	F19 PHIL 444 (Groups)	4.9	4.4	100%
	W19 PHIL 361 (Ethics)	4.7	4.4	89%
	F18 PHIL 359 (Law)	4.6	4.4	75%

3.2 QUALITATIVE

Below are *complete* and *unedited* sets of written comments from all the classes I have taught at the University of Michigan. There is a lot here, so I have bolded comments that I feel especially speak to my strengths as an instructor.

In all cases, students were asked to respond to the following prompts:

1. Comment on the quality of instruction in this course.
2. How can Angela Sun improve the teaching of this course? OR How would you change this course?

3.2.1 PHIL 303 (LOGIC), SPRING 2021 — PRIMARY INSTRUCTOR

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

- "The instruction was very lively and increased my interest in the course"
- "This class was presented well and was explained in a way that was graspable for people who do not study Philosophy."
- **"Wonderful instruction, I seriously enjoyed taking the class, and that is in large part due to how great of an instructor Angela is. She was always incredibly helpful both in and outside of class, and made sure to explain everything in great detail to guarantee that each student could effectively understand the material. On top of that, her passion for not only the course content, but also her passion for teaching, really showed through her lecturing and made the class all that more enjoyable."**
- "Angela is an absolutely fantastic teacher. She's so thorough and open; I never felt nervous or anxious to ask questions. **She always made sure to understand the question and get back in a timely manner.** She also worked through problems until they made sense. I loved her!"
- "I can't comment about how wonderful Angela was as an instructor highly enough. The way she explained things was very thorough, and very receptive to questions. She always made sure to make herself available to students in office hours and outside of them. Angela was not only incredibly personable, but also she was an excellent instructor. **I was absolutely dreading taking this class going in, and she made me feel far more comfortable with the material.** If I could take another class with her in the future I absolutely would. I cannot rave about her highly enough, and can't thank her enough for teaching this course!"
- "Angela was an excellent instructor. **She deeply cares about the wellbeing of her students, and goes out of her way to make sure they are not only understanding the course material, but are doing alright personally.** Angela is very knowledgeable about the course

material, and it shows in her lectures. She is always prepared during class discussions, and she is always willing to answer questions students may have along the way. She even gives students time outside of class to ask questions and get individual help, and she responds promptly to emails. Angela truly went above and beyond in supporting students and giving students ample opportunities for success."

- "Angela was superb. I am not entirely certain how she was able to muster so much enthusiasm for logic, but she exceeded expectations across the board. I would probably take a class on most anything taught by Angela. **Her demeanor encouraged attentiveness and enabled an effective learning environment—her joy of logic was infectious.**"
- "I really enjoyed the clarity in the course."
- "It was fair"
- "Top-tier. Really great teaching."
- "The professor was excellent! I had low expectations for a spring course because of the accelerated time table but Angela went above and beyond to make sure we didn't feel overwhelmed with material and work. She provided us with homework extensions and additional lectures to help those who didn't quite understand certain concepts."
- "She did an amazing job 10 out of 10"
- "Outstanding quality of instruction."
- "Angela is great! I hope she doesn't feel too bad about everyone keeping cameras off."
- "high quality, angela did fantastically."
- "I think Angela did a terrific job teaching this class. Most of the students seem to have been inexperienced in this type of class and it was nice to feel like we could ask questions so that we would not fall behind"
- "The structure is clearly designed. We don't have too much worry about catching up on the materials."
- "Angela really knows her stuff and is eager to share with students."

Responses to "How can Angela Sun improve the teaching of this course?":

- "None"
- "I think some optional mini quizzes could be useful to test our understanding as we work through problem sets."

- "I had no qualms with the teaching of the course, I think Angela did a wonderful job through and through."
- "N/A."
- "N/A"
- "I think maybe having a mid-semester check in/survey (like the one she sent out before the course started) about the material could be helpful. Otherwise, I have no complaints or suggestions; Angela is a great instructor."
- "N/A"
- "Do more practice or example problems"
- "Overall, fantastic. However, possibly add more extra credit opportunities?"
- "I can't think of anything to add for improvements, Angela did a fantastic job teaching this course!"
- "Maybe go over problem set answers more"
- "Neater notes."
- "Keep using free textbooks and providing practice material."
- "n/a"
- "N/A"

3.2.2 PHIL 443 (RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY), FALL 2020 — GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

- "Angela was a wonderful GSI! She did a great job explaining the challenging material we learned in class. She was also always willing to help students with any questions or concerns."
- "Angela was a fantastic instructor"
- "Angela was very friendly with students and was well-liked and respected by them in return."
- "Angela was a wonderful and enthusiastic instructor. Her clear explanations of course material made up for any confusion in lecture. She responded promptly to emails and offered additional support to students who were struggling."

- "Angela is one of the best instructors I've had at Michigan. Not only was she extremely knowledgeable and adept at explaining hard concepts in clever ways, but she was also very approachable, down-to-earth, and extremely funny. I struggled with the difficulty of this class as someone with zero background knowledge in the content (full disclosure, it kind of killed my will to graduate a few times throughout the semester), but Angela was always happy to meet one-on-one, able to understand exactly where I was confused, and then explain everything from literal square one (and my comprehension definitely improved as a direct result). Even given the virtual format, Angela did such a good job of creating a comfortable atmosphere in class and during office hours, and I really don't think it presented as a barrier at all from the students' end. I cannot express my appreciation enough for her!"
- "Angela was regularly available and helpful. She's a top-notch GSI"
- "Angela is the best GSI I've ever had. She is enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and encouraging. She always made me feel comfortable because in office hours and discussion she jumped right in to help me solve the Problem Sets. Also, her examples are illuminating of the concepts."
- "it was good for being online"
- "Angela was the best GSI I have had at the University of Michigan! She was so knowledgeable, clear, and engaging. **She always wanted to hear from the students and was sympathetic to the difficult demands of the class. I learned so much during discussion. Her one-hour-a-week meeting saved me in passing this course.**"
- "Angela is one of the best GSI's I've had here. She was super duper flexible and met my needs throughout the entire class."
- "Angela was great. She did a great job explaining the content, she seemed to really care about our success and understanding, and was overall very engaging and energetic which helps a lot with this topic."
- "High quality"
- "Angela helped explain some really difficult concepts from Professor Joyces lectures and was very engaging even for a friday morning discussion."
- "Excellent"
- "Very good, Angela made the discussion both interesting and extremely helpful."
- "I thought Angela was an excellent GSI. The course, however, was very tough and at times extremely stressful."

