This class will center on two important philosophical topics: happiness and the meaning of life. The first part of the course will focus on the concept of happiness, where we examine its nature and value. We begin by considering the role happiness has played in the history of ethics, and then we explore how it continues to play a role in contemporary philosophical debates.

The second part of the course is focused on questions concerning the meaning of life. As Albert Camus explains, “Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy…I see many people die because they judge that life is not worth living. I see others paradoxically getting killed for the ideas or illusions that give them reason for living…I therefore conclude that the meaning of life is the most urgent of questions.”

In addition to readings on what makes life meaningful, we also consider questions concerning love, death, suicide, and immortality.

If you have any questions or would like to know more about this course, feel free to email me at cvitrano@brooklyn.cuny.edu or stop by during my office hours on Tuesdays from 12:15 – 2:15 or Thursdays from 12:15 – 1:25 in room 3315 Boylan.

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