

## PHI 4938: Senior Research Seminar

Spring 2018

W 6:00-8:50 PSY 226

**Instructor:** Dr. Jennifer Mundale

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**Office hours:** Monday 2-4, Thursday 9:30-11:30, by appointment, and online chat as needed.

### **IMPORTANT NOTICE!**

The message below is from The Office of the Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs:

**“As of Fall 2014, all faculty are required to document students’ academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the following academic activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course.... Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.”**

Required Academic Activity:

Take “Attendance Verification Quiz”, in Quizzes area of course website. This quiz will not count toward your course grade. It opens Wednesday, January 10, and closes Wednesday, January 17.

### **Course Description and Prerequisites**

**This is a course for senior Philosophy majors only (other departmental majors with permission of chair or advisor).** If you do not qualify, please drop the course. This course is a “capstone” experience for seniors. It is an advanced seminar, and will be run accordingly. Emphasis will be placed on quality argumentative discourse (written and spoken), analysis of texts, and synthesis of overall philosophical contributions of philosophical works examined.

### **Course Themes and Initial Readings**

The general theme of the course will be “Philosophy from Non-Philosophers”. I intend both parts of that theme seriously, in that we will most assuredly be doing standard philosophy, but many of the authors from which we will draw are not traditionally regarded as philosophers. More specifically, we will examine three such authors: Martin Luther King, Jr., Oliver Sacks, and philosophers writing on the magical world of Harry Potter, created by J.K. Rowling.

#### Part I – “The Philosopher King”, Martin Luther King, Jr.

The beginning of this course coincides with Martin Luther King, Jr., Day. While King is rightly remembered as a civil rights leader, he was also a philosopher, and in the first section of the course, “The Philosopher King”, we address the philosophical content and themes in King’s writings and speeches, both alone and in light of earlier, similar themes as found in Plato.

#### Part II – “The Philosophical Neurologist”, Oliver Sacks

Next, we consider another important intellectual figure, Dr. Oliver Sacks, with a section on “The Philosophical Neurologist”. Like King, Sacks was not primarily known as a philosopher, but his works and his life are widely recognized to have philosophical depth and importance. They are often read in philosophical courses having to do with Philosophy of Mind, Epistemology, Cognitive Science, Philosophy of Psychology, and Philosophy of Neuroscience.

#### Part III – “The Philosopher of Magic”, J. K. Rowling

In the third section of readings, we will take a trip into pop culture with the philosophy of J.K. Rowling and the magical peoples and worlds she created. If you are not yet familiar with the Harry Potter series, I recommend either reading or

watching it before the last third of the course. Acquaintance with the main characters and larger plot lines should be sufficient. Depending on the level of general class familiarity, I can briefly outline the basic elements of the story needed for each assigned reading, but you would do better to have familiarized yourself with the series ahead of time.

### **Required Texts**

You are not required to purchase any texts for this course. I will make them available through online sources, hardcopy handouts, and distribution through email.

### **Recommended Texts for Assistance with your Research Papers**

- Strunk, Wm. and White, E.B., 2000. *The Elements of Style*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Booth, et al. 2016. *The Craft of Research*, Fourth Edition (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing).

### **Basis for Course Grade**

Weekly Quizzes – 3% each, keep best 5 – total 15%

Test 1, February 7th – 15%

Test 2, March 7th – 15%

Test 3, April 18th – 15%

Class participation – 10%

Final Research Paper – 30%

**Optional** - You will have the opportunity to complete a research presentation, on the subject of your research paper, during the final exam week meeting, worth *up to* 10 extra credit points on your paper.

### **Tests**

There will be three semester tests, each scheduled at the completion of each of the three parts of the course (see course schedule, below). These tests will be mixed format, including some objective-style questions as well as at least one essay, and possibly some short answer questions. I will distribute a review sheet well in advance of each test, and you will have time in the class before the test to ask review questions. During the test, if you need to leave the room before you complete it, you may go, but you must give up your test as is, and will not be allowed to change it upon your return. Students who arrive late on test day will not be allowed to take the test unless no student has yet left the classroom. If no student has left the room, you will be allowed to take the test without any penalty to your grade, but you will not be given extra time to complete it.

