

Teaching Portfolio

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Table of Contents

Teaching Philosophy	2
Curriculum Vitae	5
Student Evaluations	11
Meaning of Life - Section 001 - Fall 2024	11
Meaning of Life - Section 002 - Fall 2024	16
Meaning of Life - Section 009 - Fall 2024	21
Philosophy of Video Games - Section 001 - Fall 2024	26
Sample Syllabi	31
Ethical Theory	31
Meaning of Life	39
Class Structure	47
Introductory / Lower Level Courses	47
Advanced / Upper Level Courses	48
Examination Samples	49
Ethical Theory - Exam 1 (blue book exam)	49
Meaning of Life - Exam 1	50

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy centers on nurturing intellectual curiosity and an appreciation of the philosophical process. I aim to cultivate a classroom environment where students develop essential skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking, while feeling encouraged to explore and share their ideas creatively and confidently. A key component of my approach involves integrating Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools into specific assessments, allowing students to explore both the potential and limitations of this technology within the context of our course content. My concrete steps to ensure such courses meet these goals are described below.

Nurturing Foundational Skills in Introductory Courses

In introductory and lower-level courses, I prioritize helping students acquire reading abilities, writing skills, and foundational critical thinking skills. Each week, students engage with assignments that require the submission of annotated notes. Each class begins with a student presentation over that day's reading which focuses on the student attempting to reconstruct the author's reading in standard form.

To support diverse student backgrounds, I provide structured handouts that detail the format and expectations for thesis statements and papers. This clear guidance helps all students, regardless of their educational, linguistic, or cultural backgrounds, to organize their thoughts and meet academic standards. Additionally, my partnership with the Samuel Bak Museum has allowed for the creation of a collaborative assignment which encourages students to apply course content to real-world contexts, fostering a collaborative relationship with the museum and enhancing their learning experience.

My introductory course exams are all in-person and handwritten. The first exam bridges the gap between high school and college exams, with a focus on multiple-choice questions and definitions, followed by short-answer questions. Subsequent exams increasingly emphasize critical thinking and writing, with fewer points allocated to multiple-choice and definitions.

To achieve this, I utilize artificial intelligence (AI) in my exams. I prompt an AI using a predetermined prompt based on course readings at the beginning of the exam. After completing the initial multiple-choice and definition sections, students critically analyze the AI's response, identifying its strengths and weaknesses. This exercise enhances their understanding of the material while developing crucial AI evaluation skills. This method not only addresses plagiarism concerns but also boosts students' confidence in their analytical abilities and critical engagement with AI.

Deepening Analytical Skills in Advanced Courses

In advanced and upper-level courses, I expand upon the foundational skills developed in introductory courses. Students must still do their weekly annotated notes submissions, and nearly each class begins with a student presenting their reconstruction of the arguments from the day's reading. An additional assignment format is introduced in advanced courses which require the creation of visual representation of arguments twice during the semester. These assignments allow the students to create something as straightforward as a flowchart to represent an author's argument, but can also be as fanciful as a comic strip or short movie. This approach encourages critical and creative thinking, ensuring that students can articulate complex ideas in various formats.

Similar to the lower-level courses, AI plays a role in upper-level assessment. However, instead of analyzing a single AI summary, students are presented with multiple AI-generated summaries of different perspectives relevant to the course content. They are then required to select a specific number of these summaries and critically assess them for accuracy, completeness, and potential biases, demonstrating a nuanced understanding of the material and the complexities of AI output.

Addressing Plagiarism and Encouraging Authentic Work

While I recognize the potential of AI as a learning tool, I also acknowledge the challenges it presents. The integration of AI into specific assessments, as described above, directly addresses these challenges by shifting the focus from simply generating content to critically evaluating it. This approach encourages authentic engagement with the material and discourages passive reliance on AI. Furthermore, in-person components of exams and assignments, such as in-class scenario analysis in introductory courses and the diverse representation assignments in advanced courses, further ensure that students develop genuine analytical and creative skills.

Emphasizing Transparency and Support Through Scaffolding

Teaching literature plays a significant role in my course design. I am committed to providing explicit and transparent explanations of grading criteria and assignment expectations. In introductory courses, the difficulty of readings gradually increases, applying scaffolding principles to support students' learning. In advanced courses, while readings are challenging from the start, I ensure clarity and transparency in assignments and provide curated feedback.

Scaffolding is particularly beneficial for students from diverse educational, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. In introductory courses especially, I have found that by starting with simple assignments and progressively increasing complexity, that I help all students build confidence and competence. This structured approach ensures that every student, regardless of their background, can achieve success and feel comfortable engaging with the material.

Fostering Brainstorming and Intellectual Growth

My goal is to create a classroom environment conducive to exploration of philosophical ideas, and an appreciation of the philosophical process. I encourage open-ended thinking, creativity, and the free exchange of ideas, helping students develop the skills and knowledge needed for advanced academic pursuits. By fostering a supportive and intellectually stimulating environment, I strive to empower students to reach their full potential and prepare for future academic challenges.

Conclusion

My teaching philosophy revolves around inspiring intellectual exploration and fostering brainstorming. Through structured assignments, diverse representation methods, the strategic integration of AI, and a focus on scaffolding, I aim to support all students, especially those from diverse backgrounds. By creating an inclusive and engaging classroom environment, I help students develop essential skills and a passion for philosophical inquiry in the age of AI.

Curriculum Vitae

Kevin Patton Curriculum Vitae

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Academic Appointments

2019-2020, 2022 - Present	Instructor, University of Nebraska-Omaha
2020	Instructor, Kansas State University
2016 - 2019, 2021	Adjunct Professor, University of Nebraska-Omaha

Education

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
PhD, Philosophy, August 2024

University of Nebraska-Lincoln
MA, Philosophy, May 2023

University of Nebraska-Omaha
BA, Philosophy *cum laude*, *Phi Beta Kappa*, May 2012

AOS

Epistemology, Metaethics

AOC

Philosophy of Language, Value Theory, and Medical Ethics.

