

# HOLY NAMES UNIVERSITY

Fall Semester 2012

## PHILA/RLSTA 140-W: The Human Person

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**Office Hours:** Wed., 5:30 to 6:30 p.m.  
**Phone:** (Cell 510-435-9017)

**Class day & Time:** Wed., 6:30- 9:30 p.m.  
**Class Room:** Brennan 61  
**Class Dates:** Aug. 29 to Dec. 12, 2012  
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### 1. Course Description

In this course, we will investigate one of the most important questions of our existence: What is it to be a human being? We'll approach our inquiry into this question on three levels: content, methodology and self-examination. We'll ask *what* religions and philosophies have said in response to this question, *how* they arrived at their response and how *we* can arrive at *ours*.

1.1 Content: First, we'll read some of the seminal works of the great religious and philosophic traditions from both the West and East. Following the lead of the questions posed on the first page of our main secondary text, *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, our discussion will focus on understanding four points: a) What is the text's metaphysical view of reality? b) How does it describe the role of the human person, or the human condition, in this reality? c) What is its diagnosis of what goes wrong in human experience? d) What is its prescription of how to heal, repair or correct the problem?

These questions will open up four major themes: 1) reality and illusion, 2) the human person as soul and the body, 3) the presence of good and evil in this world, and 4) an understanding of human suffering and death. In addition, we will examine modern critiques of these traditional viewpoints including the feminist analysis of the importance of gender for human identity. Generally, a philosophic text will be paired with a religious text for comparison.

1.2 Methodology: Secondly, we'll analyze the methods that these texts use to arrive at their positions. How do the religious texts engage the question in rational, non-rational and experiential ways? How do philosophers use reason and logic? What is the role of faith and doubt? What constitutes a sound philosophical argument? What is the difference between sound and unsound theology?

1.3 Writing: Finally, after studying the ideas and methods of others, we'll examine what we think through the discipline of writing. We will take a workshop approach to writing. This means that the give-and-take of discussion about your papers will form an important part of developing your ideas. The first assignment will be a self-reflection paper that you can update from time to time during the course. You will write some short assignments in and after class to present for class discussion. Your final project will be to write an 8- to 10-page seminar paper in which you take a position, defend it using appropriate methods of argument, proper academic style and accurate reference notes. This paper will be written in stages, with a draft handed in for class discussion and feedback that you can revise before turning in your finished paper. Along with this formal writing, you'll be encouraged to keep a private journal for your own self-development and appropriation of the material studied. This is entirely up to you; you will never need it for class.

## **2. Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course, the student will be able to:

- 2.1. Recognize and knowledgeably discuss the way these questions are framed and answered by philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Jean-Paul Sartre, Simone de Beauvoir and Judith Butler.
- 2.2. Recognize and knowledgeably engage the various religious perspectives on the human person, including those of Buddhism, Confucianism, Islam, Judaism, and Christianity.
- 2.3. Develop an ability to recognize and discuss methods of understanding a text appropriate to its proper genre, including the readings through faith, metaphor, rational analysis and logic.
- 2.4. Critically analyze and evaluate the strengths and inconsistencies of the particular perspectives, including identifying the difference between true faith and ignorance disguised as blind faith and between sound reasoning and logical fallacies.
- 2.5. Develop and clarify a personal theological and/or philosophical anthropology.
- 2.6. Improve his or her ability to define a thesis position, and present it cogently in writing through sound argument and in proper academic style.

## **3. Class Process:**

3.1 The religious and philosophical texts that we will read in this class are famously challenging to read and understand. Do not be surprised if you spend an hour per page on the primary texts. Your brain will hurt. You will wonder why you enrolled. Don't worry. This is normal. These are mental growing pains. They will pass, and you'll be the better for it.

The primary texts in *The Study of Human Nature* or those posted on Blackboard for you to print out are generally short so that you will have time to read them more than once and analyze their structure critically before class. They will be supplemented by secondary readings, mainly in *Ten Theories of Human Nature*.

3.2 We will examine the primary texts through a close reading in the following stages:

a) First, we focus on understanding what the author is saying. We will identify and clarify any terms and concepts that are confusing, then summarize in our own words the basic meaning of the text from the author's point of view.

b) After this, we will compare the author's approach to that of others, asking what's different or similar.

c) Next, we will analyze the text critically for its strengths and weaknesses.

d) Once we have understood the text on its own terms, we will evaluate it ourselves, see how it develops and challenges our own understanding of the issues and calls us to change or take action.