### **Makeup Policy**

**If you miss a test, you will not automatically be granted a make-up.** Makeups will be given only in exceptional circumstances, with substantial, written documentation, from a competent authority (physician, coach, counselor, etc.) Additionally, you must contact me within 3 calendar days of the missed test in order for me to consider granting a makeup: note that “contact” means actually discussing the matter with me, not merely leaving me a message or an e-mail. **If granted, the make-up will likely be more difficult than the original that was missed, and will be given at the end of the semester.** Alternatively, if you anticipate having to be absent on a test day, and have a legitimate reason for your absence, see me well ahead of time, and if possible, I will arrange for you to take it early. Unexcused absence from a test will result in a score of zero for the missed test.

There will be **no makeups for the quizzes**, since you will have the opportunity to drop your two lowest quiz scores.

### **Participation, Attendance, and Preparation (See also Class Decorum, below)**

Regular attendance, thoughtful preparation and proper class decorum (see below) will be essential to your successful completion of this course. You are responsible for any missed material, including announcements made in class. If you do miss something, I suggest consulting with a reliable student to obtain copies of his/her notes. Additionally, you are welcome to consult me during office hours to review material you may have missed, or to ask any questions you may have.

Your class participation grade is based on your performance in 2 components: Preparation (as evidenced by level of contribution to class discussion, judged both qualitatively and quantitatively), and attendance (see below). **Expect to be called on from time to time to answer questions about the assigned material.** For attendance, the table below shows you the relationship between the number of classes missed and the **\*best attainable** score for overall class participation that you can hope to achieve with a given number of missed classes. Please note that “best attainable” score means just that: if you do not regularly and actively participate while you are present, you can expect a much lower score than what is listed as the “best attainable” score.

It is your responsibility to make sure you have signed the attendance sheet. If you come in late, see me after class, and I will add you to the sheet with a note that you were late. Two late attendances or early departures will count as 1 absence (assuming you were there for at least half the class). Generally, I will not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences since there are so few classes that substantial absences amount to simply not participating in the course. Contact me ahead of time if you believe you will have justified reason for missing more than 1 class, such as for participation in a sport or other recognized University activity, and we will discuss your particular situation. (In other words, don’t wait until the end of the semester to try to argue that several of your absences were supposed to have been excused – it won’t work). Similarly, make sure you have signed the attendance sheet every day that you attend; it won’t count if you tell me afterwards that you were there on a given day but simply forgot to sign the attendance sheet.

Number of classes missed	Percentage of course missed (Based on 15 total class meetings)	Best attainable* class participation score (see above)
0-1	0-6.7%	100% (A)
2	13.3%	90% (A-)
3	20%	80% (B-)
4	26.7%	70% (C-)
5	33.3%	60% (D-)
6 or more	40%	0 (F)

### Email (Not Canvas)

I will communicate official course notices to you through your Knight’s e-mail. UCF regards your Knight’s e-mail as an official means of contacting you and you are responsible for anything I send via e-mail. Please make sure to check it regularly. After you are officially enrolled in the class, claiming “I never received the email” will not be sufficient excuse for not knowing the content of class emails. **I do not use Canvas mail** (course website mail). Messages sent to it will not be acknowledged.

### Class Decorum

Everyone is expected to maintain **positive classroom decorum**. Disagreement and debate in the exchange of philosophical ideas are natural and encouraged, but you must observe a respectful attitude toward others in the class. As a matter of common courtesy, please remember to turn off your cell phones during class!

Any form of disruptive or discourteous behavior, including lack of attention to class (internet surfing, texting, or otherwise mentally checking out), repeated lateness and/or early departures, leaving and returning outside of break time, will not be tolerated, and may result in being marked absent for the class, an overall lower course grade, failure of the course, referral to the Office of Student Conduct and/or dismissal from the course, depending on the nature and severity of the behavior.

