

COR 184: Virtue in Life, Text, and Film
Professor: Dr. Katherine Sweet
Email: ksweet@flagler.edu

This 3-credit hour course meets MWF 11-11:50 am, location TBA

Office Hours: Kenan Hall #517
MW 12 – 2 pm, TR by appointment

Course Description

This course is focused on historical and contemporary discussions of virtue, as well as the cultivation of virtue in practice. Students will study historical and contemporary works of philosophy as well as fictional texts and films, relating the ideas in these to their own experience of real-world virtuous activity. Overall, students will connect the concept of human virtue to that of human happiness and meaning in life, through fiction and non-fiction textual analysis, long-term student habituation, and careful reflection.

The CORE Skill: Ethical Reasoning

Ethics deals with questions of good and evil, right and wrong, should and should not. The ability to think critically about ethical issues, to question our own ethical presuppositions and those of others, and to productively engage with people whose ethical perspectives we disagree with or just don't understand is crucial both on an individual level and for a well-functioning society. These skills are necessary for the development our own ability to make well informed ethical and political choices and to our formation as virtuous individuals. They are also indispensable tools for living and participating in a diverse democracy in which people often have different and sometimes conflicting values that inform their personal and collective decision making.

The CORE Value: Transformative Learning

We are committed to educating the whole person. As a community of inquiry, we value freedom of expression and the bond between teacher and student. We embrace a personalized education that is designed to transform lives and instill a passion for lifelong learning.

Learning Outcomes

Students will demonstrate how to have productive conversations with those they disagree with to foster understanding. Students will express and defend reasoned viewpoints about ethical issues orally and in writing. Students will articulate different theoretical approaches to ethical questions and identify the presuppositions of each approach.

Required Readings

Each required course reading will be available on Canvas.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Attendance: 10% of total grade

Attendance is required. Each day you attend is worth 1 point out of a total of 40 points (40 class days). Everyone gets 2 free points, which means 2 free absences without any excuse needed. If you miss more than 9 days of class, you will receive a 0 for Attendance, regardless of how many points you had previously accrued. Please do not email me about absences, as there is no difference in policy between an un-planned absence and a planned absence.

In Class Participation: 10% of total grade

Discussion is required and is something you can only acquire by attending class. Each class day, you will receive a point for speaking thoughtfully about the reading/topic of discussion during class. You can only receive one point per class, no matter how much you speak. If you do not speak thoughtfully on the reading or topic, you will not receive that point, no matter how many times you speak up. If you miss more than 9 days of class, you will receive a 50% on in class participation, no matter how many points you had previously accrued. If you miss more than 20 days of class, you will receive a 0 on the overall class participation.

Reading Summaries: 25% of total grade

You will write 5 2-page reading summaries throughout the semester, on readings of your choosing. These summaries will be graded for clarity, accuracy, thoroughness, and understanding. You must prove that you completed the entire reading and understood it in your summary. Other students will read your summaries throughout the semester and discuss them in class.

Reading Presentations: 15% of total grade

Almost every Friday, after the week's discussion of the reading is complete, you will get into groups during class and spend about 30 minutes working to summarize the 2 most important ideas of the week's reading. You will present those to the class, attempting to explain in simple terms what the reading is about at its core. This discussion and presentation will be graded for clarity, conciseness, and accuracy. If you miss a Friday's class, you will receive a 0 on that week's presentation.

Philosophy as a Way of Life Project: 25% of total grade

The first stage of this project involves what are called "Purpose Projects." Each week for the first 7 weeks of the semester, you will choose one Purpose Project to complete (you cannot do any Purpose Project more than once during the first stage). You will make a video reporting your experience for each Project and send it to me and another student for review. A written reflection is a suitable alternative to a video report.

The second stage of this project will run for 4 weeks straight. You will be asked to follow a set of rules in your life, many of which likely run contrary to your current routine. First, you will choose 4+ Purpose Projects and make them a permanent part of your life for the next 4 weeks. Second, you will choose 8 rules from the list I provide and incorporate them into your daily routine for the 4-week period. Your choices should be determined in part by which rules make the most sense for you and your current habits. For example, if you never play video games then you should not choose the "no video games" rule on the list. This will be important when it comes time to work on your final Way of Life report.

During the second stage, you will meet **twice** per week with your Way of Life partner for at least 10 minutes each time to discuss changes in your habits; send me a photo of each meeting. These meetings are completely private between you and your partner, and you will sign confidentiality agreements to keep the conversations private. You will journal nightly by mentioning 1-2 choices or habits that day and reporting any mistakes or rule breaking. Journals may also be kept private if you prefer it that way, but you must prove that you are

journaling each week. At the end of this stage, you will submit a creative report on your experience.

If you choose to decline participating in this project, you will instead write 4-6 page double-spaced essay on 4 readings from the course, comparing and evaluating the 4 texts.