## **4. Overview of Class Requirements:**

In summary, this class requires five things:

1. Your active preparation before class by reading and thinking about the assignments.
2. Your attendance and full, focused attention for the entire class period,
3. Your active participation during class through discussion and listening to others,
4. Your completion of all formal written assignments by the assigned deadline, especially your draft and final 8-to-10-page seminar paper which will you present to the class.
- 5 Attendance at the summary discussion during exam week in place of a final exam.

**Class Requirements in Detail:**

The following details are intended to help you engage with the course in a meaningful way, not create formal and sterile burdens. They are spelled out here to avoid confusion during the semester. If you have any questions, please ask sooner than later. *Please read the addendum on HNU policy appended to this syllabus.*

Students are expected to:

**4.1) Read and Prepare:** It is essential that you do the assigned reading thoughtfully and critically before class. You'll be lost if you expect the class discussion to substitute for your own advance preparation. We'll discuss how to do this reading and at times outline the structure of the argument as a class. Please print out the Blackboard readings, read and make notes on your printed copies, and bring them to class. We will often read directly from your printed copies. *PLEASE NOTE: HNU policy indicates that students are expected to devote two hours to homework for every one hour of class time. For this course, this means **you should expect and plan for six hours of homework outside class each week.***

**4.2) Attend class:** **Absences, late arrivals after 6:30 pm and early departures before 9:30 pm will reduce your grade. If you cannot attend for some unforeseen event, please email me at [sylvester@hnu.edu](mailto:sylvester@hnu.edu) or call me on my cell phone 510-435-9017 BEFORE the class begins.**

You will need to make arrangements in your personal life so you can be certain that you can arrive on time and attend the entire class as well as do the outside homework. We need every minute of class time to do justice to absorbing these ideas properly. Also, please eat any food before you come or during the break so that our mouths are available for conversation.

(Beverages ok).

*PLEASE NOTE: HNU policy indicates that more than 20 percent of absences, **or more than three absences in this class,** can result in an F.*

**4.3) Participate:** Participation means actively talking in class, asking or answering questions, wrestling with issues, contributing your insights and sharing your experience. As part of participation, you will write a self-reflection paper after the first class, which you are encouraged, but not required to revise and update during the course. Also, as part of participation, students may be asked to prepare short outlines and/or introductions to specific texts following the manner that we will have discussed in class.

**4.4) Write and submit your papers on time:** You will have the opportunity to improve your writing through a series of short assignments and class discussions about writing. Your major work for the semester will be the 8-to-10-page seminar thesis paper in which you take and defend a position with proper argument. You will propose the topic, discuss it in class, research and write it, and then present it at the end of the semester. (See Section 6 for summary schedule of deadlines.) Your paper will be graded on a) the clarity of its thesis statement, b) the cogency of argumentation through reasons, evidence, counter-reasons, rebuttals and conclusion, c) the tone, flow and elegance of your writing d) the overall significance of your discussion in advancing an understanding of the issue you have selected.

*PLEASE NOTE: Paper deadlines are fixed. Extensions will be granted only in emergency.*

4.5) *Attend the Seminar Summation discussion in place of final exam:* Students **must attend this last class discussion** in which we will review the course to clarify our own understanding and examine what implications our study has for how we live our lives. This final discussion is not graded, but it is essential as a catalyst of your understanding of the course experience.

### **5. Grading System:**

- ▶ Attendance and Participation: 40 percent.
- ▶ Class Papers written to class standards and submitted by the deadline: 20 percent
- ▶ Final Seminar Paper written to class standards and submitted by the deadline: 30 percent
- ▶ Seminar summation discussion: 10 percent
- ▶ Your grade will be reduced for unexplained absences, missed deadlines or failure to attend the last summary class. *Please see the university requirements at the end of this syllabus.*

### **6. NOTE PAPER DEADLINES:**

Class 2. 9/5: Self-reflection paper, 3-pgs, single printed copy for teacher.

Class 7. 10/10: Response paper, 3 pgs, printed copies for all class members.

Class 8. 10/17: Seminar paper proposal, 1 pg, one printed copy for teacher.

Class 12. 11/14: Draft Seminar Paper, 6 -8 pgs, submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), and printed copies for all class members brought to class.

