PHIL 380 03 - THE PHILOSOPHY OF WELL-BEING
Fall 2018, Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:00 am – 11:15 am
Siegel Hall, Room 203

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday, 1:30 pm - 2:30pm in Siegel Hall, Room 235

COURSE DESCRIPTION

We will explore different aspects of what philosophers discuss under the term 'Well-being'. This is NOT the topic covered in self-help books. However, reflection on different views on well-being might lead you to insights about your own well-being. Mainly, you will gain the ability to understand and engage with philosophical texts, evaluate arguments, apply ideas to real and fictional situations, express your own thoughts clearly, and (hopefully) achieve a broader understanding of the surrounding world and your place in it. (You will also come out knowing some particular views about well-being.) You will develop writing and thinking skills that can serve you in your further college career and for the rest of your life.

All readings will be provided for free by the instructor as pdf files. The readings listed on the schedule are to be read before the class of the day for which they are listed. Most readings are from a little book, which you might want to buy (optional):
Ben Bradley: "Well-Being", Polity Press 2015
Your instructor reserves the right to substitute readings or assign additional readings at his discretion. Any such changes or additions will announced in class and provided as pdfs.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are two types of assignments: papers and homework. All written assignments are to be formatted **double spaced**, with a **12pt. font** (Times New Roman or another, size-equivalent, font). All assignments will be explained further in class. Due dates are marked on the schedule.

- **Homework:** There are three homework assignments, due on 8/23, 10/4, and 10/30, respectively. Written homework is to be turned in in class on the day for which it is due.

- **Papers:** There are three paper assignments. Each paper has to be **at least three, but no more than four pages long**. Papers have to be **submitted by e-mail** to the instructor, as attachments in either **Word or PDF** format. The first paper is due on 10/08 by 11:59 pm. It will be returned to you with comments from your instructor within two weeks from submission. The second paper will be a revision of your first paper, based on the comments you received. It is due on 10/29 by

11:59pm. The final paper is due on December 6, by 11:59 pm. Any **extensions have to be requested at least 24 hours prior** to the due date via email and are given at the discretion of the instructor.

REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

In order to pass the course, apart from achieving a passing grade (see breakdown below) you are required to attend all classes, complete all written assignments, and submit them when they are due.

Do the assigned readings. Arrive on time. Turn all electronic devices off (unless you have a pacemaker). DO NOT USE YOUR PHONE DURING CLASS FOR ANY PURPOSE! Participate in class. In and outside of class, be kind to each other and to yourself.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Your grade consists of the following:

HW 1..................................10 points
HW 2.................................10 points
HW 3.................................10 points
Paper 1.............................20 points
Paper 2 (rewrite).............15 points
Paper 3.............................20 points
Class Participation..........20 points

As you may have noticed, these add up to 105 points. To get full points for the course, you need 100 points. That means you there are 5 extra-credit points included. If you are, for example, not as comfortable participating in class, you can lose 5 points there without sacrificing your grade.

POLICIES

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is taking things that others have said or written and use them as if they were your own ideas. It is considered a serious transgression. Always cite the original source, even when you paraphrase. Whenever possible, use your own words.

Academic Honesty will be presumed. Unless collaborative work is specifically called for, work on assignments is expected to be your own. Please refer to the *Code of Academic Honesty* in the Student Handbook for details concerning sanctions.

Attendance and Participation: The university policy requires all students to attend all classes. This course requires active discussion and participation. What we do, say, and cover in class cannot be made up at home. Participation counts towards your grade. BE ON TIME! You need to attend all classes in order to pass it. If there is a true emergency or a serious reason why you

cannot do so, please let me know in advance, or as soon as it is possible. Make-up work will be provided.

Special Needs Students will be accommodated. Adaptation of methods and materials for students with documented disabilities will be made in consultation with the Center for Disability Resources. Students must consult with me and the CDR at the beginning of the term, or as soon as reasonably possible should the disabling condition arise during the term.

A note about computers: Studies have shown that using computers in class reduces concentration, retention, and outcomes, even for students who do not use them, but sit near those who do. So please put your laptops and tablets away and take notes with pen and paper, if you wish. If you have a special need for a computer, please let me know.

TOPIC 1 – WHAT IS WELL-BEING?