Teaching Experience

University of Nebraska-Omaha, Instructor

Undergraduate Courses

1. PHIL3960: Kant: Ethics and Values (1x)
2. PHIL3230: The Philosophy of Video Games (1x)
3. PHIL3070: Leadership Ethics in Practice (2x)
4. PHIL3060: Values and Virtues (1x)

- 5. PHIL3050: Ethical Theory (5x)
- 6. PHIL2300: Human Values in Medicine (2x)
- 7. PHIL2030: Introduction to Ethics (20x)
- 8. PHIL1210: Critical Reasoning / Introduction to Mathematical Logic (5x)
- 9. PHIL1010: Meaning of Life (6x)

Kansas State University, Instructor

- 1. PHIL365: Medical Ethics (2x)

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Instructor

- 1. PHIL106: Introduction to Ethics (2x)
- 2. PHIL110: Introduction to Logic (1x)

Mentoring and Supervision

University of Nebraska-Omaha, Instructor

Independent Studies

- 1. PHIL3960 Kant: Ethics and Values, Spring 2024

Taught an independent study on Kant's ethical and axiological commitments. This independent study required meeting with the student twice a week to discuss assigned readings, and to review any written work. Ultimately, this resulted in the student authoring three papers. The first two were shorter and narrowly focused responses to specific issues at play for a Kantian. The second of these two papers was developed into a longer paper which sought to argue that Christine Korsgaard's Kantian ethics could, with certain modifications, overcome a specific objection. This paper is intended to also serve as the foundation for a writing seminar paper (a course required for the philosophy major) for the student.

Honors Contracts

- 1. PHIL2030 Introduction to Ethics, Fall 2023

Supervised an honors contract for a student which focused on a detailed reading of G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* in order to assess Moore's intuitionism. This culminated in weekly reading summaries for relevant chapters and sections of the *Principia*, and ultimately into a research paper where the student concluded that Moore's intuitionism was internally inconsistent. This paper is intended to also serve as the foundation for a writing seminar paper (a course required for the philosophy major) for the student.

- 2. PHIL2300 Human Values in Medicine, Fall 2022

Supervised an honors contract which focused on issues related to reducing cases of SIDS across culturally diverse societies. This culminated in an in class student-led lecture that described the current state of research on the issue, and

possible avenues of future research. This project tied in with the student's larger research project in preparation for medical school applications.

3. PHIL2300 Human Values in Medicine, Fall 2022

Supervised an honors contract which focused on the lack of accessibility for, and economic impact of, IVF on patients. This culminated in the student lecturing for a class on the topic. This project tied in with the student's larger research focus on the biological and ethical aspects of medical care in preparation for the student's medical school application.

Service

1. Judge and Moderator for Omaha Ethics Bowl, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2025
2. Lead Trainer on Generative AI Training, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Fall 2024 - Present
3. Co-Chair of Web Development, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024 - Present
4. Co-Chair of Advertising and Promotion, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024 - Present
5. Faculty Advisor, UNO eSports Team, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024 - Present
6. Creator and Administrator of Department Newsletter, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024 - Present
7. Student Summer Reading Group, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2023
8. Judge for Omaha Ethics Bowl, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska at Omaha 2022
9. Graduate Student Colloquium Organizer, Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2015 - 2016

Conference Presentations

1. "Open Source Database Indexing as a Means of Assisting Non-Native English Speaking Students in Learning Philosophy."

The 21st Biennial AAPT Conference on Teaching Philosophy, Saginaw, MI. July, 2016

Research Grants and Awards

1. The OpenAI Challenge Approval, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Spring 2024
2. Affordable Content Grant Approval, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024
3. The OpenAI Challenge Approval, University of Nebraska at Omaha, Fall 2024
4. Tier 2 AI Jumpstart Grant, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024
5. Online Program Grant for the creation of the course *PHIL3070: Leadership Ethics in Practice*, University of Nebraska at Omaha, 2024
6. Hinman Scholarship and Fellowship Award Philosophy Department, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2017
7. Teaching Assistantship, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, 2013-2017
8. Outstanding Teaching Award, Teaching Recognition Award from UNL Student Organization, 2013

Professional Memberships

American Philosophical Association

American Association of Philosophy Teachers

Association for the Advancement of Artificial Intelligence

Graduate Coursework

Epistemology and Metaphysics

- Theory of Knowledge, Albert Casullo
- Seminar, The Epistemology of Disagreement, Aaron Bronfman
- Seminar, Epistemic Norms as Social Norms, David Henderson
- Quine's Philosophy, Edward Becker
- Seminar, The Metaphysics of Dispositions, Jennifer McKittrick
- Seminar, Grounding, Jeniffer McKittrick
- Metaphysics, Joseph Mendola
- Seminar, Philosophy of Mind, Joseph Mendola
- Reading Group on Natural Kinds, Edward Becker

Philosophy of Language and Logic

- Formal Logic, Reina Hayaki
- Seminar, Fictional Names, Reina Hayaki
- Philosophy of Language, Edward Becker

Ethics and Ethical Theory

- Seminar, Ethical Theory and Reasons, Mark van Roojan
- Advanced Ethics, Aaron Bronfman
- Seminar, Internal and External Reasons, John Brunero
- Seminar, Metaethics, Aaron Bronfman

History

- Ancient Philosophy, Harry Ide
- Kant's Critical Philosophy, Colin McLear
- Self-Knowledge in Kant & Early German Idealism, Colin McLear

Dissertation

Title: The Value of Knowledge and its Problems
Committee: David Henderson (committee chair)
William Melanson (reader)
Aaron Bronfman (reader)
Edward Becker (reader)