Class 15. 12/5: Revised Seminar Paper, 8-10 pages, submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), and printed copies for all class members brought to class.

Seminar Summation. 12/12: Final Seminar Paper, 8-10 pgs. for final paper grade, submitted to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com), and printed copies for all class members brought to class.

### **7. Required Texts:**

Stevenson, Leslie and Haberman, David L. *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition. (Oxford University Press.) 2009.

Stevenson, Leslie. ed. *The Study of Human Nature: A Reader*, Second Edition (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2000.

### **8. Reference Books on Reserve at Cushing Library:**

Mautner, Thomas. *The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy*. (London, U.K.: Penguin Books Ltd., 2005.)

Baggini, Julian and Fosi, Peter S. *The Philosopher's Toolkit: A Compendium of Philosophical Concepts and Methods*. (Malden, MA: John S. Wiley Publisher's, 2010.)

Dunbar-Odom, Donna. *Working with Ideas*. (Houghton Mifflin Co., 2000.)

Seech, Zachary. *Writing Philosophy Papers*. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2009)

Course documents, assignments and this syllabus are posted on

**Blackboard:** <http://blackboard.hnu.edu>.

Look there for updates.

## CLASS SCHEDULE

### **Class 1. AUGUST 29: Introduction to the Inquiry about the Human Person**

#### Discussion questions:

Why are we asking a question about the “human person?” What is “personhood?” How is such a question approached through religious experience and philosophical reflection? What questions does life itself pose to us? What does it mean to respond in faith and/or with reason?

Self-reflection: What have been key questions that life has posed to you personally? What life choices have you made, and do these reveal your values and assumptions? What experiences have formed your understanding what it is to be a human person? Is your understanding shaped by faith and reason, or culture and conditioning?

#### Class discussion for Class 1:

► Early Greek Philosophers (Posted on Blackboard), 55-58. (Italic text is background, excerpts of philosophers is in regular type.)

#### Assignments for Class 2:

► **Self-reflection paper:** Based on our class discussion, **write a 3-page double-spaced reflection paper** on your experience of the meaning of being a human person and any influence this has had in your life. One printed copy for teacher due at start of class. 6:30 p.m., Sept. 5.

► Read Plato’s cave analogy, pgs. 34-41, in *Study of Human Nature*. Stop at the three asterisks (\* \* \*).

► Read Aristotle, “Metaphysics,” Book A.1 (Posted on Blackboard)

► Read *Ten Theories of Human Nature*, “Introduction: Rival Theories and Critical Assessments,” pg. 1-9 and Ch. 4, “Plato: The Rule of Reason,” pg. 71-88.

► At some point by Sept. 26, watch the movie, *The Matrix* (part 1). (Netflix or Amazon.com)

Optional, for personal development:

► Buy a journal notebook, leave a few pages at the beginning for you to insert a printed copy of your self-reflection paper revised after the class discussion. Freewrite your first entries about what the class discussion has stirred up for you, where your educational and life journey has brought you so far and where you are going. This journal is entirely for your own personal use and will never be discussed or requested in class. If this suggestion doesn’t work for you, forget it! Do what does work for you!

## **Theme: What is Ultimate Reality?**

### **Class 2. SEPTEMBER 5: Plato’s Cave Analogy; Aristotle’s *Metaphysics***

**DUE at start of class at 6:30 p.m.: 3-page reflection on how you experience and grapple with the question the human person in your life, one printed copy for teacher in proper style with Times New Roman, 12-pt type and correct margins, header and footer.**

#### Discussion questions:

1. On self-reflection papers: What questions have you faced in life? What ideas have you developed? How do your ideas guide your actions, and vice versa? What’s the next step in your reflection?

2. On readings: In Plato's cave analogy, what is his vision of the human condition? What – and how – do we “wake up” and what is our reaction to the “sunlight?” What is Plato's main argument about education? How does Aristotle differ with Plato? How does each understand the role of the human senses in our perception of reality?

Assignments for Class 3:

- ▶ Read Genesis, 1:1 – 2:25, *Ten Theories*, 1-5.
- ▶ Read Gospel of John, 1:1-28 in *Jewish Annotated New Testament*, (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ Read *Ten Theories*, Ch. 6, “The Bible: Humanity in Relation to God,” pgs. 101-128.