- "Angela is a very understanding and kind GSI. She was willing to explain material in detail for those who did not understand, and she also allowed for people to meet with her outside of class for further questions. **Her enthusiasm and excitement for the class helped me personally stay motivated and participate.**"
- "Angela was an excellent GSI who clearly understood the material well and selectively went over the harder concepts in discussion with examples to ensure we could succeed."
- "Given that section was online, the quality was as good as it could have been."
- "Angela Sun was an excellent GSI. I thoroughly enjoyed the class and though she did a spectacular job explaining the material and facilitating student discussion. Angela was very empathetic to the student's difficulty with the semester and material, and I really felt that she understood the students and was willing to talk plainly with them."
- "Angela is a great GSI. She is really passionate and interesting in the material and it comes across, making discussion much more interesting. Angela chose great topics to go over in discussion and was really good at making concepts clear."
- "I think Angela does a great job teaching discussion. I do notice there are small errors every now and then, but she usually catches them. I appreciate her pep and enthusiasm every time we have discussion. It makes it easier for me to want to focus and digest the material."
- "Angela was always enthusiastic even if when us students were not. She was incredibly helpful and seemed to really know the material."
- "Ms. Sun was always personable with her students, easy to relate to and made the topics very understandable with real-life applications."
- "Angela was such a great GSI. I don't think I would have understood the class material if it were not for her."
- "Good"
- "Angela is amazing! Honestly the best GSI I have had. She was always down to help and provided enriching material that helped solidify class concepts. I thoroughly enjoyed attending her class."
- "i would have failed this course if it weren't for angela. she is the best gsi i've ever had. she explained the material so clearly and should have been the professor for this course."

Responses to "How can Angela Sun improve the teaching of this course?":

- "More breakout rooms may have been helpful."
- "Please bring back the videos! I think they are so helpful!"

- "Have in-person section instruction. Online learning is simply inferior, especially for discussion sections."
- "I cannot think of anything to change this course."
- "I think it would be great to have more practice to help us be more equipped to do the problem sets, especially the ones in which we are mostly explaining why things must or must not be true (i.e. not the math parts). I think something else that may be beneficial is reorganizing the lectures/readings in a way that makes it easier to search for information. I found that when the exam came around, I had a lot of trouble trying to find information and was flipping back and forth between lectures and readings. I might suggest making a list of the topics for each week on the syllabus to make information easier to find."
- "I would not change the discussion section at all."
- "N/A"
- "Not having a paper and implementing an extra problem set."
- "have angela teach the whole course"
- "It would be great if the beginning of the section was dedicated to the big picture. In other words, it would be helpful if the class material was put into context."
- "Maybe make 1-on-1 office hours first come, first served just because students might not realize they need help with specific questions before all the slots are filled."
- "More practice problem examples, maybe."
- "Make it in person."
- "More open discussion of topics"
- "I would not change anything about the course."
- "get rid of COVID and have this not be online. Im not paying for online school. If i was id be paying about a third of what im currently paying. You ask what i would change and my response is that you should lower the cost of tuition."
- "N/a. Fantastic discussion. Lively, engaging, thoughtful."
- "I would change it at all!"
- "Overall I thought it was great! Maybe just bringing back the asynchronous videos"
- "Tought to say given the circumstances"
- "N/A"

3.2.3 PHIL 303 (LOGIC), WINTER 2020 — GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

- "Angela is absolutely amazing! She explained the material in a more understandable way than the professor, which I appreciate because sometimes logic can get tricky. I often got lost or disinterested in the professor's lecture, and Angela helped clarify a lot of the material up for me. She was very helpful whenever I asked questions, and I really appreciate the work that she put into this semester!"
- **"Angela was an amazing teacher! She did a great job clearly presenting the material and explained abstract ideas to make them feel more intuitive. I appreciated that she focused on strategies to solve different types of problems during discussions—I know I would have struggled on the problem sets without attending discussion sections. Angela also made a sincere effort to get to know students and went above and beyond to provide everyone with additional resources, especially prior to the midterm and final exam."**
- "Angela was fantastic!"
- "Angela Sun was an amazing discussion leader. She clarified many confusing topics by presenting them in an easy-to-understand manner and provided great feedback on all assignments."
- "Very good"
- "Really appreciated how accommodating Angela was throughout the term! The Youtube videos were also really helpful."
- "Angela is an excellent teacher. Overall I was happy with the pace of instruction because of what we were able to get through in the times we had, though I think I would prefer it to be slightly slower if there was more time. She regularly pauses to allow for questions when teaching and felt very approachable which allow for clarifications and not getting lost. It is very helpful for me when there is some sort of visual, like writing on a chalkboard or shared computer screen. **Angela's eagerness to help and her encouragement was also great for my motivation if I was feeling stuck. She used examples that were easy to follow. When asking for help on problem sets, I felt that there was a good balance between nudging me in the right direction without explicitly giving me the answer so that I understood the process and actually learned.** Overall, just amazing, I wouldn't change a thing."
- "I like Angela's teachings. I signed up for her section but before the section moved online, I went to prof section. However, Angela later uploads videos on youtube and these videos are so helpful! Her explanations are very clear, logical, and easy to follow. My grades get much better since I watch her video every week. I really appreciate her work. Also, Angela

is a very positive person. She can always pass on her positive energy to students. No matter when you see her, she always smiles to you."

- "good"
- "The quality of instruction was incredibly high. Angela explained material so clearly that I would have really struggled without attending discussion section. **She did a fantastic job adapting to the challenges of remote learning, and her YouTube videos helped me to continue to succeed in the course. Angela will make a wonderful professor in the future!**"
- "Angela did an AMAZING job with this section. **We really maximized our 50 minutes each week, with helpful short-cuts and strategies to apply to the problem sets.**"

Responses to "How would you change this course?":

- "Nothing"
- "Would not"
- "VISUALS. I am a visual learner and so it is super helpful for me just to see things being written down as we are talking but even more helpful is colors and pictures, etc."
- "Nothing."
- "Slow down"
- "N/a"
- "N/A—I really think everything worked just fine as is."

3.2.4 PHIL 444 (GROUPS AND CHOICES), FALL 2019 — GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

- "Angela is an AMAZING teacher! She always was able to make me understand the material."
- "Angela was very helpful and enthusiastic"
- "**Angela is great at giving feedback. She makes our ideas feel valuable and intelligent, while still pushing us to think more deeply and more critically.** She is also so bubbly and engaging."
- "Best GSI I have ever had. I love Angela!!"
- "Great GSI for confusing course material!"

