Philosophy 110G: LOVE & SEX Summer session 3 2020

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Course Description
Love. Sex. Philosophy. Wait, what? Philosophy? Yes, philosophy! Love and sex are two of the most significant and pervasive aspects of human life. And while most people have thought about them a lot, most of us still have many questions about them, both ethical questions about love and sex, as well as questions about their natures. In this course we shall see that philosophy is uniquely suited to help us to reflect on love and sex. Through cooperative philosophical engagement, we will come to a better understanding of love and sex and how to approach the issues connected to them. Along the way we will begin to develop philosophical skills required to evaluate the arguments of others and to construct and offer arguments of our own. We shall do so by considering questions like:

- Is there such a thing as true love?
- Is it possible to be in love with more than one person? If so, is it moral?
- Is flirting cheating?
- What counts as sex?
- Is casual sex wrong?
- What is consent?
- How should we understand sexual orientation?
- How do laws and social customs impact the way we’re encouraged to think about love, sex, and gender?

Learning Online Together
I’m excited to teach this course and a big reason why is because the questions we’ll ask are important but I don’t have answers to them. So, I am eager to learn what you all think about these issues! And our online structure is perfectly suited for this. It will put you, the students, at the center of the discussion and it will furnish us all with ample opportunities to exchange ideas with and learn from each other. My job will be to guide our discussions, as together we try to sort out these important issues.

In order to get ready to bring your insights to our course, begin by viewing the START HERE video, read the syllabus, and complete the Online Learn Orientation. In addition, you can find more helpful information at this site: http://web.uri.edu/online/learningonline/. Finally, the syllabus is your map to this course.
Course Goals at a Glance

- Students will learn how to read philosophical texts and identify arguments in them.
- Students will learn how to reconstruct arguments from texts.
- Students will learn how to evaluate arguments, that is, determine whether the reasoning supports the conclusion.
- Students will learn how to construct their own arguments.
- Students will learn how to anticipate and respond to objections to their views.
- Students will practice expressing their thoughts across different types of writing.
- Students will practice considering issues from multiple perspectives.
- Students will apply class material to life outside of the classroom.

General Education Outcomes

This is a Grand Challenge Course, which also provides full coverage in Humanities (A3) and Diversity and Inclusion (C3). By the end of the semester, students will:

- Be able to identify philosophical vocabulary, definitions, terms, and concepts
- Recognize philosophical concepts and tools relevant for evaluating the arguments of others and constructing their own
- Ask questions and frame hypotheses about the nature of love and sex as well as about some ethical issues surrounding love and sex
- Apply concepts we learn to arguments in readings, discussions, and long and short papers
- Deconstruct arguments about love and sex by identifying claims and evidence and synthesize evidence in favor of a view across multiple sources
- Evaluate support for claims and justify conclusions for arguments about love and sex
- Demonstrate understanding of the social construction of difference regarding sexual orientation and gender identity within U.S. society
- Demonstrate knowledge of the impact of discrimination and social inequalities regarding sexual orientation, gender identity, romantic partnerships, and family units within U.S. society
- Show capacity for understanding of the experience of marginalized groups in U.S. society by considering accounts of these experiences and discussing the underlying similarities between cases of genuine love
- Be able to communicate and have difficult dialogues across diverse individuals and groups by considering different perspectives on issues regarding love and sex and learning to scrutinize our own views as we do the views of others

Required Texts

All readings will be posted to the Sakai site or linked in the schedule of readings below. I will also provide reading questions for most readings/videos to help guide you through your reading and preparation. Use these questions to develop a sense of your own about what is most philosophically significant in our readings and course materials.
Required Materials
A reliable internet connection and computer are ESSENTIAL and thus REQUIRED for this course. Registering for an online course implies that you understand and agree to this requirement. Please note that, should something happen to interrupt your internet access at home, you are responsible for finding acceptable access to the course.

Technology Requirements
Computer access to the internet is required in order to successfully navigate this course. The course is delivered through the Sakai platform, which is a set of web applications designed to work with modern web browsers. Recommended browsers (those with the most QA testing effort against them) are Google Chrome, Safari, and Mozilla Firefox. The mobile versions of these browsers also work well with the majority of operations in Sakai. Internet Explorer is not recommended.

In the Sakai menu on the left you will see Sakai Documentation at the bottom of the menu. If you click on it, it will take you to the Help pages. You can also call the Help Desk at 401-874-4357.