**Class 3. SEPTEMBER 12: Torah on Creation, Gospel of John on the Beginning**

Discussion Questions:

How would you summarize how Genesis' description what's ultimately real? How about the Gospel of John? In what ways are these two texts “in conversation” with each other? How would you compare these with the ideas in Plato and Aristotle? What role does the divine play in the Greek philosophers? What is the role of the human in Genesis and in John's creation story?

Assignments for Class 4:

- ▶ Read Plato's *Republic* excerpt on the soul, pgs. 41-55 in *Study of Human Nature*.
- ▶ Read Aristotle “On the Soul” Book II, (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ Read *Ten Theories*, Ch. 5, “Aristotle: The Ideal of Human Fulfillment”, pgs. 89-106.

Optional, for personal development:

- ▶ Revise your self-reflection paper based on class discussion. Print it and append to your journal. Freewrite in your journal about your reflections on what is ultimately real for you.

**Theme: Human Person as Soul and Body**

**Class 4. SEPTEMBER 19: Plato and Aristotle on the Soul**

Discussion questions:

What is Plato's description of the human soul, compared to Aristotle's? What is the tripartite soul? How would you define “form” and “matter?” What lies at the heart of the disagreement between Plato and Aristotle? What role do the senses, matter and the body play in the view of each philosopher?

Assignments for Class 5:

- ▶ Read Ayatullah Murtaza Mutahhari on “Man and Faith,” pgs. 69-83 in *Study of Human Nature*.
- ▶ Read Psalm 8, 42, 88, 139 (Posted on Blackboard)

**Class 5. SEPTEMBER 26: Islamic Views and Biblical Psalms on Human Person**

Discussion questions:

What does Ayatullah Mutahhari see as distinctive in human nature? Would you call his view philosophical, religious or a combination of both? What is his view on the role of faith for the fulfillment of human life? In the *Psalms*, make a list on paper of every time that the psalmist refers to the soul. Does the psalmist have a different view of the soul and body than we have encountered so far?

Assignment for Class 6:

- ▶ Be sure you have watched the movie, *The Matrix*. (Part 1)
- ▶ Read and be prepared to analyze in class the sample student paper on *The Matrix*: “Red or Blue? Which pill would you take?” (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ Read *Writing Philosophy*, Ch 3, 4, pgs. 55-95. (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ Review summary of academic style. (Posted on Blackboard)

Optional, for personal development:

- ▶ Update self-reflection paper, freewrite in personal journal on your thoughts on soul, body.

## Special Focus: Methods of Reasoning & Writing

### **Class 6. OCTOBER 3: Reason, Logic and Philosophic Argumentation**

#### Discussion Questions:

How do we develop and frame theological and philosophical questions? What is an “argument”, aka, a thesis position that arrives at a conclusion supported by evidence through sound reasoning? How do we use logic to defend our thesis properly? How can we identify the major fallacies? What is sophistry compared to true reasoning?

How do we write a thesis defense paper— especially for this course?! How do we develop an idea, research it and present it in a paper? What’s the difference between a strong and weak paper? What is proper academic style and how should papers be double-checked for factual and typographical accuracy? How will your paper be evaluated and graded in this course?

Assignment for Class 7:

- ▶ **Write a 3-page response paper** in which you present a clear thesis position, argue it using logic and sound reasoning as we have discussed in class. Bring enough printed copies for all class members to read and discuss during the next class.
- ▶ Read Aristotle, *Ethics* excerpt (Posted on Blackboard)

## Theme: Human Person as Good and Evil

### **Class 7. OCTOBER 10: Thesis Writing; Happiness and Virtue in Aristotle’s *Ethics***

**DUE at start of class at 6:30 p.m.: 3-page response paper with thesis and argument on topic of your choice, print copies for all class members. Plan ahead so you will arrive on time!**

Discussion questions:

1. Your response paper: In your 3-page paper, what is your thesis? Is it clearly stated? Are your reasons clear and supported with convincing evidence? Have you identified the objections to your thesis and have you clearly rebutted them with evidence? Does your conclusion summarize how you demonstrated the truth of your thesis in a way that would persuade any prudent person?

2. What is Aristotle’s view of the life well lived? Does human life have a goal? What is the role of happiness, virtue? What is his view of the good and evil in human nature? How does this differ from Socrates’ and Plato’s? Why do we call Aristotle’s method “empirical?” What does “telos” and “teleological” mean?