Final Oral Exam: 15% of total grade

Your final exam will take the form of an in-office presentation in of a virtue or vice. You will spend a few weeks researching a habit or emotion that has been historically viewed as a virtue in some philosophical tradition. You will come to my office and explain the research you have discovered and its connection to the readings from the semester. You must show the connection between that virtue or vice and at least 5 readings from the course, readings which I will then ask you about in more detail as part of the oral exam.

CLASS POLICIES:

No electronics of any kind are allowed by students during class sessions except by the express permission of the professor.

Often, discussions may be on controversial topics. This does not license anyone to yell at another student or be in any way rude or ill-willed toward another person. I reserve the right to ask anyone to leave at any time for being rude or disruptive.

Late work is always accepted in this course, but only for up to half credit. No-penalty 72-hour emergency extensions will be granted without documented reason if they are requested prior to the deadline. No other extensions will be granted unless official documentation is given by the College to the instructor.

If you need me for any reason, please always feel free to come to my office hours. If you want to make an appointment for a meeting about philosophy **outside** of normal office hours, which I strongly encourage (and which will be used as extra credit for borderline grades), please email me with the possible times for me to choose from, as well as a reason for meeting. If you have **non-philosophical** questions about an assignment and cannot come to normal office hours, please first submit those questions via email to me. Many of the questions about assignment details are already answered on the

prompts or in the syllabus, and those that are not can often be answered via email without a formal meeting. If you email me, please be clear and concise about your question or concern. Expect 48 business hours for an email response. I only respond to work emails during normal work hours.

The syllabus (especially course schedule) is subject to change. Changes and updates of the syllabus will be announced in class and in Canvas with an explanation of reasons or considerations driving the changes. You are responsible for keeping track of any of the changes in course assignments and schedule.

COURSE SCHEDULE

| Class Date | Required Reading #1 | Required Reading #2 / Required |
|------------------|---|--|
| Jan 17 – 19 | Read The Experience Machine | Watch Ready Player One on Republic Book VII Cave Analog |
| Jan 22 – 26 | Read Plato’s Republic Book II excerpt | Read Plato’s Republic Book |
| Jan 29 – Feb 2 | Read The Death of Ivan Ilyich – Tolstoy | Watch Living on Netfli Hutcheson excerpt in cla |
| Feb 5 – 9 | Epictetus, <i>The Enchiridion</i> : Sections I-XI, XXI, XXX, XXXV, XLII, L-LI | <u>Memnon the Philosopher, Or Hun</u> – <u>Voltaire</u> |
| Feb 12 – 16 | Read The Machine Stops – Forster | Confucius – <i>Analects</i> in cl |
| Feb 19 – 23 | Read The Pearl | Read Wolf – Happiness and Mean |
| Feb 26 – Mar 1 | Read Seneca – Letters on Ethics Letters 1-5, 7, 14, 16, 20, 23, 25, 26, 28, 32, 35, 37, 38, 61, 63, and 64 | Watch Gandhi on Prim Read 42, 50, 59 in class |
| Mar 4 – 8 | Read Seneca – Letters on Ethics Letters 66, 67, 69, 74-78, 80, 93, 96, 105, 106, 110, 113, 114, 116, 123, 124 | Watch The Ten Commandments Read 71, 82, 89, 92, 109, 120 |
| Mar 11 – 15 | SPRING BREAK | SPRING BREAK |
| Mar 18 – 22 | Plato’s Symposium | Way of Life Project Begins M |
| Mar 25 – 29 | Read NE Books I-II | Watch Alex Honnold – TedTalk |
| April 1 – 5 | Read NE Book VI | Watch Life is Beautiful |
| April 8 – 12 | Read NE Book VIII | Way of Life Project Ends A Watch Gladiator on Netf |
| April 15 – 19 | Aquinas’s <i>Summa Theologiae</i> ST I-II Q. 62 , II-II Q. 4 , II-II Q. 17 , II-II Q. 23 | Hursthouse – Virtue Theory and class |
| April 22 – 26 | Hursthouse – Applying Virtue Theory to Our Treatment of the Other Animals | Way of Life Creative D |
| April 29 – May 3 | Oral Final Exam | |

UNIVERSAL COURSE POLICIES FLAGLER COLLEGE

Grading Scale:

| “A” = Excellent | | “B” = Above Avg. | | “C” = Average | | “D” = Below Avg. | |
|-----------------|--------|------------------|-------|---------------|-------|------------------|-------|
| A | 100-93 | B+ | 89-87 | C+ | 79-77 | D+ | 69-67 |
| A- | 92-90 | B | 86-83 | C | 76-73 | D | 66-60 |
| | | B- | 82-80 | C- | 72-70 | F | 59-0 |

Class Attendance Policy:

(Faculty have the discretion to determine their own attendance policy – specific course syllabi should state this policy and its consequences. The College-wide policy is below.)

