

# syllabus

## **Core Curriculum 3105: Philosophical Issues in Literature (and Film)**

Thursday 12:50-3:30PM

418 A

**OVERVIEW:** Some of our first lessons about human nature and the universe are learned through the many stories we were told and read as children and then as young adults. Even a fictional narrative is about something real and familiar. A good story provides a glimpse into human nature. An exceptional story holds up a mirror to humanity and dares us to behold its very soul in all its contradictions.

Literature is full of exceptional stories that tackle some fundamental human questions in a very honest way. By studying some examples of such works we discover that philosophy is not some purely intellectual pursuit completely removed from ordinary life but is the very driving force in our life. Philosophy is the expression of our eternal curiosity.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. To recognize and discuss major philosophical themes in various works of literature and film;
2. To be able to critically assess and compare philosophical views expressed in works discussed during the course.

### **GRADE BREAKDOWN:**

10% - participation  
15% - journal (on Blackboard)  
15% - midterm  
15% - term paper  
20% - group project & report  
25% - final exam

**Extra credit:** up to 5% can be earned by leading or participating in online discussions on the Blackboard course website.

**REQUIRED TEXT:** The required reading materials are compiled into a **course packet** available for purchase at Far Better Copy (Campus Rd. & Hilel Pl.) starting 2/7/13.

### **COURSE POLICIES:**

**ABSENCES:** Attendance is mandatory. You are allowed **up to three** unexcused absences. Any other unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade.

**LATENESS:** Anyone arriving after 1:15PM will receive ½ of an absence.

**OFFICE HOURS:** All meetings except in rare circumstances **must be by appointment** in 3316B.

**EMAILING PROCEDURES:** You are always welcome to email me with any course-related questions. However, you **MUST** adhere to the following rules:

1. The SUBJECT **must** contain the title and section of the course (CORC3105) and your FULL NAME;
2. Do NOT send any attachments (i.e. assignments, essays, etc.) as I will not open them unless I specifically request them from you;
3. You must state your FULL NAME in your email.

If you do not stick to these rules, your message will remain unanswered.

**CELL PHONES & PDAS:** all cell phones, pagers, PDAs, etc. **must be turned off** at the beginning of class **and put away**. Any ringing, clicking, or vibrating cell phone will result in the user's exclusion from class activities and an automatic absence. No text-messaging, picture-taking, or any other behavior unrelated to class activities will be tolerated. This policy WILL BE strictly enforced.

**University's policy on Academic Integrity:**

The faculty and administration of Brooklyn College support an environment free from cheating and plagiarism. Each student is responsible for being aware of what constitutes cheating and plagiarism and for avoiding both. The complete text of the CUNY Academic Integrity Policy and the Brooklyn College procedure for implementing that policy can be found at this site: <http://www.brooklyn.cuny.edu/bc/policies>. If a faculty member suspects a violation of academic integrity and, upon investigation, confirms that violation, or if the student admits the violation, the faculty member **MUST** report the violation.

**Students with Disabilities:**

In order to receive disability-related academic accommodations students must first be registered with the Center for Student Disability Services. Students who have a documented disability or suspect they may have a disability are invited to set up an appointment with the Director of the Center for Student Disability Services, Ms. Valerie Stewart-Lovell at 718-951-5538. If you have already registered with the Center for Student Disability Services please provide your professor with the course accommodation form and discuss your specific accommodation with him/her.

**Other Academic Regulations:**

Consult pp. 35-51, pp. 52-59, and pp. 74-83 in the Brooklyn College Bulletin, for a complete listing of academic regulations of the College.

**COURSE CALENDAR:**

THU 1/31	Intro
THU 2/7	Fables, fairytales & allegories "The Allegory of the Cave", Plato <i>Group Project &amp; Term Paper discussed</i>
<b>THU 2/14 - NC</b>	<b>No Class – Tuesday Schedule</b>
THU 2/21	<i>The Leviathan</i> , Thomas Hobbes <b>Group Work</b>
THU 2/28	Viewing of "Soylent Green"
THU 3/7	<i>Planet of the Apes</i> , Pierre Boulle <b>Group #1</b>
THU 3/14	"Welcome to the Monkey House", Kurt Vonnegut <b>Group #2</b>
THU 3/21	<i>On Liberty</i> , John Stuart Mill Chapter II <i>On Democracy</i> , John Dewey <b>Group #3</b>
<b>THU 3/28 - NC</b>	<b>Spring Break</b>
THU 4/4	<b>Midterm</b>
THU 4/11	"Women and the Family", excerpt from <i>The Republic</i> , Plato <i>The Stepford Wives</i> , Ira Levin <b>Group #4</b>
THU 4/18	<i>The Stepford Wives</i> , Ira Levin <b>Group #5</b>
THU 4/25	<i>Medea</i> , Euripides <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</i> , Mary Wollstonecraft (Chapter IX)
THU 5/2	"Alienation of Labor", Karl Marx <i>Animal Farm</i> , George Orwell <b>Group #6</b> <b>Group #7</b>
THU 5/9	<b>Term paper due</b> Film & Discussion
THU 5/16	<b>Final Exam review</b>
<b>THU 5/23</b>	<b>FINAL EXAM 1-3 PM</b>