Assignments for Class 8:

► **Write a one-page proposal of final seminar paper**, describing your (best guess) thesis position, argument, possible steps to argue it. Due at beginning of Class 8, one printed copy for teacher.

► Read Confucianism in *Study of Human Nature*, pg. 22-34.

► Read Kant, “Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason,” in *Study of Human Nature*, pp. 127-138, especially 130-35.

**Optional:**

► Read *Ten Theories*, Ch. 1, “Confucianism: The Way of the Sages,” 25-45.

► Read *Ten Theories*, “Historical Interlude,” and Ch. 7, Kant: Reasons and Causes, Morality and Religion,” 129-162.

Optional, for personal development:

► Update self-reflection paper, freewrite in personal journal on your thoughts on faith, reason.

**Class 8. OCTOBER 17: Confucian Views and Kant on Good and Evil**

**DUE at start of class at 6:30 PM: 1-page proposal for your seminar paper summarizing thesis position, argument, main questions to research, one printed copy for teacher but plan to discuss in class.**

Discussion Questions:

Who do you find more convincing in the debate between Mencius and Hsun-tzu in the Confucian discussion over the good and evil of human nature? Why?

What does Kant mean by the human being’s “animality,” “humanity” and “personality?” How do these relate to ways that other philosophies divide the interior of the human person? How does Kant account for evil among humans?

How do you deal with good and evil in your own life? How has your understanding of good and evil changed through formative events in your life?

Assignments for Class 9:

► Read the excerpt of Thich Nhat Hahn, *Living Buddha, Living Christ*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1995. (Posted on Blackboard)

► Read *Ten Theories*, Ch. 3, “Buddhism: In the Footsteps of the Buddha,” 47-70.

► Bible readings:

- Ten Commandments: Exodus 19:1 to 20:26, Deuteronomy 5:1-22 (On Blackboard)

- Jewish Shema: Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21, Numbers: 15:37-41 (On Blackboard)

- Curses and Blessings: Deuteronomy 26-30. (Posted on Blackboard)

- Suffering Servant: Isaiah 42:1-10. (Posted on Blackboard)

Optional, for personal development:

► Update self-reflection paper, freewrite in personal journal on your thoughts on good and evil.

**Theme: Human Suffering and Death**



**Class 9. OCTOBER 24: Buddha's life, his noble truths; Torah's view of suffering, death**Discussion Questions:

What is the source of human suffering, according to Buddhist thought? What are the four noble truths? What does it propose as a response to suffering? Does the story of Buddha's life parallel the spiritual awakening in anyone you are familiar with, whether personally or from reading? How would you characterize a Buddhist concept of human nature?

How do we compare this with Greek and Biblical worldview?

How does the Torah present the source of human suffering and what is the proper response to it? Where do the "Aseret HaDevarim" fit into this view? Why are there two versions? If interested: [http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/ten\\_commandments.htm](http://www.ewtn.com/expert/answers/ten_commandments.htm) and <http://www.jewfaq.org/10.htm>

Assignments for Class 10:

- ▶ Read death of Socrates in Plato's *Phaedo* and *Apology* excerpts, (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ New Testament readings on suffering and Jesus' death: (Posted on Blackboard)
  - The Daily Cross of the Christian: Luke 9:18-27
  - Jesus' Crucifixion, Resurrection: Luke 22-24.

**Class 10. OCTOBER 31: Socrates and Jesus as they understand their deaths.**Discussion Questions:

What is Socrates' view of death? The comparison between Socrates' and Jesus' death is frequently made. What is your opinion of the similarities and differences?

Assignments for Class 11:

- ▶ Read Jean-Paul Sartre: "Existentialism is a Humanism." *Study of Human Nature*, 185-206
- ▶ Read *Ten Theories*, Ch. 9: "Sartre: Radical Freedom," 181-200.
- ▶ Read Simone de Beauvoir: "Introduction to *The Second Sex*," (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ Read excerpt from Judith Butler *Gender Trouble*. (Posted on Blackboard)
- ▶ Read St. Paul on gender roles: Ephesians 5:21- 6:9, and Galatians 3:24-29

**Theme: Human Nature and Gender****Class 11. NOVEMBER 7: The Modern Era: Sartre, Feminism, and Gender Theory**Discussion questions:

1. If you were asked, "what characterizes existentialist thought," how would you answer? What does Sartre mean when he says "We are condemned to be free"? What constitutes responsible moral action in the face of this "burden of freedom"? What is "bad faith"? What is the "prescription," according to Sartre?