From the Catalog: Flagler College holds all members of our community to the highest academic standards in its pursuit of academic excellence. Regular attendance at classes, laboratories and examinations is fundamental to this commitment. Students are, therefore, expected to attend class as part of their personal responsibility as members of this community.

Individual professors will establish specific attendance policies for each class and publish them in the syllabus at the beginning of every academic semester. Professors must also discuss with students on the first day of class the relationship between attendance, interaction in the classroom, and evaluation in specific courses.

Students have the responsibility to take appropriate action to make up missed work where permitted by the professor's policy. Absences for official college events, for example athletic or club academic travel, must be appropriately documented. Flagler College deeply values and supports the required participation of students in formally sanctioned Flagler College activities. Instructors will provide such students with reasonable accommodations for completing missed exams, quizzes, and other required work. Absences for such events themselves should also not have a detrimental effect on students' grades. All absences should be discussed with the professor in advance when possible.

Academic Honesty:

In keeping with its Core Values - particularly its commitments to “Citizenship with Integrity” and “Transformative Learning” - Flagler College affirms the value of academic honesty and requires all students to adhere to the highest standards of integrity in their academic work. Students are entrusted to be honest in every phase of their academic life and to present as their own work only that which is genuinely theirs. Cheating, plagiarism, violation of test conditions, complicity in dishonest behavior, or other falsification of academic work is a serious breach of College expectations and is subject to immediate disciplinary action.

Plagiarism is defined as any attempt to represent the work of someone or something else – that is to say, a person, computer program, artificial intelligence, or otherwise - as one's own original work. This includes the appropriation of the language, thoughts, or ideas – either literally or in paraphrase – without appropriate notation of the source and in such fashion as to imply that the work is one's own original work. To this end, Flagler College subscribes to [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com), a web-based plagiarism detection service which enables professors to determine if a paper has been documented properly. But Turnitin.com findings are not the only means of determining plagiarism, nor is evidence from that service necessary to substantiate an incident.

Fabrication is defined as the use of created or invented information or research for the purpose of deceiving an instructor or other College personnel. Bribery is defined as the promising, offering,

giving, receiving, or soliciting of any materials, items, or services of value to influence the judgment or conduct of College personnel.

Misrepresentation is defined as giving false information to any College representative with the intent to deceive or gain an unfair advantage. This may include using computer files generated by another person and submitting the information to an instructor as your own work (unless expressly allowed by the instructor).

Instructors should explain to students what constitutes academic dishonesty in relation to particular course requirements. Instructors should also aim to ensure that examinations and quizzes are administered in a fashion that discourages dishonesty. But explicit prohibition of particular forms of academic dishonesty is not a necessary condition of incidents being reported or sanctions levied; academic integrity is a cornerstone of our academic community, and ignorance is not an excuse.

A student guilty of academic dishonesty will be subject to academic sanction for the course in which the incident took place as determined by the Instructor of Record in the course, ranging from Warning to a grade of “F” or “WF” in the overall course. Additional penalty may come at the Administrative level for serious infractions as determined by Academic Affairs, or for repeat offenders – up to and including expulsion from the College. The official actions of the College may be either academic in nature or both academic and disciplinary.

Statement on Disability Accommodations: Flagler College is dedicated to creating an inclusive campus. If you have a disability which requires an accommodation, in order to fully participate in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC), under the direction of Philip A. Pownall, by visiting Library 211, Emailing: disabilityservices@flagler.edu, or calling 904-819-6460.

Title IX Statement: Flagler College seeks to provide an environment that is free from gender discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence. If you have experienced any of these, we encourage you to report the incident. If you inform me of an issue through discussion, private conversation, or a written assignment, I will keep the information as private as I can, but I am required to bring it to the attention of Dr. Jess Kobryn. If you would like to talk to Dr. Kobryn directly, she can be reached at [904-826-8553](tel:904-826-8553) or atjkobryn@flagler.edu. For more information and other reporting options, please refer to the Title IX webpage at www.flagler.edu/title-ix.

In addition, a non-reporting option is to contact our Counseling Services Office, as any conversation will be kept confidential. They can be contacted at atcounseling@flagler.edu or [904-819-6305](tel:904-819-6305).

Notice of Non Discrimination: Flagler College is committed to diversity, inclusion, and pursuit of higher education with adherence to high ethical standards. It is the policy of Flagler College not to discriminate in admission, treatment, or access to, or employment in, its programs or activities on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national origin, age, disability, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or any other protected characteristic.

If you are being or have been discriminated against, please contact Dr. Kobryn at atjkobryn@flagler.edu or [904-826-8553](tel:904-826-8553).

The Learning Resource Center offers free tutoring for all Flagler College students. One-on-one help is available in math, economics, business, accounting, writing, reading, study skills, the natural sciences, French and Spanish. Students can access <http://www.flagler.edu/LRC> in order to make an appointment.