This dissertation answers the three value problems in epistemology. These three problems require an answer as to how knowledge is more valuable 1) than mere true belief, 2) any of the proper subsets of knowledge, and 3) in kind than that which falls short of knowledge. The methodology used to provide an answer to these problems relies on the arguments put forth in a rarely discussed paper from Ward Jones. In short, the Jonesian approach can be summed up as the view that epistemic axiology and analysis ought to be kept separate. The Jonesian framework instead looks outside of the necessary and sufficient conditions of knowledge to find properties of knowledge which, though contingent, can explain the distinctive value of knowledge. This framework, though remarkably robust, requires going against what I consider to be the orthodox approach to the problems. This orthodox approach relies on two axiological assumptions. The first is that every component of an analysis on knowledge must provide independent value to knowledge. The second assumption is that the value of knowledge cannot be derived from factors excluded from an analysis of knowledge. Once these assumptions are appropriately discarded, the Jonesian view has a straightforward answer to the first problem. Answering the second requires assessing Jonathan Kvanvig's claim that a satisfied Gettier condition contributes no independent value. While I agree with Kvanvig regarding a satisfied Gettier condition, I will argue that an unsatisfied Gettier condition is not likewise neutral; it contributes disvalue. With that distinction in place, a solution to the second problem follows immediately. The third value problem, however, is a different kind of problem altogether. Answering it requires not only the Jonesian framework, but also a novel account of how we determine final value. Once this account is offered, a Jonesian answer to the tertiary problem follows immediately. This dissertation closes by applying the Jonesian framework to an argument that claims there can be no modal conditions on knowledge due to such conditions failing to help answer the value problems. This claim will be found wanting.

- helpful
 - Dr. Patton is a very cool teacher. His way of explaining the readings we did was very easy to understand. He made us think deeply on what we thought about it.
 - as a first year undergrad, Kevin was by far my favorite professor so far. Not only is his class great, but so is he. Looking forward to have him in the future and would definitely recommend him to other students!
- He was very enthusiastic and very funny.
- Kevin's enthusiasm and humor were driving factors in making me want to show up to class every week. I actually wanted to be involved in class discussions, and he made it easy to do so. This is also the first class in a long time that I didn't necessarily have trouble doing the readings outside of class for. The pre-exam review days were definitely helpful; without those, I probably would not have done as well in this class.
- very genuine personality, great professor truthfully
- Kevin Patton characteristics is he very nice and his work is easy to follow. He explain everything again and again so students understand. his class is easy but the only hard part is exam. He teach excellent and he supportive with everything.
- Very Good at Writing Practice Exams that will be actually helpful for studying the material on the Exam it is for
- very entertaining and understanding when it comes to difficulties
- The way he taught made it intriguing and interesting.

- none
- Reorganize the reading to match the weeks we are in.
- I appreciate the idea of leaving the course syllabus slightly ambiguous as to allow for flexibility within the course, despite our discussions in class to make it less so. Sometimes, preparing for the exam questions proved to be difficult, as the bullet points listed on the review/answer key were difficult to expand upon in 2-3 paragraphs, but not impossible. I think that may just be the nature of the content, though, as many of the readings in the class were dense with information.
- not much to be honest
- Kevin Patton don't need to work on anything because i enjoy his class and he did really good.
- Grade quicker.



- funny friendly no filter (this is a good thing) made students feel heard and did not leave anyone out
- The course was very broad and explored many different view points while also revolving around the subject of the class. Dr. Patton was very flexible with students if needed and was always there for students to ask questions whether they were course related or general life related.
- Kevin did an excellent job at not taking a personal perspective to the different things we were learning. He simply took the perspective of the person whom we all did not agree and it made discussions so much deeper and more thoughtful. I think he really enjoys teaching about this subject and he is very engaging. He has great jokes, even if no one laughs too much. He makes class a fun one to go to!
- his humor
- He's funny, his trump impression

- i think hes doing everything right but if i had to retake this i would love to see more group work that way students could potentially make friends
- I do not think the course nor Dr. Patton need to be improved or improve on anything. The only thing I would suggest is for Dr. Patton to teach higher level classes every semester such as his religion one.
- Nothing :P
- n/a
- his hand writing with the board



- The fact that Kevon Patton brought high energy to class every day made me want to show up to class each time. It helped me to show more interest in the subject as well. • His humor and ability to argument for a specific view/theory.
- I like how he has a sense of humor and joked with the class while also giving a good presentation about the reading. He is very passionate about the subject and wants the students to get something from the class too.
- Mr.Patton was an interesting intructor he was funny...even though I don't really think he is funny he tried and that was amusing to watch. He cared about his students and wanted us all to do well. He asked us through out the course how we felt things were going and asked for our feedback.
- Hes funny and engages the class

- I think that Kevin has a great method for teaching his classes and he does not have much that needs improved on
- Sometimes the readings can be very long



- Dr. Patton adds humor to every lecture and class discussion. He goes above and beyond to bring in guest speakers who meaningfully contribute to the field of study. • Prof. Patton was a very fun professor. He made the classes fun and interesting. Sometimes the readings were a little long and not the most exciting but his sense of humor made them easier to get through in class. I really appreciate when a professor uses their humor in class and Dr. Patton did a great job of that.
- twas good shit
- Unfortunately, I can't say that anything about Patton or his class was valuable to me or my learning expereince.
- The open discussions

- Organization
- I do think the structure of the class was a little wishy washy. There were a few times assignments would have the wrong due dates on them and that made staying on top of assignments a little confusing and overwhelming. I also think having dates on the syllabus would be extremely helpful.
- I would improve upon the syllabus a bit or at least post the two readings for the week in canvas on Friday the week before. I like to get my homework done as soon as possible to have time to relax. • Dr. Patton needs to focus a lot on his canvas page, especially since he often adjusts assignment timelines verbally but that is rarely ever accurately reflected on canvas. Dr. Patton struggles with communication in a clear manner about assignment changes and even assignment expectations, which is often confusing, especially in the times when readings got off track on the syllabus. In those moments he would get frustrated with the class that no one read what we were actually supposed to read, but really, he should've have been frustrated that he failed to actually communicate expectations of what readings changed rather than just assuming everyone knew that readings would be pushed back if we missed a class. Dr. Patton attempts to be a humorous professor but often his humor just derailed and distracted the class rather than enhanced the class. I definitely felt like I was just wasting my time each week in his class and I wouldn't recommend others to take this class.
- The discussion were mostly good, but sometimes needed more direction. It was good when you went over the readings beforehand. Maybe a short review followed by discussion would be ideal.