- "Angela was one of the best GSI's I have ever had. She explained the material so well and made everything in class much easier to understand. All of the students I have talked to have felt the same way too. She brought great energy to every discussion and was extremely knowledgeable and encouraging."
- "Angela cares for her students and tries to make the topic interesting! She clearly enjoys this topic and it shows in her teaching — thank you!"
- "Angela is a great teacher. **Any time i was confused in lecture, she'd instantly clear things up in discussion.**"
- "Very good quality"
- "Angela is an amazing GSI! I think going to discussion and sometimes to office hours is what got me through all the course material without feeling frustrated. She is incredibly open to meeting with her students, and explains things clearly. Her warm attitude also makes this topic more fun than I could have expected."
- "Ms. Sun was the best GSI I have had during my undergraduate experience at the University of Michigan. **She worked extremely hard to make sure everyone understood the material, and even taught in a variety of different styles to cater to students with a variety of learning styles.** She went above and beyond, and on top of it all, she always came with a happy, enthusiastic disposition to every class, discussion, and office hour session."
- "I really enjoyed it, Angela was always very excited to talk about the material."
- "Discussion was very clear and helpful."
- "Angela is a great GSI! This is my second time having a class with her and I thoroughly enjoyed it. She explains concepts well and seems to have a passion for philosophy which shows in her teaching."
- "Most enthusiastic and helpful GSI I have had in my 3 years at Michigan!"
- "Angela has by far been the best GSI that I have had a chance to experience throughout my whole college career. **Angela is extremely organized and presents information very clearly and always leaves room for students in section to ask questions.**"
- "Angela Sun was the most incredible GSI I have had at Michigan. She should teach this class herself because Professor Weatherson was so unclear in his instruction that she would teach us all the material during office hours and discussion. I cannot give her enough credit for how much she did for us as students. She was a fantastic teacher."
- "Angela is a fantastic GSI. I attended her office hours every week and she helped me better understand class material. I would take another course with her if I could. She is a great teacher and goes out of her way to make sure everyone understands the material."

- "Angela would always explain the concepts from lecture really well and clearly! Also, when we discussed philosophical topics, the questions she raised to engage the students seemed to be good for facilitating discussion."
- **"One of the best GSIs that I've had at the university. This material wasn't always intuitive or the most interesting, but Angela used fun examples to help us understand. Every discussion had a clear purpose, and even when I had already finished the homework beforehand, I still learned something useful about the topic.** I wish she was my GSI for all future PHIL classes!"
- "Angela is seriously one of the best GSI's I have ever had. This was the second class I had with her, and it was just as great. She has such a likeable personality, and she is so sweet and funny! **She makes the material so interesting and asks thought-provoking questions to really help solidify our understanding of the material.** Also she is always so willing to help her students understand the material, and giving them what they need to succeed!"

Responses to "How would you change this course?":

- "I would have more small writing assignments, or spend more time on one topic versus jumping around so much."
- "Angela was great. The classroom was a very comfortable environment and I always felt more confident in the material after class. Office hours were so helpful and Angela was willing to schedule additional times to meet with students who could not attend office hours. Basically, I'm saying she did everything right."
- "The only thing I would change is making it more discussion promoted between students"
- "I really enjoy the set up of discussion. I wouldn't change it"
- "Nothing"
- "I wish we went over readings more in discussion (during the second portion of the course)"
- "I would not"
- "I would have more background info about the subjects, especially since this was my first philosophy class"
- "Less lecture and more discussion."
- "—"
- "I would not change anything about the way Angela teaches."
- "If readings are going to be suggested/required, incorporate them more into lecture. I thought the structure of discussion section was perfect!"

3.2.5 PHIL 361 (ETHICS), WINTER 2019 — GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

- "Angela was great! Very knowledgeable and had great energy. Loved her passion for philosophy!"
- "very good and clear. I was able to understand material easily and my questions were usually answered"
- "Best qualities: -enthusiasm -preparation -sensitivity to circumstances of students -trying to create a open and respectful classroom environment. Consider: -responding directly to in-class contributions that seen off: misinterpretations of the theories, simplifications, etc."
- "She was definitely the best GSI I've ever had. Angela always came in with so much energy and such a positive attitude. I really enjoyed having her as an instructor. **She brought up really interesting facts in relation to the topics and always made us think about really deep, interesting questions. She helped discussion to run smoothly even through the more conflict-prone topics of discussion.** She was very helpful and understanding when it came to any unexpected difficulties that may have come up with us. Overall, she was an incredible instructor and I wish I could have her as an instructor again."
- "Angela was consistently prepared and facilitated in-class discussion well. She is an incredibly thoughtful and intentional instructor. Always willing to be a resource to students and help. I loved this class and felt that I was set up to succeed with her help!"
- "Discussion was great and Angela was well prepared for every class. Very energetic and made sure that a variety of people had their opinion heard."
- "The course instruction was excellent. **Angela did a great job of presenting examples and counterexamples in the form of thought experiments. She was also excellent at tempering the most vocal students so that others could get involved.** I was overall very happy with the quality of discussion."
- "Very good"
- "Angela is a wonderful instructor. She is knowledgeable, encouraging, firm, and kind in and out of office hours. **I have really enjoyed taking part in her discussion section and I've appreciated her feedback on my work which has pushed me towards becoming more comfortable with philosophy.**"
- "Angela was a great discussion teacher. **Her handouts, which gave a brief outline to what we were talking about during the day were super helpful.** I wish her the best of luck in the future."

- "Instruction was great"
- "Fantastic teacher, very willing to explain questions in full detail and often engages with students. Exams were a bit misleading with some questions, but overall, quite good."
- "My intention is to write a GLOWING evaluation for Angela and her instruction in the course. Angela was by far my favorite GSI at Michigan so far. **Although I think it helped to have a lot of confident voices in the class, she was extremely skilled at creating an equitable classroom. Students who liked to speak a lot were given a fair amount of time, while those who spoke less, I think, were encouraged by Angela and her positive demeanor. Angela was also really helpful in OH for papers and reviewing for the exams. She introduced interesting questions that we didn't discuss in lecture and her class worksheets were top notch!**"
- "Great! The worksheets were very helpful."
- "Ms. Sun was a great, instructor, overall. She was obviously extremely knowledgeable about the subject and really good at making it accessible and easily-understood for students. I do think sometimes she lost control of the class a little, but I'd suggest that this was because of students and not a failure of hers per se. My thought is just that I wished that discussion had been guided or moderated a little differently (see below). But overall, again, Ms. Sun was a great instructor."
- "Angela was great at steering discussion in interesting directions and stimulating class participation"
- "Angela was a fantastic GSI. She made discussion enjoyable and interactive while at the same informative and interesting. Angela always has a pleasant demeanor and is genuinely excited to teach the material, which makes for a lively discussion. **I learned a lot and often looked forward to class, and a major part of that was Angela's high quality of instruction.** Also, Dan Lowe is amazing and probably the best professor I've ever had. The two of them together were a dynamic duo!"
- "**Angela Sun was an absolute joy to have as a teacher. Maintaining a classroom of intelligent and very opinionated undergraduate students in a class on ethics seems like it would be one of the toughest assignments imaginable. Angela kept a well regulated classroom without disruption or incident while maintaining a infectiously positive attitude. On top of that, she was always well prepared for the material and allowed for the right combination of instruction of said material and space for group discussion.**"
- "Angela was the best GSI I've ever had! She was so nice and understanding and made it easy for everyone to ask questions. **We also spent a lot of the semester discussing sensitive topics and she handled and facilitated those harder discussions really well. She**

also graded all assignments fairly and I found her comments on papers really helpful. I actually looked forward to going to discussion, which never happens. Stay amazing!!"