If you know you will have to leave class early or if you have a genuinely urgent situation, please discuss it with me. Consider what your general behavior and attitude convey about you, particularly to those who may know little else about you outside of the classroom.

### **Research Paper (See also separate handout detailing the paper requirements)**

It is a departmental policy that all 4000-level courses require students to write a research paper, and I support this policy. Also, since this course functions as a senior “capstone” course, you are required to write a substantial research paper of at least **4,5000** words (approximately 15-16 pages of text), **not** counting footnotes/endnotes, bibliography, cover page, appendices, or anything other than the main text.

You are required to first submit an acceptable thesis statement, followed by a rough draft that includes the approved thesis statement, outline, annotated bibliography in progress, and a representative sample of the paper. Failure to submit a timely and acceptable draft will result in the reduction of your final paper grade by an entire letter grade (e.g., an “A” paper will become a “B” paper). Turning in a paper with an unapproved thesis will result in a score of zero for the paper and therefore failure in the course.

Final papers are due in **both** hard copy and in digital form to Turnitin.com at the final exam week class meeting on **Wednesday, April 25th**. Papers turned in late will be downgraded 5 points per calendar day, (e.g., an “A” paper of 95 that is 1 day late becomes an “A-” paper of 90, two days late and it becomes a “B” paper of 85, and so on), and I will not accept any papers later than Monday, April 30th. Papers must be date stamped by the front desk staff if turned in outside of class.

Please note that it is not acceptable to turn in recycled papers that you have written for other courses or submitted to this course in past attempts: this constitutes self-plagiarism. You will be given a separate handout that addresses the paper requirement in more detail and you should consult it closely.

**Students who do not adequately complete the research paper requirement (that is, students who do not achieve a score of 65%, a “D” or better on their papers) will receive *no higher grade than a D in the class, irrespective of their grades on the other components of the course.***

### **Minimum Required Grade for this Course to Count Toward Graduation Requirements:**

In order for this course to fulfill the requirements for the B.A. degree in Philosophy, you must attain a grade of “C” or better. A “C-” or lower is not sufficient, and you will have to retake the course in order to graduate.

### **Cheating and Plagiarism**

I do not tolerate cheating or plagiarism and will punish cheaters to the fullest extent allowed through the Office of Student Conduct. If you don’t have enough integrity to do your own work, drop the class now and re-examine your purpose in life and at UCF. Final research papers will be processed through Turnitin.com. The following guidelines are reproduced for your information from the UCF Golden Rule (<http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/conduct.html>):

#### “Academic Dishonesty/Cheating

A. Cheating is a violation of student academic behavior standards. The common forms of cheating include:

1. Unauthorized assistance: communication to another through written, visual, or oral means. The presentation of material which has not been studied or learned, but rather was obtained through someone else’s efforts and used as part of an examination, course assignment or project. The unauthorized possession or use of examination or course related material may also constitute cheating.
2. Plagiarism: whereby another’s work is deliberately used or appropriated without any indication of the source, thereby attempting to convey the impression that such work is the student’s own. Any student failing to properly credit ideas or materials taken from another is plagiarizing.

B. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.”

