PHIL C119: Self, Identity, and Authenticity Syllabus (DRAFT)  

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Course Description

In this course, we will critically examine a range of historical accounts on self and identity. We'll draw mainly from the Western philosophical canon though some material from Eastern traditions and contemporary social philosophy will be incorporated into the discussion. Readings will include Plato, Hume, Nietzsche, and Hannah Arendt, as well as works by Charles Taylor, Maria Lugones, and V.F. Cordoba. We will also look at Hindu and Buddhist texts. In canvassing this array of accounts, we'll address the following questions: How might the self be a historically situated notion? In the various views, what is the role of the "other" in determining one's sense of self? What is the relation between self-knowledge, other-knowledge, and living authentically (i.e. "being myself")? How might the presence of self be a hindrance to self-development? Finally, implications for contemporary identity politics will be addressed if time permits.

Learning Outcomes

- To develop sustained analytical responses to the central themes of the course.
- To engage in critical discussion and dialogue with peers on the views covered.
- To synthesize ideas from different readings in order to grasp broader philosophical concepts.
- To write essays that demonstrate working knowledge of the course material and to analyze that material in a clear, systematic, original, and well-developed manner.

Assignments & Grading

Your final grade will be determined by one short writing assignment, two papers, and a participation grade. The grading breakdown is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Grade Portion</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Writing Format Assignment</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Sunday, 6/28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 1</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Sunday 7/12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper 2</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Friday, 7/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section/Course Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Writing Format Assignment: A short written response that is to be 1.5-2 pages in length (~450-500 words). The focus of this assignment will have more to do with form than content. Aside from document format, you may be asked to include, for example, a proper aim statement, two proper citations, a single footnote, and one example explanation. This assignment will be graded and returned by the first meeting of week 2.

Paper 1: Paper 1 will be 4.5-5 pages in length (~1100-1250 words). Paper 1 topics will be based on readings and lectures up to the end of week 3. More info TBA.

Paper 2: Paper 2 will be 5.5-6.5 pages in length (~1400-1650 words). Paper 2 topics will be based on readings and lectures up to the end of week 6. More info TBA.

Section/Course Participation: Open discussion will be an important tool for learning in this course. As such, your final grade will include a course participation/contribution portion. Receiving the full score can happen in multiple ways; it does not require getting things right all of the time or speaking for its own sake. Rather, excellent contribution may be the result of attending contributing meaningful questions or thoughts to lecture/sections/office hours discussions, and/or demonstrating improvement in the quality of assignment submissions over the length of the term. With that said, a practical requirement for receiving a full contribution score is consistent attendance.
Reading Schedule

**Week 1: Course Introduction, The Ancient Soul.**
- Plato: Phaedrus 245c-250c, Phaedo 102b-108c.
- Plato: Republic Book IV, 419a-445e.

**Week 2: Buddhism and Hume. Self and “no self”.
- (Optional) Julie Ching. “Paradigms of the Self in Buddhism and Christianity”. Pgs. 36-43.

**Week 3: The Conscious Self and Recognition.**
- Hegel. “Lordship and Bondage”.
- Alexandre Kojève. “Desire and Work in the Master and Slave”.
- Feuerbach. “The Essence of Religion in General”.
- (Optional) Feuerbach. “Towards a Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy”.

**Week 4: Nietzsche and The Emergent Self.**
- (Optional) Kenneth Gergen Selections from *The Saturated Self*: (Pgs. 4-7, 20-41, 89-102, 119-126).

**Week 5: Self-Disclosure and Self-Knowledge.**

**Week 6: Multiple “I’s” and Authentic Selves.**
- (Optional) Iris Murdoch. Selections from *The Sovereignty of Good*. Chapter 1, 3.
Course Policies

Respectful Language
Please be mindful of how we communicate with each other. Any language that is harmful or abusive will not be tolerated. At all times, I ask that we approach sensitive topics with sensitivity and communicate in ways that show respect for divergent views.

Learning Language
I believe that learning happens best when simple language is used. Whenever possible, I will do my best to explain things in the simplest terms. If I stray from this and you’re lost, ask for clarification. After all, the ultimate goal is for you to understand the material and to articulate your views with clarity and precision.

Learning Accommodations
Your success in this course is my primary goal. Should you need accommodations, please let me know early on, either in person or through email. I will provide any accommodations you require, as directed by you and in conjunction with the Center for Accessible Education (CAE - previously known as the Office for Students with Disabilities). For more information, visit http://www.cae.ucla.edu/.

Electronic Devices
Please silence all electronic devices. The use of laptop-style devices for taking notes is welcomed. Cell phone use is not allowed during class under any circumstances. You are not allowed to record audio/video or take pictures during instruction time without my consent. If given consent, be advised that you are then agreeing to share whatever media you capture during sections upon my request. For any prolonged distraction that occurs because of any electronic device (e.g. computers, phones, recording devices, etc.), you may be asked to leave the classroom.

Email
Use “PHIL (class #)” in the subject line. Please reserve substantive questions about papers, the course material, or life in general, for office hours or after lecture. I typically respond to emails within 24 hours. Help me stick to this 24-hour rule by placing multiple questions into a single email.

Attendance
Course attendance is expected. If you are late or absent for a class, first seek out your classmates to fill you in. Otherwise, come to office hours, though attending to students with current questions or concerns will be my priority.

PTE
This will be handled on a case by case basis. See me ASAP if this applies to you.

Paper Extensions
Typical extension requests are required 1 week in advance. No-penalty extensions will only be granted in rare and documentable cases. If you believe you will require an extension, see me ASAP.

Late Assignment Submission: A paper is late when it is submitted to turnitin past the deadline. Any late paper will be deducted 1/3rd of a letter grade for each 24-hour segment it is late (e.g. A becomes an A-, B+ becomes a B, for each 24 hour-period past the deadline). You will be excused from this penalty only if I have explicitly notified you in writing (e.g. email) that you are exempt.

Academic Integrity: Maintaining academic integrity in accordance with the UCLA Student Code of Conduct is of utmost importance. Academic misconduct includes (but is not limited to) cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, facilitating academic dishonesty, coercion regarding grading or evaluation, and unauthorized collaboration. Suspected instances of academic misconduct will be reported to the Office of the Dean of Students. You will be subject to whatever consequences they determine.

For more information, please consult the UCLA Student Conduct Code on academic dishonesty:
https://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/Individual-Student-Code#academicdis