- "Angela is the best GSI I've had so far. She is clearly passionate about philosophy, and it rubs off on everyone in class. Everyone always felt comfortable asking questions, and no one was ever bored. She's the best."
- "loved angela! always brought positive energy and made me excited about coming to class."
- "Angela did a great job this semester! She brought bundles of positive energy, and inspired the class to learn. She engaged with students and made difficult material understandable. Overall, Angela was an amazing GSI. I hope that more students in the future are lucky enough to learn from and with her!"
- "Angela is an excellent teacher and helped us break down the different topics we had learnt in class and understand them better with the help of examples and discussion. She has also been nice enough to meet with plenty of times to discuss my troubles with the papers and help me greatly improve my writing skills. **The progress that I have made through this class has improved my confidence as a philosophy student.**"
- "Angela was a wonderful GSI! Both informative and engaging."
- "Angela was a fantastic GSI"
- "Angela was one of my favorite GSIs I have ever had. Such a funny, smart teacher and I enjoyed being in her section!"

Responses to "How would you change this course?":

- "I would change the format of lecture + discussion right after. Sometimes it got redundant because we came straight from class."
- "I wouldn't!! Thanks!"
- "I would much rather not have so many reading quizzes and wish that the discussions could be slightly longer so that more people could get their input in, but other than that, I thoroughly enjoyed the class overall."
- "Because discussion came right after lecture, I didn't think we needed the recap."
- "Less recap and more small group discussion first maybe"
- "As I've found with other philosophy courses, I feel that discussions and debates can easily become either off-track or monopolized by a small number of people. While I welcome philosophical inquiries, I found that often times our discussions were pulled far off track in a way that distracted or confused me from learning the course content. I often felt isolated

from the conversations taking place since they often became hard to follow or unrelated to our lecture content. While I believe Angela did a good job of getting the class back on track and keeping conversations well-mediated, I think more could have been done to steer the course of our conversations before getting off track."

- "Reading assignments were honestly a little light compared to other philosophy courses that I have taken in the past."
- "Teaching wise, I would reduce the weighted percentage of exams. I simply think for a philosophy course, more essays are far better to understand the course. It seems to me that our first essay should be done every unit or even every other week, where we explain the arguments of the philosophers we read. Since it is ethics, it seems far more effective in developing our understanding. It might be more work for the student, but I think more effective."
- "Every now and then it might be a good idea to try different discussion formats, like students calling on each other or splitting up into groups to tackle a worksheet and coming together. This was an excellent course so there's not a lot to change."
- "I would not, Angela was great!"
- "Put simply, I would really encourage the instructor to try to moderate discussion a little more. I don't think allowing endless argument about subjects was a great idea—it seemed like students really took this and ran with it, and discussion just turned into a venue for people who wanted to say offensive things to get away with that in the name of "making/assessing all possible arguments". Again, I really think this was more of an issue with the students—I just wish the instructor had moderated it a little more and perhaps even censored it a bit. I know some students (myself included) sometimes felt unwelcoming in the classroom, or felt unheard, or even, in some extreme cases, unsafe."
- "Dan and Angela did such a good job structuring and teaching the material. I wouldn't change anything."
- "N/A"
- "I would never."
- "none"
- "n/A"
- "NA"
- "Possibly require students to do some question problems before discussion so that their thoughts might be sharpened."

3.2.6 PHIL 359 (LAW AND PHILOSOPHY), FALL 2018 — GRADUATE STUDENT INSTRUCTOR

Responses to "Comment on the quality of instruction in this course":

- "Outstanding. The best GSI I have had so far in college."
- "angela is super enthusiastic and really made me want to learn more and participate in discussion. she is easily accessible to students and would make my time with her outside of class really worthwhile. she is passionate and fun and I really enjoyed having her as my GSI"
- "This course is great."
- "Section was extremely helpful in this course as it made unclear lecture topics much easier to understand. The handouts in this class were also very helpful. Angela was always very understanding and willing to help both in and outside of class."
- "Angela Sun is my favorite GSI I've had at Michigan so far. **She is so welcoming in discussion and always works to understand what students mean when they speak up, which helps the conversation keep moving forward and even helps all of us organize our ideas about the topic.** Fantastic."
- "Started off a little disorganized but definitely got better as the semester rolled on. Overall, great!"
- "Angela was always very enthusiastic and willing to help students."
- "I really enjoyed discussion section. It was led in a way that facilitated worthwhile conversations and kept me interested. She also was very helpful in explaining course concepts. Always prepared with a helpful handout."
- "I really enjoyed having Angela as a GSI. **She was good at facilitating discussion and prompting interesting follow up questions.** She was also very approachable and easy to reach out to after class. Overall, I always enjoyed coming to discussion, knowing that I would leave learning a lot from my peers."
- "instruction is good."
- "Great!"
- "I didn't know what was expected on exams at any time, so I don't think they were fairly graded. Best GSI I've ever had"
- "it was the most amazing quality ever honestly"
- "Handouts were super helpful!"

- "Angela was a great GSI! **Very enthusiastic, knowledgeable, and able to push the class to some interesting discussions.**"
- "Angela is the best GSI I've ever had in my life. **She is excited and that gets me excited! I loved this course because of Angela.** She is knowledgeable and very well prepared for the class. Give this woman a raise!"
- "Best quality ever!"
- "Angela is a great GSI. She is super enthusiastic and does a good job of keeping everyone engaged by posing thought-provoking questions."
- "She was great"
- "I loved this class so much and you made it such an enjoyable course for me! Thank you for all the help!"
- "Angela was a really good GSI and I honestly learned a lot in discussion, not just lecture alone. **She is really good at moderating class discussion and is really good in trying to help and facilitate students in developing comprehensive arguments.**"

Responses to "How can Angela Sun improve the teaching of this course?"

- "Nope!"
- "we often get off topic and fall behind on the course material. i like the group discussions we have but also it's going to catch up to us when we are behind near the final"
- "Just making sure that there's enough time to get through all the material on time"
- "No suggestions. Great job."
- "Wasn't sure the smaller (2-3 person) discussions were necessary, the class was already pretty small as a whole I thought."
- "Sometimes we fell behind during discussion, but I didn't mind since Angela is always open to questions."
- "Improve the balance between small group and class discussion and her own teaching on the topics."
- "Sometimes I felt like I couldn't give a counter-argument or play devils advocate without being personally tied to the idea. I know this is difficult to accomplish since the atmosphere of the room depends on student reactions largely. But it would be beneficial to feel comfortable discussing different viewpoints, so the class isn't showing extreme bias only for one side. This would also help to better facilitate dialogue and simulate real world discussions."