2. What does Simone de Beauvoir mean by the term "otherness," and why is woman's otherness so absolute? With regard to women, what does "liberty" consist of, according to Simone de Beauvoir? For Butler, is gender inherent in human nature, or is it conditioned and a social construct?

Assignments for Class 12:

► **Finish your best possible Draft Seminar Paper, 6-8 pages**, in proper academic style with reference notes and bibliography to present for discussion in class. Print enough copies for all members of the class to be turned in at 6:30 p.m. at the start of class. Plan ahead and arrive on time!

Optional, for personal development:

► Update self-reflection paper, freewrite in journal on your thoughts on suffering, death.

## Special Focus: Writing

**Class 12. NOVEMBER 14: Writing Workshop on Your Seminar Paper Drafts.**

**DUE at 6:30 p.m.: Draft Seminar Paper, with printed copies for all, to present & discuss.**

Discussion questions:

In examining the drafts of the seminar papers, can we identify the paper's clear and distinct thesis statement? Do we see the logical "moves" of the argument to assert and defend it with reasons, evidence, counter-reasons and rebuttals? Suggestions for improvement?

Assignments for Class 13:

► Read Descartes, "*Meditation I*" and "*Discourse IV*" (Posted on Blackboard)  
 ► If you are unable to make Class 13, please participate in online discussion as outlined below by 6 p.m. Nov. 21.

**Class 13. NOVEMBER 21: ONLINE CLASS OPTION: The Modern Era: Descartes**

**Pre-Thanksgiving Blue Light Special! This Time Only!**

**Class attendance is encouraged, but optional**

You may substitute attendance for this class by submitting comments on your reading of Descartes in our Blackboard discussion area no later than 6 p.m. Nov. 21 – one half hour before class begins. We will print out your comments and distribute them in class as part of the discussion of those who do attend.

Discussion Questions for class and for comments submitted on Blackboard:

Your online submission should have two parts for a total of about 3 manuscript pages, or at least 800 words. You do not have to write up your responses if you attend class.

Part 1. Please analyze Descartes' "Meditations I" as an example of thesis writing as we have discussed in class. Namely:

- a) Identify and quote Descartes' thesis statement.
- b) Name the function that the beginning of his essay plays.
- c) Identify his arguments. How does he develop them?
- d) Identify any counter-arguments that he cites.
- e) Discuss whether you find his reasoning and argumentation effective. Are you convinced? Or do you see unanswered questions and unexamined assumptions in his logic?

Part 2: Please discuss: What was Descartes' inner crisis, and what decision did he make

to resolve it? In "Discourse IV", what does he mean by "I think; therefore I am."? What are the

implications of this for his view of the human person compared to the views of our previous writers?

Assignments for Class 14:

- ▶ Keep working on your **Revised Seminar Paper**, due in two weeks.
- ▶ Choose one of the following articles from *Study of Human Nature* to read and prepare for class discussion:
  - ▶ Nancy Holmstrom, "Do Women Have a Distinct Nature?" 288-302.
  - ▶ Henry Bracken, "Essence, Accident and Race," 257-269.
  - ▶ Rose, Lewontin, Kamin, "Not in Our Genes," 303-315.
  - ▶ Matt Ridley, "The Origins of Virtue," 316 - 330.

**Class 14. December 5: Synthesis Discussion: Modern, Classical Views of the Human Person**

Discussion questions:

We will read and discuss in class some aspects of the modern critiques of the traditional religious and philosophical positions on the human person. Which modern ideas do you find most convincing? Least convincing? What do you think of the idea that there is a crisis of both faith and reason in modern thought? Do you think the modern thinking supersedes or only supplements the traditional ideas?

Assignments for Class 15:

- ▶ Finish your **Revised Seminar paper** and prepare it for class presentation, due at start of class at 6:30 pm., Dec. 5. Bring printed copies for everyone to read. Plan ahead to leave enough time to arrive at class on time!

Optional, for personal development:

- ▶ Update self-reflection paper, freewrite in your journal on your thoughts on gender and human nature.