Classroom Protocol
For this online course, Sakai is our ‘classroom’. In the online learning environment, ‘attendance’ is measured by your presence in the site as well as your contributions to the site. The importance of regular log-ins and active participation cannot be overstated. I will gauge your participation by your regular, on-time forum postings and responses, and timely assignment submissions. If you’ve never taken an online course, ‘hanging out’ on Sakai will take some getting used to, and it will be easy to forget about the course from time to time. I recommend that you check out the Online Learn Orientation at https://sakai.uri.edu/portal/site/8287ab7d-aa33-4fa7-ad8c-066fe8203251. This short orientation will provide you with an introduction to the important aspects of taking an online course. I further recommend that you get in the habit of daily attendance online to maximize your successful completion of the course.

Course Requirements
Breakdown of grade
Participation (i.e., forum posts and reply posts) = 25%
Six Philosophy Exercises = 30% (5% each)
Two Papers = 25% total (1st paper = 10%, 2nd paper = 15%)
Four Quizzes = 20% (5% each)

Requirements in detail
Participation/forum posts (25%) Philosophy is first and foremost an activity. Because our course is online, we have the opportunity to share our thoughts with each other continuously over the duration of the session. The primary way that we’ll do this will be through the course forum board. On the forum, students can raise questions from the course material, offer their thoughts on an issue, connect our class to the world around us,
and, of course, respond to one another. **Each week**, students are responsible for one **original post** and responses to at least two **classmates’ posts**. Posts needn’t be long but they should be thoughtful. This means that your post should reflect engagement with class material or with another student’s post. Individual posts will not be graded, but I will evaluate them for **thoughtful engagement with classmates and course material**. If a post does not meet this standard, then it will not count. The following is a guide to what a thoughtful post looks like:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>4 Excellent</th>
<th>3 Good</th>
<th>2 Acceptable</th>
<th>1 Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Relevance of Post</strong></td>
<td>Posts consistently are related to discussion topic; brings readings into discussion; cites additional references related to topic.</td>
<td>Posts are related to discussion topic; makes some connections with readings.</td>
<td>Occasionally posts off topic; most posts offer no further insight into the topic.</td>
<td>Posts topics which do not relate to the discussion content; makes irrelevant remarks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>References &amp; Support</strong></td>
<td>Uses references to literature, readings, or personal experience to support comments.</td>
<td>Incorporates some references from literature and personal experience.</td>
<td>Uses personal experience, but no references to readings or research.</td>
<td>Includes no references or supporting experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expression Within the Post</strong></td>
<td>Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic.</td>
<td>Opinions and ideas are stated clearly with occasional lack of connection to topic.</td>
<td>Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas.</td>
<td>Does not express opinions or ideas clearly; no connection to topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong></td>
<td>Consistently uses grammatically correct posts with rare misspellings.</td>
<td>Few grammatical or spelling errors are noted in posts.</td>
<td>Errors in spelling and grammar evidenced in several posts.</td>
<td>Utilizes poor spelling and grammar in most posts; posts appear “hasty”.</td>
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Adopted from: [http://www2.luthersem.edu/nyssse/QT2116-50/ParticipationRubric.htm](http://www2.luthersem.edu/nyssse/QT2116-50/ParticipationRubric.htm) and [http://www.udel.edu/janet/MARC2006/rubric.html](http://www.udel.edu/janet/MARC2006/rubric.html)

**Philosophy Exercises (30%)** It takes work to develop and hone our philosophical skills. While these skills grow out of everyday ways of thinking, in philosophy we approach issues in a precise and explicit manner that is challenging to master. So, throughout the session, we will work on our philosophical skills with exercises. These philosophy exercises will focus on skills relating to posing and answering questions, evaluating arguments, as well as other philosophical methods. We will have six exercises over the session. Your exercises will be due on the **Friday 5:00pm EST** of the week they are assigned. Late submissions will receive a one-point-per-day-late deduction.

**Grading criteria for exercises:**

5 points: Responds to each aspect of the prompt in a clear and precise manner. Demonstrates genuine engagement with the philosophical skill at hand and does so through sophisticated claims (when applicable),
original examples (when applicable), and in a creative and thoughtful way. Reasoning is explained in detail and connections between claims are clear.

4 points: Responds to each aspect of the prompt in a clear and precise manner. Engages with the philosophical skill at hand through plausible claims (when applicable) and attempts original examples (when applicable). Reasoning is explained and claims are connected.