- "I love Angela because she truly cares about the students. Once when I unintentionally said something might be disrespectful, I heard her comments with her co-workers. These comments truly heartbreaking and hurtful, but Angela, in general, is a great teacher."
- "i wish i could talk to her after class instead of having to make appointments so maybe if the course scheduler could not make the discusisins back to back."
- "N/A"
- "Don't be so polite an nice that debate is forgotten about. I'm not sure she disagreed with anyone all semester."
- "angela is the BEST and she has already exceeded expectations!"
- "More pre-prepared and structured examples instead of ones made up on the spot. Better set guidelines for how to get discussion participation grades."
- "Greater grade transparency earlier in the course would have been helpful."
- "Angela is perfect. Literally change nothing."
- "No room for improvement!"
- "I don't think anything needs to be changed."

4 SAMPLE SYLLABI

Below I have included sample syllabi for the following five courses:

1. **NORMATIVE POWERS:** an upper-level undergraduate course that builds on ideas students will have encountered in an introductory ethics course. I would happily teach an advanced version of this course as a graduate seminar.
2. **AESTHETICS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART:** an introductory course that does not assume any background in philosophy or art. The course is designed for students in philosophy and in art history, music, literature, and related fields. Note that this is an abridged syllabus that does not contain details about the goals or accommodations for the course.
3. **FROM WOMB TO TOMB: TOPICS IN BIOETHICS:** an intermediate undergraduate course that assumes some background in philosophy or health-related fields. It is designed for students in philosophy, students with interests in science and medicine, and students interested in contemporary ethical debates. Note that this is an abridged syllabus that does not contain details about the goals or accommodations for the course.
4. **OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE:** an upper-level undergraduate course that assumes some background in philosophy, gender studies, or race and ethnicity studies. Note that this is an abridged syllabus that does not contain details about the goals, assignments, or accommodations for the course. I would happily teach an advanced version of this course as a graduate seminar.
5. **DECISIONS, GAMES, AND RATIONAL CHOICE:** an upper-level undergraduate course that assumes some background in philosophy, economics, political science, or math. Note that this is an abridged syllabus that does not contain details about the goals or accommodations for the course.

4.1 NORMATIVE POWERS

INSTRUCTOR	Angela Sun angsun@umich.edu
DESCRIPTION	Human beings have a remarkable power to change their normative circumstances by mere utterance (or, in some cases, mere <i>thought</i>). Take, for instance, the power of consent. Heidi Hurd famously wrote that "consent can function to transform the morality of another's conduct," turning "a trespass into a dinner party; a battery into a handshake; a theft into a gift; an invasion of privacy into an intimate moment; a commercial appropriation of name and likeness into a biography." ¹ What could possibly explain such an amazing ability? In this course, we will survey a variety of phenomena that may be considered <i>normative powers</i> : promise-making, consent, forgiveness, and resolution-making. Along the way, we will consider the conditions that are needed to make these powers possible and how these powers can be used (or suppressed) for good and evil.
GOALS	By the end of this course, students will have developed the following knowledge and skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth understanding of contemporary philosophical debates surrounding promises, consent, forgiveness, and resolutions, as well as why we might think about all these phenomena as normative powers. • The ability to defend a position with clear, rigorous argumentation. • The ability to give constructive, critical, and friendly feedback on others' arguments and ideas. • The ability to communicate complex ideas clearly by discussing them in class and writing philosophical essays.

¹Heidi M. Hurd, "The Moral Magic of Consent," *Legal Theory* 2, no. 2 (1996): 123.

REQUIREMENTS

The requirements of this course are as follows:

- *Paper 1* (25%): For the first paper, you will be asked to identify a phenomenon that is not covered in one of the units in the course that you think should be considered a normative power and explain what control it allows us to have over our normative circumstances. The paper should be no longer than 1500 words.
- *Paper 2 prospectus* (5%): The second paper will be on a topic of your choice. Before you start writing the paper, you must submit a 500-word summary of your main argument for feedback.
- *Paper 2* (35%): As noted above, the second paper will be on a topic of your choice. The paper should be no longer than 2500 words.
- *Peer review for paper 1* (5%): You will provide written feedback on drafts of paper 1 for two of your peers.
- *Peer review for paper 2* (5%): You will provide written feedback on drafts of paper 2 for two of your peers.
- *Discussion questions* (10%): At least once a week (i.e., at least every other class), you must submit a discussion question based on that day's reading to me at least 12 hours before class.
- *Participation* (15%): Come to class having completed the reading and prepared to discuss it!

ACCOMMODATION

I will work with every student interested in taking this course to ensure it's possible to. If you have a disability, are struggling with mental or physical health, or if there is anything else that might prevent you from fully participating in this course, let me know as soon as you can, and we will figure something out.

SCHEDULE

UNIT 1: THE IDEA OF A NORMATIVE POWER

Day 1: What is a normative reason?

Jacob M. Nebel, "[Normative Reasons as Reasons Why We Ought](#)"

Day 2: What is a normative power?

Ruth Chang, "[Do We Have Normative Powers?](#)"

Day 3: Speech acts

J.L. Austin, Lectures I and II of [How to Do Things With Words](#)

UNIT 2: PROMISES

Day 4: Promising as a speech act

Gary Watson, "[Asserting and Promising](#)"

Day 5: Why should we keep our promises?

Thomas Scanlon, "[Promises and Practices](#)"

Day 6: What kinds of reasons to promises give us?

Joseph Raz, "[Is There a Reason to Keep Promises?](#)"

Day 7: Promising against the evidence
Berislav Marušić, "[Promising Against the Evidence](#)"

Day 8: Coerced promises
Seana Valentine Shiffrin, "[Chapter 2: Duress and Moral Progress](#)" in *Speech Matters: On Lying, Morality, and the Law*

Day 9: Immoral promises
Yuval Eylon, "[Just Threats](#)"

UNIT 3: CONSENT

Content note: in this unit, we will discuss nonconsensual sex

Day 10: Consent as a normative power
Heidi M. Hurd, "[The Moral Magic of Consent](#)"

Day 11: Does consent require communication?
Tom Dougherty, "[Yes Means Yes: Consent as Communication](#)"

Day 12: Intoxicated consent
Alan Wertheimer, "[Intoxicated Consent to Sexual Relations](#)"

Day 13: Seduction
Sarah Conly, "[Seduction, Rape, and Coercion](#)"

Day 14: Consent and misinformation
Tom Dougherty, "[Sex, Lies, and Consent](#)"

UNIT 4: FORGIVENESS

Day 15: What is forgiveness?
Jeffrie Murphy, "[Chapter 1: Forgiveness and Resentment](#)" in *Forgiveness and Mercy*

Day 16: The obligation to forgive
Nancy Potter, "[Is Refusing to Forgive a Vice?](#)"

