It concerns us to know the purposes we seek in life, for then, like archers aiming at a definite mark, we shall be more likely to attain what we want.

--Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*

**Instructor contact information:**

Dr. Shelley Park  
Department of philosophy  
PSY 269  
407-823-2273  
e-mail: Shelley.Park@ucf.edu. I would prefer you contact me via course mail at web courses.

**Course description:**

In this course, we will examine a variety of philosophical concepts and themes, focusing on the nature of the good life (a classical philosophical concern). We will explore the various theories of the good life as well as other philosophical issues in light of their interplay with popular culture and everyday life. More specifically, in this online section of Introduction to Philosophy we will examine ethical, social and political, aesthetic, epistemological, and metaphysical issues through a philosophical reading of the Hunger Games trilogy that brings the dystopian world of Panem into contact with our world and brings protagonists such as Katniss Everdeen and Peeta Melark into conversation with philosophers from the western tradition such as Plato, Aristotle, Seneca, Rousseau, Locke, Hobbes, Foucault, Bourdieu, and Butler.
**Required texts:**


Classical and contemporary philosophical texts and relevant videos available online, as listed on the course schedule and in the course modules.

**Course requirements:**

**Discussions: 50%**

Philosophy happens through dialogue. Thus 50% of your course grade will reflect the quantity, quality and professionalism of your participation in our philosophical discussions this term. Deadlines are on the course schedule; quantity and quality expectations are provided in discussion forum instructions and grading rubrics. Your discussion grade will be broken down as follows:

- **Introductory and Concluding discussions: 15%**

  During the first two weeks to of class and the last week of class, everyone is expected to participate in certain warm-up and closing discussion forums. These mandatory exercises are described in greater detail in the course modules for weeks 1, 2, and 14.

- **Reading discussions: 35%**

  From Weeks 3-13, there will be 10 discussion forums devoted to questions and issues arising from weekly assigned readings (essays from *The Hunger Games and Philosophy* anthology plus classical philosophical readings related to these essays as available online). You may choose any seven of these forums in which to participate, depending upon which topics and readings are of greatest interest to you. Each of these discussion forums will be worth 5% and you will be evaluated on the quantity and quality of your participation, as well as your professionalism (i.e., your ability to meet deadlines, proofread your work, etc.). If you choose to participate in more than seven forums, I will record your seven highest grades.
Midterm: 20%

There will be a midterm exam on material covered prior to spring break. This exam will include both objective questions and short answer or essay questions. In terms of content, it will focus on primary concepts and themes covered. Please pay close attention to all terms which are italicized in *The Hunger Games and Philosophy* anthology, to all philosophers and philosophical views mentioned in the anthology (especially but not exclusively those philosophers on which additional materials have been assigned), and to specific examples from the trilogy that illustrate philosophical concepts and theories. Please note that you will be examined on *all* assigned readings, regardless of whether or not you have chosen to participate in a given week’s discussion. See course calendar for the deadline by which to submit your exam.

Final exam: 30%

A final exam, scheduled during the final exam period, will be comprehensive but emphasize material covered after midterm. See course schedule for date. Similar considerations apply here to those stipulated for the midterm exam. Both the midterm and final will be timed and open book.

Grading Policies:

I use a plus/minus scale for grading as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Minimum Average</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A (Exceptional, Outstanding, Wow!)</td>
<td>93% or better</td>
<td>C (Satisfactory, Meets expectations)</td>
<td>73-76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89%</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B (Very good, exceeds expectations)</td>
<td>83-86%</td>
<td>D (Below satisfactory, fails to meet basic expectations)</td>
<td>63-66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82%</td>
<td>D-</td>
<td>60-62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79%</td>
<td>F (Fail)</td>
<td>Less than 60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Academic Integrity: There is a zero tolerance policy for cheating and plagiarism. Cheating occurs when someone else does your work for you or gives you test answers, etc. Plagiarism occurs when you quote or paraphrase someone else’s words or borrow their ideas and fail to cite your source. It is a form of cheating because this failure (whether intentional or unintentional) represents someone else’s work as your own. It is an infraction of the student code of conduct and will result in a referral to the Office of Student conduct and an automatic "F" on that assignment. If you have questions regarding when or how to cite something, please consult the MLA style guide, the University Writing Center, or your professor.
Disability accommodations: If you need accommodations, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services (SDS) who will inform me how to best provide individualized accommodations consistent with your documented disability. To be eligible for disability related accommodations, students must have a disability as defined by applicable federal and state laws and documented by an appropriate health care provider or professional.

Late Submissions: Late submissions will not be given full credit unless you have an excuse recognized by UCF policy, e.g. hospitalization, death or life-threatening illness of a family member, or other documented medical excuse. Other legitimate reasons for absence (e.g. religious holidays, UCF related travel) are not excuses for late submissions; work should be turned in early when you know you will be unable to submit it on the deadline. Please also note that a broken computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for submitting an assignment late. Back up your work and avoid procrastination in order to meet deadlines.

Extra-credit: Do not ask for extra-credit. Do your best throughout the class and you will not need it. If I decide a substantial portion of the class would benefit from an additional opportunity, it will be offered to everyone. I will not select you out for special treatment. Don’t ask.

Course Schedule:

The course schedule, including topics, readings and assignment due dates can be accessed at the online course calendar.