3 points: Responds to each aspect of the prompt. Shows some engagement with the philosophical skill at hand and employs examples (when applicable). Reasoning is present but more detail is needed and the connections between claims could be clearer.

2 points: Responds to some aspects of the prompt. Shows little engagement with the philosophical skill at hand. Some reasoning is present. Connections between claims are obscure.

1 point: Responds to few aspects of the prompt. Shows little to no engagement with the philosophical skill at hand. Reasoning is absent or unclear. No connections between claims.

0 points: No submission

Quizzes (20%) We will have four quizzes over the session. These will be straightforward and based on class material. Typically, the questions will be True/False with a required explanation of your answer. In addition, each quiz will test you on a fundamental philosophical skill. Quizzes will be available on Thursday at noon EST of the week they are scheduled and are due by Friday 5:00pm. Students will have 15 minutes to complete the quiz once it is opened. No late submissions will be accepted.

Papers (25%) In your papers, you will deploy your philosophical skills by clearly and precisely explaining the philosophical ideas at issue and then offering your own, well supported, argument on the topic. The first paper will be 3-5 pages. The second paper will be 4-6 pages. I will provide paper topics for both papers well before they are due. If you would like to write on a topic that is not offered, email me as soon as possible. Papers will be due on Saturday 5:00pm EST of the week they are assigned. Late submissions will receive a one-letter-grade-per-day-late deduction.

Grade scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade (A)</th>
<th>Grade (B)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>94-100</td>
<td>C 74-76</td>
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<tr>
<td>A- 90-93</td>
<td>C- 70-73</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+ 87-89</td>
<td>D+ 67-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>B 84-86</td>
<td>D 64-66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B- 80-83</td>
<td>F 63 and below</td>
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<td>C+ 77-79</td>
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Academic Honesty

Students are expected to be honest in all academic work. The Provost’s Office has the following academic honesty standards for URI students:
“A student’s name on any written work, quiz or exam shall be regarded as assurance that the work is the result of the student’s own independent thought and study. Work should be stated in the student’s own words, properly attributed to its source. Students have an obligation to know how to quote, paraphrase, summarize, cite and reference the work of others with integrity. (If you are uncertain about how to appropriately reference material from a text or from the web, please ask me and I will explain it.)

The following are examples of academic dishonesty:
• Using material, directly or paraphrasing, from published sources (print or electronic) without appropriate citation
• Claiming disproportionate credit for work not done independently
• Unauthorized possession or access to exams
• Unauthorized communication during exams
• Unauthorized use of another’s work or preparing work for another student
• Taking an exam for another student
• Altering or attempting to alter grades
• The use of notes or electronic devices to gain an unauthorized advantage during exams
• Fabricating or falsifying facts, data or references
• Facilitating or aiding another’s academic dishonesty
• Submitting the same paper for more than one course without prior approval from the instructors”

Cheating or plagiarism will mean a failing grade. Please see the University Manual sections 8.27.16-19, 8.27.17-19, 8.27.10-15 (http://www.uri.edu/facsen/8.20-8.27.html.) regarding your responsibility in this matter.

Schedule of Readings & Assignments

Part One: Love

Week one: Course Introduction and questions about love

Readings:
(1) Love Advice Column from Loveletters.boston.com
(2) ‘What is Philosophy for?’
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mIYdx61DDhg
(3) Plato’s Symposium, Aristophanes’ speech
   See also ‘The Origin of Love’ from Hedwig and the Angry Inch
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnw_p6bM5TU
(4) Plato’s Symposium, Socrates’ speech

Assignments:
(1) Introduction post due by Tuesday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Thursday 5:00pm EST
(2) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(3) First Philosophy Exercise, due Friday at 5:00pm EST
Week two: Theories of Love, part one

Readings:
(1) Robert Nozick, ‘Love’s Bond’
(2) David Velleman, ‘Beyond Price’ (pp. 195-210)
(3) Crash Course Philosophy, Kant & Categorical Imperatives (from 6:25 mark)
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bIys6JoEDw&feature=youtu.be&t=385
(4) Helen Fisher, ‘The Brain in Love’ (TED Talk)
   https://www.ted.com/talks/helen_fisher_studies_the_brain_in_love?language=en#t-930999

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Quiz, due by Friday at 5:00pm EST

Week three: Theories of love, part two, and monogamy

Readings:
(2) Carrie Jenkins and Jonathan Jenkins Ichikawa and, ‘On Being the Only Ones’
(3) Carrie Jenkins, ‘Modal Monogamy’ (no need to read sections 3 and 4)

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Second Philosophy Exercise, due Friday 5:00pm EST.