TUE 8/21   Introduction - *No Readings*

THU 8/23   Bradley - 1.1 (pp. 1-3)
 ➔ **HW 1 (1-page): What do you think well-being is, and why?**
          IN CLASS PEER-REVIEW SESSION

TUE 8/28   Bradley – 1.2, 1.3, 1.4 (pp. 3-8)
          Haybron – Ch. 2 (pp. 29-33)

THU 8/30   Bradley – 1.5, 1.6 (pp. 9-11)
          Aristotle – *Nicomachean Ethics (excerpts)*
          IN CLASS: WHAT IS AN ARGUMENT?

TOPIC 2 – HEDONISM AND PLEASURE

TUE 9/4   Bradley - 2.1 (pp. 13–15)
          Katz – *"Pleasure"*

THU 9/6   Bradley - 2.2, 2.3 (pp. 16-27)
          Epicurus *"Letter to Menoeceus"*

TUE 9/11   Bradley - 2.4, 2.5 (pp. 27-30)
          Nozick – *"The Experience Machine"*
 ➔ **HW 2 (1-page): Write down a valid argument for *OR* against plugging into the EM**

THU 9/13   Bradley - 2.6 (pp. 30-32)
          Diener et al. - *"The Satisfaction with Life Scale"*

TOPIC 3 – DESIRE SATISFACTION

TUE 9/18   Bradley - 3.1, 3.2 (pp. 34–39)
          Sidgwick – *"The Methods of Ethics"* Ch. IX

THU 9/20   Bradley - 3.3, 3.4 (pp. 39-43)
          Easwaran (translator) – *"The Dhammapada"*

TUE 9/25   Bradley - 3.5 (pp. 43 – 46)
          Parfit – *"Reasons and Persons"* Appendix A

THU 9/27   Heathwood - *"Preferentism And Self-Sacrifice"*
TOPIC 4 – CAPABILITIES AND HUMAN NATURE

TUE 10/2   Bradley – 4.1, 4.2, (pp. 47-51)
             Kraut – *"What is Good and Why?"*

THU 10/4   Bradley - 4.3, 4.4 (pp. 51-56)
             Foot or Hursthouse - *tba*

➔ ***First Paper due by midnight on Monday, October 8th (submit per e-mail)***

TUE 10/9   Bradley - 4.5 (pp. 56-58)
             Nussbaum – *"Creating Capabilities"*

TOPIC 5 – PLURALISM

THU 10/11   Bradley - 5.1 (pp. 59-61)
             Hooker: *"The Sympathy Test"*

TUE 10/16   Bradley - 5.2, 5.3, 5.4, 5.5 (pp. 61-66)
             Bradley - 5.7 (pp. 67-69)

THU 10/18   Bradley - 5.6 (pp. 66-67)
             Wolf - *"Meaning in Life"*

TOPIC 6 - AGGREGATING AND MEASURING WELL-BEING

TUE 10/23   Bradley - 6.1 (pp. 70-72)
             Yan – *Incomparability*
             IN CLASS: Chang – *"How to Make Hard Choices"*

THU 10/25   Bradley - 6.2, 6.3 (pp. 72-79)

➔ ***Rewrite of first Paper due by midnight on Monday, October 29th (submit per e-mail)***

TUE 10/30   Bradley - 6.4 (pp. 79-82)
             Diener – *"Subjective Well-Being"*

THU 11/1   Bradley – 6.5 (pp. 82-85)
             Alexandrova – *"A Science of Well-being"*
             IN CLASS: Gilbert – *"The Surprising Science of Happiness"*

INTERLUDE: EVALUATING A THEORY

TUE 11/6   Fuchs – *"The Core Desire Theory of Well-Being"*
    ➔ **HW 3 (1-page): Find an objection to the Core-Desire Theory and explain it.**
TOPIC 7 - WELL-BEING AND NORMATIVE THEORY

THU 11/8   Cahn – *"Moral Theory"*

TUE 11/13   Bradley - 7.1 (pp. 87-93)

THU 11/15   Bradley - 7.2 (pp. 93-96)

TUE 11/20   Bradley - 7.3 (pp. 97-101)

THU 11/22   THANKSGIVING – **NO CLASS!**

TUE 11/27   Bradley - 7.5 (pp. 102-106)

THU 11/29   **CONCLUSION/MAKE-UP CLASS** – *NO READINGS*

    ➔ *Final Paper due by midnight on Thursday, December 06th (submit per e-mail)*