Sample Syllabi

Ethical Theory

PHIL3050: Ethical Theory
Spring 2025

Monday & Wednesday 1130am - 1245pm, RH 102

Instructor:	Kevin Patton, PhD 	Department:	Philosophy
Email:	kevinpatton@unomaha.edu	Office:	ASH 205F
Course Website:	https://phil3050.kevinpatton.com	Office Hours	Mon & Wed 1pm - 2pm

Course Description	Course Requirements	Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course description Learning Prerequisites Student Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Required materials and devices Location of course resources on the web Classroom expectations Description of major assignments Grading Course schedule including required readings, and exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grading, late work, and dropping / withdrawing policy Policy on absences Information about student services: Safety information Academic Integrity

Course Description

Course Description

PHIL3050 explores the fascinating (and often perplexing) foundations of morality. We'll tackle theories that challenge the very existence of moral truths, like Error Theory and Emotivism, and grapple with their implications. We'll explore the nature of "goodness" itself, dissecting arguments from renowned thinkers like G.E. Moore. Our journey will take us through the intricate world of value theory, examining the distinctions between intrinsic, extrinsic, and instrumental value. Finally, we'll confront the enigmatic concept of "moral luck," as articulated by Bernard Williams and Thomas Nagel, and wrestle with its potential solutions. Prepare to question your assumptions and dive deep into the philosophical underpinnings of right and wrong.

What Will You Learn?

In this course, you will learn to critically analyze metaethical theories, evaluate arguments about the nature of "goodness" and value, and how moral luck challenges moral appraisal.

Main skills to be developed

- Excellence in expositional writing
- Mastery of annotating
- Argument analysis
- Develop understanding of core metaethical concepts and terms
- Effectively verbalize ideas and criticisms

Learning Outcomes

1. Ability to explain the core arguments and motivations for various metaethical positions
2. Ability to assess arguments for validity and soundness, or cogency and strength.
3. Understand the relationship between metaethics and normative ethics.
4. Ability to engage in respectful discussion and debate with peers.

How will I learn?

This metaethics course prioritizes active learning through structured class sessions designed to develop advanced critical thinking and argumentation skills. Students will analyze assigned readings by reconstructing arguments, presenting them to the class, and engaging in in-depth discussions to evaluate their validity and implications. Guided lectures will delve deeper into the material, encouraging students to actively question assumptions and offer alternative interpretations. Finally, dedicated time for objections and clarifications allows students to refine their analytical skills and engage in respectful debate, fostering a collaborative learning environment where complex philosophical ideas are explored and challenged.

Prerequisites for the course

Either PHIL2030, or 6 hours of PHIL courses, or permission from the instructor.

How to succeed in this course

Active Preparation: Thoroughly read and analyze assigned texts before each class, preparing a formal argument reconstruction to facilitate active participation in discussions.

Engaged Participation: Contribute meaningfully to class discussions by questioning assumptions, offering alternative interpretations, and respectfully debating ideas with both the instructor and peers.

Assignment Submission: Adhere to deadlines for all assignments, recognizing that late submissions may impact your grade and hinder your ability to fully engage with the course material.

Come to Office Hours: If you are struggling to keep up, or find the readings extremely challenging, then coming to speak to me directly during my office hours will be helpful. Also, I have snacks.

Course Requirements

Required Materials

There are no textbooks that you are required to purchase for this course. Class materials, handouts, and supplemental resources will be posted on the course website: <https://phil3050.kevinipatton.com>.

I do not use Canvas except for posting grades, making announcements, and submitting assignments.

Required Devices

There are no required devices for this course.

Classroom expectations

Your preparation for discussion and participation is extremely important for you and your team. Here are some ground rules:

- **This course thrives on mutual respect and active engagement.** As your instructor, I am committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives are valued. I expect you to contribute to this environment by treating each other with courtesy and respect.
- **Remember, learning is an active process.** Your participation in class discussions, activities, and assignments is crucial for developing critical thinking skills and achieving success in this course. Embrace the challenge, step outside your comfort zone, and enjoy the journey of exploring your own thought processes!

Assignments

Assessment of your learning will occur through a variety of venues including the final project, reflection journals, homework assignments, quizzes, application activities, content synthesis, and class/team participation

Annotated Notes: You will be required to submit annotated notes over one of the readings nearly every week. As these will be submitted via Canvas, you can either annotate digitally (e.g. edit in Adobe, Word, Docs) or you may handwrite your notes and then take pictures of those notes and submit those. A handout over this assignment is available on the website.

Argument Presentation: Each student will sign up for one of readings for which they will present to the class their best attempt to reconstruct the author's argument. This will be accompanied by a 10-15 minute assessment of the argument by the student. A handout over this assignment is available on the website.

Argument Visualizations: In addition to writing philosophy, students will also be making their own visual aids over the course of the semester. This can take the form of flow charts, pictures, or even comics (in the style of Existential Comics). A handout over this assignment is available on the website.

Blue Book Exams: Students will take four non-cumulative, in-person exams. These exams must be handwritten and will evaluate both understanding of course material and original thought. One week before each exam, students will receive a study guide.

Grading for this Course

The following table represents how you will demonstrate your learning and how we will assess the degree to which you have done so.

Assignments	Total Points Possible	Percent of Total Grade
Annotated Notes	140	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence color coding standards • Appropriateness of marginal notes 		
Argument Presentation	20	5%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument in standard form • Discussion of argument 		
Argument Visualizations	100	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Originality • Accuracy of the representation 		
Blue Book Exams	400	60%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of answers 		

Grade	Cutoff
A+	100-97
A	96-93
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D+	69-67
D	66-64
D-	63-60
F	<60

Semester Outline

Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advance notice as possible).