Week four: Marriage and committed relationships

Readings:
(1) Stanley Kurtz, ‘Beyond Gay Marriage: The Road to Polyamory’
   https://www.weeklystandard.com/stanley-kurtz/beyond-gay-marriage
(2) Obergefell v. Hodges (Majority opinion, pages 1-28)
(3) Dan Moller, ‘An Argument Against Marriage’

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Third Philosophy Exercise, due Friday 5:00pm EST

Week five: Adultery

Readings:
(1) Jared Diamond, ‘The Science of Adultery’ (from The Third Chimpanzee)
(2) Mark White, ‘Adultery: Is it ever justified?’
(3) Crash Course Philosophy, Utilitarianism (video)
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a739VjqdSI
(4) John Portmann, ‘Chatting is Not Cheating’

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Quiz, due by Friday 5:00pm EST

**Part Two: Sex**

Week six: What is sex and what are sexual desires?

Readings:
(1) Greta Christina, ‘Are We Having Sex Now or What?’
(2) Jared Diamond, ‘The Animal with the Weirdest Sex Life’ (from Why is Sex Fun?)
(3) Thomas Nagel, ‘Sexual Perversion’
(4) Robert Solomon, ‘Sexual Paradigms’

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Quiz, due by Friday 5:00pm EST
(3) First paper, due Saturday 5:00pm EST

Week seven: Sexual desires, sex and morality

Readings:
(1) Alvin Goldman, ‘Plain Sex’
(2) wiphi Open Access Philosophy, Intrinsic vs. Instrumental Value
   http://www.wi-phi.com/video/intrinsic-vs-instrumental-value
(3) Seriol Morgan, ‘Sex is in the Head’
(4) Immanuel Kant, ‘Duties Towards the Body in Respect of Sexual Impulse’
(5) Raja Halwani, ‘On Fucking Around’

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Fourth Philosophy Exercise, due Friday 5:00pm EST

Week eight: Sex and consent

Readings:
(1) Planned Parenthood, ‘How do you know if someone wants to have sex with you?’
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qNN3nAevQKY&list=PL3xP1jlf1jgJRkChw+VOlwQeV0-UqcWiFV
(2) WIRELESS Philosophy, ‘What is consent?’
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CQ9SPqIzVo4&feature=youtu.be
(3) Tom Dougherty, ‘Sex, Lies, and Consent’ (pages 717-734)
(4) Lois Pineau, ‘Date Rape: A Feminist Analysis’ (pages 222-223, 225-233)
(5) Ann Cahill, ‘Unjust sex versus rape’

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Fifth Philosophy Exercise, due Friday 5:00pm, EST

Week nine: Sexual orientation

Readings:
(1) Psychology Vidcast, Episode 3, ‘What causes sexual orientation?’
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdNIdjAcuoI
(2) Robin Dembroff, ‘What is Sexual Orientation?’
   Optional: three short videos in which Dembroff discusses their view of orientation
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pNmvthQLds
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eV2kO6bNfuE
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLCeEBwamrw
(3) Michael Levin, ‘Why Homosexuality is abnormal’
(4) John Corvino, ‘Homosexuality: The Nature and Harms Arguments’
   Optional: a video version of Corvino’s discussion
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iXA_0MED98
(5) Trina Young, ‘Nine stereotypes about bisexuality we need to stop reinforcing’
   https://blavity.com/bisexual-stereotypes
(6) ‘Getting bi’, from Crazy Ex-Girlfriend
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUDab9piv_U

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Quiz, due by Friday 5:00pm EST

Week ten: Gender

Readings:
(1) Esa Diaz-Leon ‘What is Social Construction?’
(2) Trans 101: Episode 1 ‘What is Transgender’
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VRH0pwENbx8
(3) Trans 101: Episode 2 ‘Terminology’
   https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ik_fy5-TTrs
(4) Christine Overall, ‘Trans Persons, Cisgender Persons, and Gender Identities’

Assignments:
(1) Original post due up by Thursday 5:00pm EST, two replies by Sunday 5:00pm EST
(2) Sixth Philosophy Exerices, due Friday 5:00pm EST
(3) Final paper, due Saturday 5:00 pm EST