## Course Finale

**Class 15. DECEMBER 5: Class Presentation of Revised Seminar Paper**

**DUE BY 6:30 PM at Class: REVISED SEMINAR PAPER, in 12-point, Times New Roman, double-spaced, proper margins, reference notes, bibliography, submitted electronically to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) and bring printed with copies for everyone. Plan ahead to you arrive on time!**

Discussion Questions: Apply the class approach to a reading: 1) What does the author say? Are there any terms or concepts need clarification? How would we paraphrase it in simpler words? 2) How does this compare to other authors' ideas? 3) What are the strengths and weakness of the paper, what is most convincing and least convincing to us? 4) What have we learned for ourselves from the paper? Suggestions for refinement, further work or action?

Assignments for Seminar Summation:

► **Finish revising and polishing your Final Seminar Paper** in light of class discussion, double-checking its grammar, spelling, accuracy and academic style. One printed copy to turn in and one electronic copy.com by 6:30 pm Dec. 12.

► Review your class notes for the course and skim your annotations on the readings to be able to discuss the entire course with the material fresh in mind.

Optional, for personal development:

► Set aside several hours, perhaps a morning or afternoon, go somewhere conducive to interior reflection, perhaps in nature or in a peaceful area of campus and re-read your journal from beginning to end. Ponder how you have changed, where your life has been and where you are going, what's really important to you and your future, what you can let go of to make more space for the most important.

► Freewrite an entirely new self-reflection paper as an exploration of your thoughts at this moment. Print it out when you can and append to the last pages of your journal.

### **FINAL SEMINAR DISCUSSION. DECEMBER 12: Your Appropriation and Next Steps?**

**DUE BY 6:30 PM at CLASS: FINAL SEMINAR PAPER, submitted electronically to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) AND one printed copy for teacher in 12-point, Times New Roman, double-spaced, proper margins and reference notes and bibliography, for final grade.**

**THIS SEMINAR SUMMATION IS REQUIRED  
AND TAKES PLACE OF EXAM**

Discussion Questions: What does "appropriation" mean for each of us personally? How active vs. passive are we in receiving our education? What have we learned? How are we different? Any effect on how we live? What are some next steps to live the philosophical life?  
Class evaluations on Blackboard due.

**HAPPY HOLIDAYS!**

## Syllabus Addendum

### Definition of Grades:

“A” – Demonstrated exceptional effort in understanding and advancing the class discussion, shown imagination and insight in generating philosophical ideas and in the final seminar paper.

“B” – Good performance in class discussion, participation and in writing the seminar paper.

“C” – Present in body but less so in mind or spirit. Adequate work. Fulfilled basic requirements.

“D” – Inadequate effort in all areas of understanding the ideas, participating in class discussions, writing the final seminar paper and meeting class requirements.

“F” – Unacceptable work; failure in basic class requirements.

### University Requirements:

#### Attendance:

The HNU Catalogue states that students who have excessive absences may receive a grade of F. Excessive absences occur when more than one-fifth of the scheduled class hours are missed. The instructor reserves the right to assign a grade of F to any student who misses more than 20% of class time.

#### Credit Hour Policy:

It is HNU policy that to receive academic credit for a course, the student is expected to do a minimum of two hours of work outside of class for every hour of direct instruction from the instructor. The amount and kind of work assigned and activities engaged in should be consonant with the stated learning outcomes/course objectives outlined above on the syllabus.

#### Disability policy and support services:

If you are a student who needs academic accommodations or support because of a documented disability, you should contact your instructor—and provide copies of your contract or accommodation letters—as soon as possible so that appropriate arrangements can be made. All discussions will remain confidential. If you have questions about accessing Disability Support Services, documenting a disability or requesting accommodations, contact Laura Lydon, Director of Disability Support Services. DSS is located in Brennan 40, and can be reached by calling x1658 or emailing [dss@hnu.edu](mailto:dss@hnu.edu).

#### No plagiarism policy:

**The policies regarding academic honesty described in the *HNU Catalog* must be strictly followed. These include submission of work that is the student’s own, adequate and proper acknowledgement of sources used in preparation of assignments, and not accepting or providing answers on tests.** As cheating undermines the learning process, the instructor reserves the right to assign a grade of *F* to any student who represents the work or ideas of another person as his/her own.

#### Note the following Academic Calendar dates:

Last date to add: Wed., Sept. 12, 2012

Last date to drop: Wed., Sept. 12, 2012 for 100% refund and Wed., Sept. 19 for 50% refund

Last date to withdraw: Wed., Nov. 14, 2012

Last day to file for incomplete: Fri, Dec. 7, 2012