**Dialogue, Discussion, and Dialectic**

Phil. 4302.001/5302.001

Fall 2017

TH 12:30-1:50 in the Dialogue Room, Comal 116

Taught by: Jo Ann Carson

Office: Comal 115D

512.245.3143 or jc28@txstate.edu

Office Hrs: Tuesday & Thursday 11:00-12:15; 2:15-2:45 or by appointment

Course Communication via TRACS

Student Guide: http://tracsfacts.its.txstate.edu/Documents/stuguide.html

Hello Sophists and Sages. Welcome to the Dialogue Class.

This collaborative course is a part of the Philosophy Dialogue Series. The class will explore dialogical and dialectical reasoning, with emphasis on both philosophical conversation and philosophical writing. Each student will research and conduct at least one dialogue and will contribute to others through discussion.

There are three parts to the course:

Part I: Background: Dialogical and dialectical reasoning in philosophy

Part II: Open dialogues led by students of this class

Part III: Paper writing

**READINGS FOR THE CLASS ARE POSTED ON TRACS UNDER “RESOURCES”**

**COURSE GOALS ARE:**

* to increase communicative skills in written and oral expression
* to learn about dialogical and dialectical reasoning and how it has been used in philosophy
* to prepare and present well-structured and intellectually stimulating dialogues that encourage participation and interaction
* to develop appreciation for insight, intuition, and imagination coupled with rigor, precision, and discipline
* to collaborate as a community of rational inquirers governed by principles of respect and good will for all persons and viewpoints represented
* to enhance the academic culture of the university and community at large
* to connect philosophy to current events by applying the methods of philosophical analysis to contemporary social, political, scientific, moral, and religious issues and controversies
* to foster a balanced perspective by exploring strengths and weaknesses of alternative viewpoints related to an issue

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

As a student enrolled in the Dialogue Class you will have some special responsibilities.

**Interlocutor**

You will serve as an interlocutor for one dialogue during the Dialogue Series. You and (in most cases), a co-interlocutor will lead the discussion on the topic of the day and will be responsible for preparing a **one-page handout** (you may use front and back) for the class and other visitors in attendance. (The Dialogue Series is open to all interested persons.) Your handout should identify key terms/concepts/issues/questions, set some background context, and focus the discussion of the day. This can be done in various ways and need not be formulaic. If you have a co-interlocutor, you should collaborate and prepare only one handout. More information on dialogue preparation will be provided as the course progresses.

**Important Note: For full credit, handouts should be turned in the day before the scheduled dialogue. (You may email them to me or put them in my mailbox in Comal 102.)**

**Scribe**

You will serve as scribe for another dialogue. Although you should take notes every day, during the class for which you are scribing you should take especially thorough and careful notes, then edit and turn them in within one week of the dialogue. (Scribe notes should be approximately 2 pages.) