

**Assignment Overview:**

In this extra credit assignment, students will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful conversations with staff members from various departments across the school. Through structured interviews, students will explore their interviewees' perspectives on life's purpose and meaning, using a series of questions provided by the instructor. This assignment must be uploaded to Canvas by **11:59PM on October 30, 2023**.

**Assignment Steps:**

1. **Selecting an Interviewee:** Students should choose a staff member at the school who is not part of the philosophy department. This can include staff from different academic departments, administrative roles, support services, or any area of interest.
2. **Interview Questions (listed on next page):** The questions on the next page are meant to be a starting point. Follow-up questions, questions of your own, etc. are encouraged.
3. **Conducting the Interview:** Students should schedule and conduct interviews with their chosen staff members. You should aim for meaningful and insightful conversations, taking notes or recording with permission.
4. **Summarizing the Interview:** In their written assignment, students should summarize the key points, insights, and perspectives shared by the staff member during the interview. You can also include direct quotes if relevant.
5. **Personal Reflection:** After summarizing the interview, students should reflect on their own thoughts and reactions to the interviewee's perspective. Do you agree or disagree with certain points? How did the interview impact your own thinking about the meaning of life?
6. **Staff Member's Perspective:** Students are encouraged to share any observations they made about how the interviewee engaged with questions of meaning. Did the staff member wrestle with these questions, and if so, how?
7. **Canvas Submission:** Students must submit their typed summaries and reflections on Canvas.

**Grading Criteria:**

Grading for this assignment can be based on the quality of the summary, the depth of reflection, and the extent to which students engage with the interviewee's perspective. Additionally, you can assess the level of insight demonstrated in their personal reflections.

This assignment not only promotes deeper thinking about the meaning of life but also fosters connections between students and staff members from diverse backgrounds. It encourages a broader dialogue on existential and philosophical questions within the school community.

**Interview questions:**

What do you believe gives life its deepest meaning or purpose?

Are there specific life experiences or moments that have significantly influenced your perspective on the meaning of life?

How do your personal values and beliefs contribute to your understanding of life's purpose?

Do you think individuals have a responsibility to actively seek meaning in their lives, or is it something that naturally emerges over time?

Is there anything that could happen in your life that would make you view life as meaningless?

In your role at the school, how do you see the pursuit of meaning and purpose manifesting in the lives of students or colleagues?

Have you ever grappled with questions related to the human condition, mortality, or the existence of suffering, and if so, how did you navigate these questions?

How do you balance the demands of your professional life with your personal search for meaning?

Do you find inspiration or guidance in philosophical or spiritual perspectives when contemplating the meaning of life, and if yes, which ones resonate with you?

Have there been moments in your life when you felt a deep sense of purpose or significance? Can you describe one of those moments?

What advice or insights would you offer to students who are exploring questions of meaning and purpose in their own lives?