Day 17: Forgiving oppressors
Myisha Cherry, "[Forgiveness, Exemplars, and the Oppressed](#)"

Day 18: Preemptive forgiving
Nicolas Cornell, "[The Possibility of Preemptive Forgiving](#)"

UNIT 5: RESOLUTIONS

Day 19: Why should we respect our resolutions?
Jean-Paul Sartre, "[The Origin of Negation](#)" in *Being and Nothingness*

Day 20: Resisting temptation

Michael E. Bratman, "[Temptation and the Agent's Standpoint](#)"

Day 21: Resolutions and intentions

Richard Holton, "[Chapter 1: Intention](#)" in *Willing, Wanting, Waiting*

Day 22: Resolutions and self-promises

Connie S. Rosati, "[The Importance of Self-Promises](#)"

Day 23: The bootstrapping problem

Christian Piller, "[The Bootstrapping Objection](#)"

Day 24: Giving ourselves reasons

Ruth Chang, "[How to Make Hard Choices](#)"

4.2 AESTHETICS AND THE PHILOSOPHY OF ART

DESCRIPTION	In this course, we will consider a series of questions about the nature of art and other aesthetic phenomena and the role that they play in our lives. What is art? What makes art good or bad, and who decides? Why do so many people think that art is pretentious? Can art created by morally reprehensible people nevertheless be good art? Can we love art even if the artworld is rife with injustice? And why, in the end, should we care about art and beauty? No background in philosophy or art is assumed in the course.
PHILOSOPHY	<p>Philosophical discussion, reading, and writing might be a little unlike what you have done in other humanities courses. Philosophical reasoning is all about clarity and rigorous argumentation. One of the goals of this course is to learn to talk, read, and write philosophy. Throughout the course, we'll talk about how to do this. But here are a few resources to get you started. I recommend reading these during the first week of the course.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Olivia Bailey, "But How Do I Participate?" • Helena de Bres, "The Pink Guide to Philosophy" • Jim Pryor, "Guidelines on Reading Philosophy" • Jim Pryor, "Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper"
REQUIREMENTS	<p>The requirements for this course are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Paper 1: argument reconstruction and analysis</i> (15%): In 1000 words, you will (1) reconstruct Frank Sibley's argument in "Aesthetic and Non-aesthetic," Kendall Walton's argument in "Categories of Art," or David Hume's argument in "Of the Standard of Taste"; (2) offer an objection to the argument; and (3) respond to the argument on behalf of the author. This exercise is meant to give you some experience carefully and charitably interpreting an author's argument and inserting yourself within a debate. • <i>Podcast</i> (20%): In randomly assigned groups of 4, you will identify an artwork that all the members of the group like, but that presents some kind of moral problem (e.g., depicts morally repugnant acts, created by an artist who has done something morally bad). You will then record a 30-minute podcast episode discussing the aesthetic and moral aspects of the work, drawing from course readings. • <i>Paper 2</i> (35%): At the end of the course, you will submit a 2000-word final paper on your choice of three topics. • <i>Discussion questions</i> (15%): At least once a week (i.e., at least every other class), you must submit a discussion question based on that day's reading to me at least 12 hours before class. • <i>Participation</i> (15%): Come to class having completed the reading and prepared to discuss it!
SCHEDULE	UNIT 1: WHAT IS ART? WHAT COULD ART BE?

Day 1: Theories of art, part 1

§6: **Definitions of Art**, in "Aesthetics," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
Arthur Danto, "**Works of Art and Mere Real Things**"

Day 2: Theories of art, part 2

Elizabeth Cantalamessa, "**Is This Really Art? Aesthetic Disagreement and Conceptual Negotiation**"

Day 3: Literature and cultural ethos

Margaret Atwood, "**What, Where, and Why is Here?**" and "**Chapter 1: Survival**" in *Survival: A Thematic Guide to Canadian Literature*

Day 4: Art and identity

Paul C. Taylor, "**Chapter 1: Assembly, Not Birth**" in *Black is Beautiful: A Philosophy of Black Aesthetics*

UNIT 2: WHAT MAKES ART GOOD OR BAD? WHO DECIDES?

Day 5: Aesthetic and nonaesthetic properties

Frank Sibley, "**Aesthetic and Nonaesthetic**"

Day 6: The category-dependence of aesthetic properties

Kendall Walton, "**Categories of Art**"

Day 7: True judges and standards of taste

David Hume, "**Of the Standard of Taste**"

Day 8: Why care what true judges think?

Jerrold Levinson, "**Hume's Standard of Taste: The Real Problem**"

Day 9: Critical hegemony

Adrian M.S. Piper, "**Critical Hegemony and Aesthetic Acculturation**"

Day 10: High and low art

Ted Cohen, "**High and Low Art, and High and Low Audiences**"

Alix Rule and David Levine, "**International Art English**"

Day 11: Snobbery

Matthew Kieran, "**The Vice of Snobbery**"

Bence Nanay, "**The Problem of Elitism in Aesthetics**"

Day 12: Is snobbery sometimes called for?

Clement Greenberg, "**Avant-Garde and Kitsch**"

UNIT 3: CAN MORALLY BAD ART BE GOOD ART?

Day 13: Offensively ugly art

Douglas Stalker and Clark Glymour, "The Malignant Object: Thoughts on Public Sculpture"

Day 14: Comedy roasts
Luvell Anderson, "Roasting Ethics"

Day 15: Are comedy audiences too sensitive?
Phillip Deen, "What Could It Mean to Say that Today's Stand-Up Audiences Are Too Sensitive?"

Day 16: Separating the art from the artist
Eva Dadlez, David Heti, Shen-yi Liao, Stephanie Patridge, Matthew Strohl, and Mary Beth Willard, "Can We Separate the Art from the Artist?"

Day 17: Cultural appropriation
Erich Hatala Matthes, "Cultural Appropriation Without Cultural Essentialism?"

Day 18: Exclusion in the artworld
Jon Silpayamanant, "Classical Music and Its Slave Orchestras"
Linda Nochlin, "Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?"

UNIT 4: WHY SHOULD WE CARE ABOUT ART?