Week 1: Foundations	Mon: No Class - MLK Jr. Day Wed: Syllabus & van Roojen, Ch1 & Ch2	
Week 2: Goodness	Mon: Moore, Ch1 Wed: Korsgaard, "Two Distinctions in Goodness"	
Week 3: Skepticism	Mon: Mackie, Ch1 Wed: Ayer, Ch6	Argument Reconstruction: Nadeen O. Argument Reconstruction: Anastasia R.
Week 4: Normativity	Mon: <i>Exam 1: What is metaethics?</i> 🤔 Wed: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 7 - 27	Argument Reconstruction: Jackson P.
Week 5: Normativity	Mon: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 28 - 48 Wed: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 49 - 71 / 1st Visualization Assignment Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday	Argument Reconstruction: Conner E. Argument Reconstruction: Garrett Z.
Week 6: Normativity	Mon: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 71 - 89 Wed: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 90 - 112	Argument Reconstruction: Nick G. Argument Reconstruction: Ava B.
Week 7: Normativity	Mon: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 112 - 130 Wed: Korsgaard, SoN, pgs 200 - 218	Argument Reconstruction: Nico H. Argument Reconstruction: Lauren C.
Week 8: Moral Luck	Mon: <i>Exam 2: What is normativity?</i> 🤔 Wed: Williams, Ch2	Argument Reconstruction: Sheldon B.
Week 9: Moral Luck	Mon: Nagel, Ch3 Wed: Pritchard, "Moral and Epistemic Luck"	Argument Reconstruction: Alex E. Argument Reconstruction: Cheryl G.
Week 10: Moral Luck	Mon: Zimmerman, "Moral Luck: A Partial Map" Wed: Peels, "A Modal Solution to the Problem of Moral Luck"	Argument Reconstruction: Liam G. Argument Reconstruction: Mahmoud A.
Week 11: Moral Luck	Mon: Whittington, Ch12 Wed: Wolf, "The Moral of Moral Luck" / 2nd Visualization Assignment Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday	Argument Reconstruction: Nick M. Argument Reconstruction: Shep S.
Week 12: Moral Luck	Mon: Driver, "Luck and Fortune in Moral Evaluation" Wed: Enoch and Marmor, "The Case Against Moral Luck"	Argument Reconstruction: Tessa O. Argument Reconstruction: Jack D.
Week 13: Value Theory	Mon: <i>Exam 3: Does moral luck have a modal solution?</i> 🤔 Wed: TBD	Argument Reconstruction: Destiny T.
Week 14: Value Theory	Mon: TBD Wed: TBD	Argument Reconstruction: Delaney M. Argument Reconstruction: Casey S.
Week 15: Value Theory	Mon: TBD Wed: TBD	Argument Reconstruction: Argument Reconstruction:
Week 16: Value Theory	Mon: TBD Wed: <i>Exam 4: What is value?</i> 🤔	Argument Reconstruction:

Policies

Classroom Policies

Statement on Learning Success

Your success in this class is important to me. We will all need accommodations because we all learn differently. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible.

Together we'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UNO. Many are listed on this syllabus, but I am happy to connect you with a person or Center if you would like.

Grading Policies

As I hope you can see, flexibility is built into the assignments to support your success in this course. If you miss a smaller assignment or don't do as well on a few notes assignments, your grade will not be impacted significantly. Consequently, the final grades are firm, and no additional curve is available.

Late work

Late work will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Generally, except in the case of an excused absence, work submitted after an assigned deadline will not be eligible for full credit. Please communicate with me if you are having problems keeping to the schedule. It is better to talk through problems than ignore them.

Absences

Excused Absence: The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances due to an emergency. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let us know at least two weeks in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with us for details or arrangements.

If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely. Ask classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may come by during office hours or schedule a meeting to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. "What did I miss?" is not specific enough.

Names and Personal Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the University Registrar:

<https://www.unomaha.edu/registrar/students/transcripts-and-records/update-your-personal-information.php>

I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the gender pronouns you use (she/he/they/ze, etc). Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit:

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Meaning of Life

PHIL1010: The Meaning of Life Spring 2025

Tuesday & Thursday from 1130am - 1245pm in ASH 143

Instructor:	Kevin Patton, PhD 	Department:	Philosophy
Email:	kevinpatton@unomaha.edu	Office:	ASH 205F
Course Website:	https://phil1010.kevinipatton.com	Office Hours	Mon & Wed 1pm - 2pm

Course Description	Course Requirements	Policies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course description • Learning • Prerequisites • Student Success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required materials and devices • Location of course resources on the web • Classroom expectations • Description of major assignments • Grading • Course schedule including required readings, and exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading, late work, and dropping / withdrawing policy • Policy on absences • Information about student services: • Safety information • Academic Integrity

Course Description

Course Description

This course explores life's big questions – questions you may be asking yourself now more than ever. What is the meaning of life? How can you lead a fulfilling life? What truly matters? Together, we'll tackle these questions head-on. We'll develop critical thinking skills to examine different perspectives on life's purpose and meaning. We'll explore various paths to fulfillment, from relationships and personal growth to career success and service to others.

This course isn't about giving you easy answers. It's about equipping you with the tools and frameworks to define what a meaningful life means to you.

What Will You Learn?

In this course, you will learn to critically analyze metaethical theories, evaluate arguments about the nature of "goodness" and value, and how moral luck challenges moral appraisal.

Main skills to be developed

- **Critical Thinking:** Analyze complex philosophical concepts, evaluate arguments, and formulate your own reasoned perspectives on the meaning of life and fulfillment.
- **Self-Reflection:** Engage in introspection to examine your own values, beliefs, and aspirations related to a meaningful life.
- **Discernment:** Assess different perspectives on life's purpose, identify underlying assumptions, and evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.
- **Decision-Making:** Apply critical thinking and personal values to make informed choices about your life path and pursue your goals with intention.

Learning Outcomes

1. Understand diverse philosophical perspectives on the meaning of life, fulfillment, and happiness.
2. Clarify your personal values and how they relate to your vision of a meaningful life.
3. Develop a framework for making life choices aligned with your values and aspirations.
4. Improve your ability to engage in thoughtful discussions about life's big questions.
5. Gain a greater sense of purpose and direction as you navigate your college years and beyond.

How will I learn?

This course features interactive lectures where you'll be encouraged to share your insights and questions. We'll analyze important texts together, examining the arguments and exploring different interpretations. Expect to participate in discussions and develop your critical thinking skills by evaluating ideas and offering your own perspectives.

