

Philosophy 152A – Topics in Moral Philosophy: Friendship
Wednesdays and Fridays, 1 – 3:05 PM Royce 160

Instructor: Andrew Flynn

Contact: andrewmflynn@gmail.com

Office Hours: Wednesdays and Fridays, 11:50 AM – 12:50 PM, Dodd 383

TA: Zachary Biondi

Contact: zbiondi@humnet.ucla.edu

Office Hours: TBA

Course Description: Friendship is an important part of our lives, worthy of reflection and analysis. This course will cover some important historical and contemporary works of moral philosophy centered on friendship. Throughout, we will focus on two main questions, which have been and continue to be disputed. First, what is good about friendship? Although it is widely agreed that friendship is a good thing, there is much disagreement about *why* it is good, and we will spend time considering different proposals. Second, what relationship does friendship have to morality? On the one hand, we give our friends special treatment, and consequently some philosophers have thought that friendship is at best non-moral and at worst opposed to morality. On the other hand, friendship presents a model of admirable concern for the other, and consequently other philosophers have viewed it as essentially moral. Written work will consist of two homeworks and a short paper.

Part One: Historical Classics

Week I

6/22, Class 1 – Introduction

Background Reading: Michael Pakaluk, “Introduction” from *Other Selves* (pgs. vii-xiv)

6/24, Class 2 – Aristotle

Reading: Aristotle, Book VIII, *Nicomachean Ethics* (pgs. 28-50 in *Other Selves*)

Week II

6/29, Class 3 – Aristotle

Reading: Aristotle, Book IX, *Nicomachean Ethics* (pgs. 50-69 in *Other Selves*)

7/1, Class 4 – Cicero

Reading: Cicero, “On Friendship” (pgs. 77-116 in *Other Selves*)

Week III

7/6, Class 5 – Seneca

Reading: Seneca, “On Philosophy and Friendship” and “On Grief for Lost Friends” (pgs. 117-128 in *Other Selves*)

Homework 1 Due 7/6, 11:59 PM

7/8, Class 6 – Montaigne

Reading: Montaigne, “Of Friendship” (pgs. 185-199 in *Other Selves*)

Week IV**7/13, Class 7 – Emerson**

Reading: Ralph Waldo Emerson, “Friendship” (pgs. 218-232 in *Other Selves*)

Part Two: Contemporary Work**7/15, Class 8**

Reading: Jennifer Whiting, “Friends and Future Selves”

Week V**7/20, Class 9**

Reading: Jennifer Whiting, “Impersonal Friends”

Homework 2 Due 7/20, 11:59 PM

7/22, Class 10

Reading: Kyla Ebels-Duggan, “Against Beneficence”

Week VI**7/27, Class 11**

Reading: Barbara Herman, “Integrity and Impartiality”

7/29, Class 12 – Conclusion

No new reading

Paper Due 8/1, 11:59 PM

Course Requirements

Attendance (15%)

Homework 1 (15%)

Homework 2 (35%)

Paper (35%)

The written work for this course will consist of two homeworks and a short paper. The homeworks will ask you to respond to several short essay prompts. Homework 1 will be 2-3 pages and Homework 2 will be 3-4 pages. The short paper will be 5-6 pages and I will provide suggested prompts.

Late Policy: Late homeworks and papers will be docked 1/3 of a letter grade (e.g. A- to B+) for each day late.

Attendance Policy: Everyone is allowed 2 unexcused absences, no questions asked, without the grade being affected.

Recordings: I plan on making audio recordings of the lectures, which I will provide to students who have cleared an excused absence with me.

Texts: Michael Pakaluk's anthology *Other Selves* is required and available for purchase in the UCLA Bookstore in Ackerman. About half of the readings – almost entirely historical – are contained in this anthology. All other readings will be posted to the course website.

Academic Misconduct:

Students are expected to know and to follow the university's guidelines for academic honesty. Academic misconduct can occur in a variety of ways, including (but not limited to) cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. When in doubt about whether some academic practice is acceptable, ask your TA or the instructor for assistance. Always err on the side of avoiding misconduct. Any suspected violation of university policy regarding academic conduct will be reported directly to the Office of the Dean of Students. (This is a course policy, and it is not subject to revision by your TA.) In other words, there are no exceptions.

Academic Accommodation:

Students needing academic accommodations based on a disability should contact the Center for Accessible Education (CAE) [formerly the Office for Students with Disabilities or OSD] at (310)825-1501 or in person at Murphy Hall A255. When possible, students should contact the CAE within the first two weeks of the term as reasonable notice is needed to coordinate accommodations.

Attendance Policy: Attendance in section and lecture is mandatory, and constitutes 15% of your grade. We will be taking attendance in both. You get an A in attendance simply for showing up. You are allowed *one* unexcused absence, in either section or lecture. (A valid excuse is, e.g., illness.) After this, each unexcused absence will result in a third of a letter grade coming off of your attendance grade.

Electronics Policy: Electronic devices are *not allowed*, unless needed for accommodation.