Day 19: Being moved by art
Marcia M. Eaton, "A Strange Kind of Sadness"

Day 20: Loving art
Martha Nussbaum, "Reading for Life"

Day 21: The consolations of beauty
Ariane Nomikos, "Place Matters"

Day 22: Images of war
Susan Sontag, "Regarding the Pain of Others"

Day 23: Everyday aesthetics
Yuriko Saito, "Japanese Aesthetics of Packaging"

Day 24: Wrapping up
Susan Sontag, "Against Interpretation"

4.3 FROM WOMB TO TOMB: TOPICS IN BIOETHICS

DESCRIPTION	In this class, we will consider a series of questions about the course of a human life. We begin with questions concerning ancestry and birth (e.g., is there value in being biologically related to one's parents? Do fetuses have moral status?). Next, we look to childhood and later stages of life (e.g., in what morally important sense are children different from adults? Why do so many people experience midlife crises?). We conclude by looking at moral issues surrounding aging and death (e.g., do we have a right to die? Would it be good for us if we could live forever?).
REQUIREMENTS	<p>The requirements for this course are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Paper 1: argument reconstruction and analysis</i> (20%): In 1000 words, you will (1) reconstruct Sally Haslanger's argument in "Family Ancestry and Self," Tina Rulli's argument in "Preferring a Genetically-Related Child," or Judith Jarvis Thomson's argument in "A Defense of Abortion"; (2) offer an objection to the argument; and (3) respond to the argument on behalf of the author. This exercise is meant to give you some experience carefully and charitably interpreting an author's argument and inserting yourself within a debate. • <i>Legal case study and comments</i> (20%): From this list of bioethically important legal cases, you will choose one to comment on. Drawing on readings from the course, write a short (500 word) response to the decision. You will then read two of your classmates' responses and provide short (300 word) written feedback for them. • <i>Paper 2</i> (30%): At the end of the course, you will submit a 2000-word final paper on your choice of three topics. • <i>Discussion questions</i> (15%): At least once a week (i.e., at least every other class), you must submit a discussion question based on that day's reading to me at least 12 hours before class. • <i>Participation</i> (15%): Come to class having completed the reading and prepared to discuss it!
SCHEDULE	<p>UNIT 1: BIRTH</p> <p><i>Day 1:</i> The value of biological ties, part 1 David Velleman, "Family History"</p> <p><i>Day 2:</i> The value of biological ties, part 2 Sally Haslanger, "Family, Ancestry and Self: What is the Moral Significance of Biological Ties?"</p> <p><i>Day 3:</i> Adoption Tina Rulli, "Preferring a Genetically-Related Child"</p> <p><i>Day 4:</i> Abortion and moral status, part 1 Don Marquis, "Why Abortion is Immoral"</p>

Day 5: Abortion and moral status, part 2

Judith Jarvis Thomson, "A Defense of Abortion"

Day 6: Abortion and moral status, part 3

Elizabeth Harman, "Creation Ethics: The Moral Status of Early Fetuses and the Ethics of Abortion"

Day 7: Human enhancement

Michael J. Sandel, "The Case Against Perfection"

Day 8: Moral enhancement

Ingmar Persson and Julian Savulescu, "The Perils of Cognitive Enhancement and the Urgent Imperative to Enhance the Moral Character of Humanity"

UNIT 2: LIFE'S STAGES

Day 9: Childhood, part 1

Tamar Schapiro, "What is a Child?"

Day 10: Childhood, part 2

Sarah Hannan, "Why Childhood is Bad for Children"

Day 11: Paternalism toward children

Amy Mullin, "Children, Paternalism and the Development of Autonomy"

Day 12: Life's stages

Andrew Franklin-Hall, "On Becoming an Adult: Autonomy and the Moral Relevance of Life's Stages"

Day 13: Midlife crisis

Kieran Setiya, "The Midlife Crisis"

UNIT 3: END OF LIFE

Day 14: Dementia

Ronald Dworkin, "Autonomy and the Demented Self"

Day 15: Consent

Heidi Hurd, "The Moral Magic of Consent"

Day 16: Advance directives

Sungwoo Um, "Vices in Autonomous Paternalism: The Case of Advance Directives and Persons Living With Dementia"

Day 17: Allocating scarce resources, part 1

Daniel Brudney, "Are Alcoholics Less Deserving of Liver Transplants?"

Day 18: Allocating scarce resources, part 2

Emily Bazelon, "People Are Dying. Whom Do We Save First With the Vaccine?"

Ezekiel J. Emanuel et al., "Fair Allocation of Scarce Resources in the Time of Covid-19"

UNIT 4: DEATH AND DYING

Day 19: Euthanasia, part 1

James Rachels, "Active and Passive Euthanasia"

Day 20: Euthanasia, part 2

Joel Feinberg, "Overlooking the Merits of the Individual Case: An Unpromising Approach to the Right to Die"

Day 21: Is death bad?

Thomas Nagel, "Death"

Day 22: The possibility of immortality

Larry Temkin, "Is Living Longer Living Better?"

Day 23: Is immortality desirable?

Bernard Williams, "The Makropulos Case: Reflections on the Tedium of Immortality"

Day 24: Mourning the death of loved ones

Dan Moller, "Love and Death"

4.4 OPPRESSION AND RESISTANCE

DESCRIPTION	In this course, we will learn about the experience of oppression, the structures and institutions that perpetuate oppression, and different modes of resisting oppression. We begin with a unit on what oppression is. Next, we discuss some experiences of oppression (including experiences of anti-Black racism, anti-Asian racism, White poverty, misogyny, and being undocumented), with special attention paid to intersectionality. Finally, we we will consider a series of questions about resisting oppression. This course assumes a feminist and critical philosophy of race perspective; rather than focus on questions regarding the legitimacy of gender, race, poverty, and other ways of carving out human differences, we will focus on questions that arise from considering how injustices along these dimensions are embedded in our social structures, institutions, and consciousness.
SCHEDULE	<p>UNIT 1: WHAT IS OPPRESSION?</p> <p><i>Day 1:</i> The phenomenology of oppression, part 1 Frantz Fanon, chapter 5 ("The Lived Experience of the Black Man") of <i>Black Skin, White Masks</i></p> <p><i>Day 2:</i> The phenomenology of oppression, part 2 Iris Marion Young, "Throwing Like a Girl"</p> <p><i>Day 3:</i> White supremacy Charles Mills, "White Supremacy"</p> <p><i>Day 4:</i> What is oppression? Iris Marion Young, "The Five Faces of Oppression"</p> <p><i>Day 5:</i> Autonomy, part 1 Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" Thomas Hurka, "Why Value Autonomy?"</p> <p><i>Day 6:</i> Autonomy, part 2 Ranjoo Seodu Herr, "Islamist Women's Agency and Relational Autonomy"</p> <p><i>Day 7:</i> Colonialism Lena Ypi, "What's Wrong With Colonialism"</p> <p><i>Day 8:</i> Intersectionality, part 1 Kimberle Crenshaw, "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color"</p> <p><i>Day 9:</i> Intersectionality, part 2</p>

Tommy J. Curry, "Decolonizing the Intersection: Black Male Studies as a Critique of Intersectionality's Indebtedness to Subculture of Violence Theory"

UNIT 2: CASES OF OPPRESSION

Day 10: Slavery's legacy

Watch *Slavery by Another Name*

Day 11: Racial fetishes

Robin Zheng, "Why Yellow Fever Isn't Flattering: A Case Against Racial Fetishes"

Day 12: White poverty

Sarah Smarsh, "Poor Teeth"

Erika Blacksher and Sean A. Valles, "White Privilege, White Poverty: Reckoning with Class and Race in America"

Day 13: Misogyny

Kate Manne, chapter 1 ("Threatening Women") of *Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny*

Day 14: Rape and consent

Catharine A. MacKinnon, "Rape Redefined"

Day 15: Silencing speech

Rae Langton, "Speech Acts and Unspeakable Acts"

Day 16: Capitalism and oppression

Vanessa Wills, "What Could It Mean to Say that Capitalism Causes Racism and Sexism?"