To prepare for class, you'll need to complete assigned readings and take notes. This will help you engage actively with the material and contribute to a collaborative learning environment where we can all learn from each other.

Prerequisites for the course

None.

How to succeed in this course

Active Preparation: Thoroughly read and analyze assigned texts before each class, preparing a formal argument reconstruction to facilitate active participation in discussions.

Engaged Participation: Contribute meaningfully to class discussions by questioning assumptions, offering alternative interpretations, and respectfully debating ideas with both the instructor and peers.

Assignment Submission: Adhere to deadlines for all assignments, recognizing that late submissions may impact your grade and hinder your ability to fully engage with the course material.

Come to Office Hours: If you are struggling to keep up, or find the readings extremely challenging, then coming to speak to me directly during my office hours will be helpful. Also, I have snacks.

Course Requirements

Required Materials

There are no textbooks that you are required to purchase for this course. Class materials, handouts, and supplemental resources will be posted on the course website: <https://phil1010.kevinipatton.com>.

I do not use Canvas except for posting grades, making announcements, and submitting assignments.

Required Devices

There are no required devices for this course.

Classroom expectations

Your preparation for discussion and participation is extremely important for you and your team. Here are some ground rules:

- **This course thrives on mutual respect and active engagement.** As your instructor, I am committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive learning environment where diverse perspectives are valued. I expect you to contribute to this environment by treating each other with courtesy and respect.
- **Remember, learning is an active process.** Your participation in class discussions, activities, and assignments is crucial for developing critical thinking skills and achieving success in this course. Embrace the challenge, step outside your comfort zone, and enjoy the journey of exploring your own thought processes!

Assignments

Assessment of your learning will occur through a variety of venues including the final project, reflection journals, homework assignments, quizzes, application activities, content synthesis, and class/team participation

Annotated Notes: You will be required to submit annotated notes over one of the readings nearly every week. As these will be submitted via Canvas, you can either annotate digitally (e.g. edit in Adobe, Word, Docs) or you may handwrite your notes and then take pictures of those notes and submit those. A handout over this assignment is available on the website.

Museum Assignment: This project will require that you visit the Samuel Bak museum in Aksarben. Requirements and due date are stated in a handout on the website.

Blue Book Exams: Students will take two non-cumulative, in-person exams. These exams must be handwritten and will evaluate both understanding of course material and original thought. One week before each exam, students will receive a study guide. If you require testing center accommodations, then I recommend getting that setup ASAP.

Bucket List: This assignment invites students to create a "bucket list" of their desired life experiences and accomplishments. Requirements and due date are stated in a handout on the website.

Reading Presentation: Each student will provide a 15-20 minute presentation over one reading throughout the course of the semester. The presentation will occur on the day that the reading is assigned. Sign-up will happen on the first day of class.

Grading for this Course

The following table represents how you will demonstrate your learning and how we will assess the degree to which you have done so.

Assignments	Total Points Possible	Percent of Total Grade
Annotated Notes	140	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence to color coding standards • Appropriateness of marginal notes 		
Museum Assignment	100	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend lecture • Quality of reflections 		
Blue Book Exams	200	30%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of answers 		
Bucket List	100	20%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of reflection • Integration of course materials 		
Reading Presentation	20	15%
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accuracy of presentation 		

Grade	Cutoff
A+	100-97
A	96-93
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D+	69-67
D	66-64
D-	63-60
F	<60

Semester Outline

Changes to the schedule may be made at my discretion and if circumstances require. It is your responsibility to note these changes when announced (although I will do my best to ensure that you receive the changes with as much advance notice as possible).

Week 1: Foundations	Tues: Syllabus; sign up for presentations Thurs: Frankl: pgs 9-17 (use the Frankl handout as a guide)	
Week 2: Suffering & Meaning	Tues: Frankl: pgs 21-40 (bring answers to reading questions) Thurs: pgs 40-77 (bring answers to reading questions)	Presentation: Htar M.
Week 3: Suffering & Meaning	Tues: pgs 77-115 (bring answers to reading questions) Thurs: Bak Museum Visit (Google Maps link)	Presentation: Grayson S.
Week 4: The Objectivists	Tues: Susan Wolf Thurs: William Lane Craig	Presentation: Aylia V. Presentation: Austin H.
Week 5: Objectivists & Review	Tues: John Cottingham Thurs: Review for Exam 1	Presentation: Ruben J.
Week 6: Exam 1 & The Subjectivists	Tues: Exam 1 🎉 Thurs: Trisel	Presentation: Henry G.
Week 7: Subjectivists & The Absurdists	Tues: Richard Taylor Thurs: Albert Camus	Presentation: Jace N. Presentation: Bella M.
Week 8: The Absurdists	Tues: Thomas Nagel (Ch2) Thurs: Thomas Nagel (Ch3)	Presentation: Gabby H. Presentation: Noah R.
Week 9: Moral Luck	Tues: Review for Exam 2 Thurs: Exam 2 🎉	
Week 10: Free Will & Consciousness	Tues: Earl Conee and Ted Sider (Ch6) Thurs: Frank Jackson	Presentation: Jack H. Presentation: Braydon H.
Week 11: Identity and Time	Tues: Earl Conee and Ted Sider (Ch1) Thurs: Earl Conee and Ted Sider (Ch3)	Presentation: Ali C. / Edwin M. Presentation: Jacob S.
Week 12: Value Theory	Tues: John Stuart Mill Thurs: Robert Nozick	Presentation: Aubrey K. Presentation: Maya W.
Week 13: Philosophy of Religion	Tues: Blackwell Guide to the Philosophy of Religion (Ch7) Thurs: William Lane Craig vs. Sean Carroll (link)	Presentation: Chloe M. Presentation: Paul F.
Week 14: TBD	Tues: Thurs:	Presentation: Mo N. Presentation: Natalia Z.
Week 15: TBD	Tues: Thurs:	Presentation: Evette F. Presentation: Kale D.
Week 16: TBD	Tues: Thurs:	Presentation: Patrick T. Presentation: Katherine P.