## Course Schedule

Week & Date	Assignments (May vary some depending on class progress).
1, January 10	Syllabus, student surveys, student Introductions, begin Part I of course, "The Philosopher King".
2, January 17	<p><b>Quiz 1 over first three readings Part I readings, below</b></p> <p>Readings are all posted under "Pages" section of course website</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- King, "<a href="#">Letter from Birmingham Jail</a>" </li> <li>- <a href="#">A Public Statement by Eight Alabama Clergymen, also known as "A Call for Unity"</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">King, text of "Mountaintop" speech</a> </li> </ul> <p>As time permits, begin works below (Plato in relation to King):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Class handout, "King and Socrates"</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">Apology</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">Crito</a> </li> </ul>
3, January 24	<p>Finish readings below and complete <b>Quiz 2</b> over same:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">Class handout, "King and Socrates"</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">Apology</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">Crito</a> </li> </ul>
4, January 31	<p><b>Quiz 3</b> over all Part I readings (King and Plato related).</p> <p>Review for Test 1 (See "<a href="#">Review for Test 1</a>" posted under "<a href="#">Pages</a>" ) section of course website.</p> <p>Discussion of thesis statements, due February 14th.</p>
5, February 7	<p><b>Test 1 (First 75 minutes of class only).</b></p> <p><b>Begin Part II of course, "The Philosophical Neurologist", on Oliver Sacks, begin <a href="#">Gratitude</a></b> .</p> <p>As time permits, continue with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat</a> </li> <li>- Excerpt from <a href="#">The Mind's Eye</a> </li> <li>- Excerpt from <a href="#">Oaxaca Journal</a> </li> </ul>
6, February 14	<p><b>Thesis Statements due today</b></p> <p><b>Continue with Part II (Sacks) readings:</b></p> <p><a href="#">Gratitude</a> </p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">The Man Who Mistook His Wife For A Hat</a> </li> <li>- Excerpt from <a href="#">The Mind's Eye</a> </li> <li>- Excerpt from <a href="#">Oaxaca Journal</a> </li> </ul>
7, February 21	Continue with Part II (Sacks) readings, above.
8, February 28	<p><b>Quiz 4 over Sacks readings</b></p> <p>Finish Sacks readings, Review for Test 2</p>

9, March 7	<b>Test 2 (First 75 minutes of class only)</b>
10, March 14	* * * HAPPY SPRING BREAK * * *
11, March 21	<p><b>Rough Drafts Due Today.</b></p> <p>Begin Part III of course, “The Philosopher of Magic”, J. K. Rowling.  - <a href="#">“The Magic of Philosophy” (introduction to Rowling and philosophy).</a></p> <p>As time permits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <a href="#">“Why Harry and Socrates Decide to Die”</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">“Dumbledore, Plato, and the Lust for Power”</a> </li> <li>- <a href="#">“Is Dumbledore Gay? Who’s to Say?”</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">“The Mirror of Erised: Why We Should Heed Dumbledore’s Warning”</a></li> <li>- <a href="#">“Voldemort’s Agents, Malfoy’s Cronies, and Hagrid’s Chums: Friendship in Harry Potter”</a> </li> </ul>
12, March 28	<p>Continue with Part III Readings, above</p> <p><b>Quiz 5</b> over Part III Readings to date</p>
13, April 4	<p>Continue with Part III Readings, above</p> <p><b>Quiz 6</b> over Part III Readings to date</p>
14, April 11	<p><b>Quiz 7</b> over all Part III readings</p> <p><b>Review for Test 3</b></p>
15, April 18	<p><b>Test 3</b>  Discussion of Research Papers</p>
<p><b>FINAL EXAM WEEK MEETING: Wednesday, April 25th, 2018, 7:00 PM – 9:50 PM</b></p> <p><b>Final Research Papers due</b>  Departmental Exit Exam and Survey (does not affect course grade)  Optional Research Presentations for Extra Credit</p>	

**Important University Dates**

Classes Begin	Monday, January 8, 2018
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	Monday, January 15, 2018
Late Registration	Monday, January 8, 2018 - Friday, January 12, 2018
Drop/Swap Deadline on myUCF	Thursday, January 11, 2018 11:59 PM
Add Deadline on myUCF	Friday, January 12, 2018 11:59 PM
Spring Break	Monday, March 12, 2018 - Saturday, March 17, 2018
Withdrawal Deadline	Wednesday, March 21, 2018 11:59 PM
Classes End	Monday, April 23, 2018
Final Examination Period	Wednesday, April 25, 2018 - Tuesday, May 1, 2018
Grades Due in myUCF	Friday, May 4, 2018 12:00 PM