Day 17: Adaptive preferences

Serene J. Khader, "Must Theorising About Adaptive Preferences Deny Women's Agency?"

UNIT 3: RESISTANCE

Day 18: Resistance and double binds

Sukaina Hirji, "Oppressive Double Binds"

Day 19: An obligation to resist one's own oppression, part 1

Carol Hay, "The Obligation to Resist Oppression"

Day 20: An obligation to resist one's own oppression, part 2

Ashwini Vasanthakumar, "Epistemic Privilege and Victims' Duties to Resist their Oppression"

Day 21: Resisting oppression: choice between prison abolition, no platforming, and microaggressions

Angela Davis, [chapter 1 \("Introduction—Prison Reform or Prison Abolition?"\)](#) and [chapter 3 \("Imprisonment and Reform"\)](#) of *Are Prisons Obsolete?*

Robert Mark Simpson and Amia Srinivasan, "[No platforming](#)"

Regina Rini, "[How to Take Offense: Responding to Microaggression](#)"

Day 22: Resisting oppression while undocumented

Antje Ellermann, "[Undocumented Migrants and Resistance in the Liberal State](#)"

Day 23: Our role in addressing structural injustice

Robin Zheng "[What is My Role in Changing the System? A New Model of Responsibility for Structural Injustice](#)"

Day 24: Moral courage

Sarah Buss, "[Some Musings About the Limits of an Ethics That Can Be Applied—A Response to a Question About Courage and Convictions That Confronted the Author When She Woke Up on November 9, 2016](#)"

4.5 DECISIONS, GAMES, AND RATIONAL CHOICE

DESCRIPTION	In this course, we will explore ways that philosophers and social scientists have approached rational decision-making, both at the individual and the group level. We will begin with a unit on individual decision-making, focusing on expected utility theory—the view that rational choices are those that maximize expected utility—and considering the advantages and disadvantages of this view. Next is a unit on game theory, where we will learn mathematical models for strategic interactions. Finally is a unit on group decision-making, where we will consider, among other things, the possibility group intentions and decisions.
TEXTS	<p>You won't need to buy a textbook for this course. All the assigned readings are linked on the syllabus. Some of the readings are from the following open-access textbooks, which you should download now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giacomo Bonanno, <i>Game Theory</i> • Brian Weatherson, <i>Lecture Notes on Decision Theory</i> • Jonathan Weisberg, <i>Odds & Ends: Introducing Probability and Decision with a Visual Emphasis</i>
REQUIREMENTS	<p>The requirements for the course are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Problem sets</i> (6 x 8% = 48%): Over the course of the semester, you will submit six problem sets. Collaboration is encouraged! • <i>Take-home exam</i> (20%): At the end of unit 2, you will complete a take-home exam. The exam will be open-book, but collaboration is not allowed. • <i>Paper</i> (25%): At the end of the course, you will submit a 1500-word paper on your choice of three topics. • <i>Participation</i> (7%): Come to class having completed the reading and prepared to discuss it!
SCHEDULE	<p>UNIT 1: INDIVIDUAL DECISION-MAKING</p> <p><i>Day 1:</i> What is practical rationality? R.J. Wallace, §1 ("Practical and Theoretical Reason") and §5 ("Maximizing Rationality") of "Practical Reason"</p> <p><i>Day 2:</i> Probability Weisberg, chapter 5 ("Calculating Probabilities"), chapter 6 ("Conditional Probabilities") and chapter 7 ("Calculating Probabilities, Part 2")</p> <p><i>Day 3:</i> Expected utility theory, part 1 Weisberg, chapter 11 ("Expected Value")</p> <p><i>Day 4:</i> Expected utility theory, part 2 Weisberg, chapter 12 ("Utility")</p>

Day 5: The sure-thing principle and the Allais paradox
Weatherson, chapter 10 ("Sure Thing Principle")

Day 6: Risk-weighted expected utility
Lara Buchak, "Risk and Tradeoffs"

Day 7: The problem of unbounded utility
Weisberg, chapter 14 ("Infinity and Beyond")

Day 8: Dutch book arguments
Weisberg, appendix B ("The Axioms of Probability") and chapter 17 ("Dutch Books")

Day 9: Evidential decision theory, causal decision theory, and Newcomb's paradox, part 1
Weatherson, chapter 16 ("Newcomb's Problem"), chapter 17 ("Realistic Newcomb Problems"), and chapter 18 ("Causal Decision Theory")

Day 10: Evidential decision theory, causal decision theory, and Newcomb's paradox, part 2
No reading

Day 11: Temptation
Chrisoula Andreou, "Temptation, Resolutions, and Regret"

Day 12: Making choices for our future selves
Jennifer Morton, "Deliberating for Our Far Future Selves"

UNIT 2: GAME THEORY

Day 13: Games in strategic form
Bonanno, chapter 1 ("Ordinal Games in Strategic Form"), pp. 3-31

Day 14: Equilibria
Bonanno, chapter 1 ("Ordinal Games in Strategic Form"), pp. 32-36

Day 15: Dynamic games with perfect information
Bonanno, chapter 2 ("Dynamic Games with Perfect Information")

Day 16: Mixed strategies
Bonanno, chapter 5 ("Mixed Strategies in Strategic-Form Games")

Day 17: Dynamic games with imperfect information
Bonanno, chapter 14 ("Incomplete Information: Static Games") and chapter 15 ("Incomplete Information: Dynamic Games")

Day 18: Spence's signalling model
Michael Spence, "Job Market Signalling"

Day 19: Iterated prisoner's dilemmas

Watch "[The Iterated Prisoner's Dilemma and the Evolution of Cooperation](#)"

UNIT 3: GROUP DECISION-MAKING

Day 20: Group intention and action

Margaret Gilbert, "[Walking Together: A Paradigmatic Social Phenomenon](#)"

Day 21: Group knowledge

Jennifer Lackey, "[Socially Extended Knowledge](#)"

Day 22: Group decisions and voting systems

Weatherson, chapter 24 ("Group Decisions"), chapter 26 ("Voting Systems"), and chapter 27 ("More Voting Systems")

Day 23: Arrow's impossibility theorem

Weatherson, chapter 26 ("Arrow's Theorem")

Day 24: Collective responsibility

Jan Narveson, "[Collective Responsibility](#)"