Policies

Classroom Policies

Statement on Learning Success

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Grading Policies

As I hope you can see, flexibility is built into the assignments to support your success in this course. If you miss a smaller assignment or don't do as well on a few notes assignments, your grade will not be impacted significantly. Consequently, the final grades are firm, and no additional curve is available.

Late work

Late work will be handled on a case-by-case basis. Generally, except in the case of an excused absence, work submitted after an assigned deadline will not be eligible for full credit. Please communicate with me if you are having problems keeping to the schedule. It is better to talk through problems than ignore them.

Absences

Excused Absence: The only absences that will be considered excused are for religious holidays or extenuating circumstances due to an emergency. If you plan to miss class due to observance of a religious holiday, please let us know at least two weeks in advance. You will not be penalized for this absence, although you will still be responsible for any work you will miss on that day if applicable. Check with us for details or arrangements.

If you have to be absent, use your resources wisely. Ask other classmates to get a run-down and notes on any lessons you miss. If you find there are topics that we covered while you were gone that raise questions, you may come by during office hours or schedule a meeting to discuss. Email specific questions you have in advance so that we can make the most of our time. "What did I miss?" is not specific enough.

Names and Personal Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to the instructor with the student's legal name, unless they have added a "preferred name" with the University Registrar:

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Class Structure

Introductory / Lower Level Courses

1. Student Presentations (15 minutes):

- Every student is required to sign-up for one of the readings over the course of the semester, and to present to the class a 15 minute summary of that reading.
- This activity serves multiple purposes:
 - **Active Recall:** It helps you consolidate your understanding of the reading by explaining its central idea(s) to your peers.
 - **Preparation for Discussion:** It provides a starting point for our class discussion and helps us identify key areas of interest or potential disagreement.
- If you have a valid reason from the university such that this assignment would cause you an undue burden, then we will work together to come up with an equivalent assignment.

2. Guided Lecture and Discussion (40 minutes):

- I will lead a lecture that expands upon the author's thesis, highlighting key concepts, evidence, and arguments.
- This is not a passive lecture; you are encouraged to actively participate by asking questions, sharing your insights, and challenging ideas.
- The goal is to foster a collaborative learning environment where we collectively explore the nuances and complexities of the text.

3. Objections, Clarifications, and Final Thoughts (20 minutes):

- This segment is dedicated to addressing any remaining questions, clarifying confusing points, and exploring alternative interpretations of the text.
- I encourage you to raise objections to the author's arguments, offer alternative perspectives, and engage in respectful debate with your classmates.
- This is an opportunity to synthesize your understanding of the material and develop your critical thinking skills.

Pedagogical Rationale:

This structured approach is grounded in several key pedagogical principles:

- **Active Learning:** You are not passive recipients of information; you are active participants in the learning process.
- **Constructivism:** You construct your own understanding of the material through active engagement, discussion, and reflection.
- **Social Learning:** You learn from and with your peers through collaborative activities and discussions.
- **Critical Thinking:** You are encouraged to question assumptions, evaluate evidence, and formulate your own informed opinions.

Advanced / Upper Level Courses

1. Formal Argument Presentation and Discussion (15 - 20 minutes):

- Every student is required to sign-up for one of the readings over the course of the semester, and to present to the class a 15 - 20 minute summary of that reading.
- These presentations will help determine what areas of the reading were clear, and what areas I should focus on.
- This collaborative analysis will deepen our understanding of the author's reasoning and highlight potential areas of disagreement or further exploration.

2. Guided Lecture and Discussion (40 minutes):

- Building upon the initial discussion, I will lead a lecture that digs deeper into the author's argument, examining its nuances, implications, and potential weaknesses.
- You are encouraged to actively participate by questioning assumptions, offering alternative interpretations, and engaging in respectful debate.
- The goal is to foster a scholarly community where we collectively grapple with challenging ideas and refine our understanding of complex philosophical issues.

3. Objections, Clarifications, and Final Thoughts (15 minutes):

- This segment is dedicated to addressing any remaining questions, clarifying points of confusion, and exploring potential counterarguments to the author's position.
- I encourage you to think critically about the material and to share your own well-reasoned objections or alternative perspectives.
- This is an opportunity to refine your analytical skills, practice articulating complex ideas, and engage in meaningful intellectual exchange with your peers.

Pedagogical Rationale:

This approach is designed to foster the following skills and dispositions:

- **Advanced Critical Thinking:** You will be challenged to analyze complex arguments, identify underlying assumptions, and evaluate the strength of evidence.
- **Analytical Writing:** You will practice reconstructing arguments in a clear and concise manner, a skill essential for scholarly writing.
- **Scholarly Discourse:** You will engage in respectful debate, learn to articulate complex ideas, and refine your ability to defend your own positions with evidence and reason.
- **Intellectual Curiosity:** You will be encouraged to explore multiple perspectives, question conventional wisdom, and develop a deeper understanding of philosophical inquiry.

Examination Samples

Ethical Theory - Exam 1 (blue book exam)

The following writing prompts comprise Exam 1.

Pick three of the following four prompts and answer each part fully.

1. Explain how Moore argued for the following three claims:
 - a. Any attempt to define ‘good’ in terms of natural properties will fail.
 - b. Whether or not something has intrinsic value is testable.
 - c. Value is not additive but organic.
2. Explain how Korsgaard argued for the following three claims:
 - a. Moore’s two distinctions in goodness are incomplete.
 - b. Moore’s method for determining things of value is flawed.
 - c. The Kantian notion of “good will” can better capture how to understand goodness.
3. Explain how Mackie argued for the following three claims:
 - a. The existence of objective moral values is dubious given the existence of moral disagreement.
 - b. The existence of objective moral values is dubious given the queerness of how we would come to gain knowledge of them.
 - c. The existence of objective moral values is dubious given the queerness of their action guiding nature.
4. Explain how Ayer argued for the following three claims:
 - a. A meaningful sentence is a verifiable sentence.
 - b. Expressions of moral judgement in language are neither true nor false.
 - c. Moral disagreement can be explained within a shared value system and between contrasting value systems.

Meaning of Life - Exam 1

Name: _____

I. Definitions (1pt each)

1. Define "active engagement" as used by Susan Wolf in her discussion of a meaningful life.
2. Explain the concept of "absurdity" as presented by William Lane Craig in the context of life without God.
3. Define "subjective fulfillment" according to John Cottingham.
4. What does Susan Wolf mean by "projects of worth"?
5. Explain the term "transcendence" as it relates to Cottingham's view on the meaning of life.

II. Multiple Choice (2pts each)

1. According to Susan Wolf, which of the following is NOT a necessary component of a meaningful life?
 - A. Active engagement
 - B. Projects of worth
 - C. Subjective happiness
 - D. Material wealth
2. William Lane Craig argues that without God, human life lacks:
 - A. Ultimate purpose
 - B. Lasting value
 - C. Objective moral standards
 - D. All of the above
3. John Cottingham argues that a purely subjective view of life's meaning requires:
 - A. Nihilism
 - B. Moral relativism
 - C. The bald denial of a transcendent dimension to human life
 - D. All of the above
4. Which author explicitly argues that a meaningful life requires active engagement in projects of worth that one subjectively values?
 - A. William Lane Craig
 - B. John Cottingham

- C. Susan Wolf
 - D. None of the above
5. Cottingham contends that a purely subjective account of life's meaning ultimately fails because:
- A. It cannot provide a basis for objective moral values.
 - B. It leads to nihilism.
 - C. It cannot account for the human desire for transcendence.
 - D. All of the above.
6. Craig's argument for the absurdity of life without God hinges on the claim that:
- A. Without God, there can be no objective morality.
 - B. Without God, there can be plenty of objective morality.
 - C. Without God, the universe itself can provide objective meaning.
 - D. All of the above.
7. Which author's view most closely aligns with the idea that meaning is found in actively shaping one's life and contributing to something larger than oneself?
- A. William Lane Craig
 - B. John Cottingham
 - C. Susan Wolf
8. According to Cottingham, transcendence is necessary for a meaningful life because:
- A. It provides a sense of connection to something larger than oneself.
 - B. It offers a source of objective value and purpose.
 - C. It allows for the possibility of life after death.
 - D. All of the above.
9. In Craig's view, the possibility of an afterlife is crucial because:
- A. It offers the prospect of finite happiness.
 - B. It provides a context in which human actions can have lasting significance.
 - C. It guarantees that justice will ultimately be served.
 - D. It allows for the possibility of reunion with loved ones.
10. Wolf argues that a life filled with purely subjective pleasures, even if deeply satisfying to the individual, might still be considered meaningless if it lacks:
- A. Active engagement.
 - B. Connection to others.
 - C. Objective value or worth.
 - D. All of the above.
11. Which of the following best captures Cottingham's stance on the relationship between the meaning of life and religious belief?
- A. Religious belief is necessary for a meaningful life.
 - B. Religious belief is sufficient for a meaningful life.
 - C. Religious belief can contribute to a meaningful life but is not strictly necessary.
 - D. Religious belief is irrelevant to the question of life's meaning.
12. Craig's concept of "absurdity" is best characterized as:
- A. A feeling of angst or despair.

- B. A conflict between human aspirations and the reality of a purposeless universe.
C. The inherent meaninglessness of human existence.
D. A state of confusion or bewilderment.
13. In Wolf's view, the primary difference between a meaningful life and a happy life is that:
- A. A meaningful life is necessarily happy, but a happy life is not necessarily meaningful.
 - B. A happy life is necessarily meaningful, but a meaningful life is not necessarily happy.
 - C. A meaningful life involves active engagement in projects of worth, while a happy life may not.
 - D. There is no difference; the two concepts are synonymous.
14. Which of the following scenarios best exemplifies Wolf's notion of a life lacking in meaning, despite potential subjective fulfillment?
- A. A person dedicates their life to amassing wealth and material possessions.
 - B. A person spends their days pursuing fleeting pleasures and indulging in trivial activities.
 - C. A person lives a solitary life, detached from any meaningful connections with others.
 - D. All of the above.
15. Cottingham argues that the human longing for transcendence can be manifested in various ways, including:
- A. Ritualistic expression.
 - B. Stifling our desire for the transcendent.
 - C. Taking PHIL1010.
 - D. All of the above.
16. Which author's view most directly challenges the notion that a meaningful life can be achieved solely through individualistic pursuits and personal happiness?
- A. William Lane Craig
 - B. John Cottingham
 - C. Susan Wolf
17. In Craig's view, the atheist is committing a kind of inconsistency. What is it?
- A. The atheist seeks to defend any action that humans take since there is no objective morality.
 - B. The atheist seeks to promote objectively bad actions.
 - C. The atheist refuses to take a stance on the moral goodness or badness of actions.
 - D. The atheist appeals to objective morality to condemn certain actions despite denying objective morality.
18. Wolf's concept of "projects of worth" implies that:
- A. Meaningful activities must have some objective value or contribute to the greater good.
 - B. The value of an activity is entirely determined by the individual's subjective assessment.
 - C. Only certain types of activities, such as artistic pursuits or scientific endeavors, can be considered meaningful.

- D. The pursuit of personal happiness is incompatible with a meaningful life.
19. If Wolf is correct, which of the following activities could potentially contribute to a meaningful life, even if they don't directly benefit society or produce tangible results?
- Pursuing a personal passion for art or music.
 - Cultivating deep and meaningful relationships with loved ones.
 - Engaging in activities that promote personal growth and self-discovery.
 - All of the above.
20. Craig argues that objective moral values can only exist if:
- God exists.
 - Humans are inherently good.
 - Society establishes a set of agreed-upon moral codes.
 - There is an afterlife where good deeds are rewarded and evil deeds are punished.

III. Short Answer (3 prompts, choose 2; 20pts each)

1. Compare and contrast Craig's and Cottingham's views on the role of God in providing meaning to life.
2. Explain Wolf's concept of "active engagement" and its significance for her overall argument.
3. Critically evaluate one potential objection to Cottingham's argument that the naturalist cannot explain our yearning for transcendence.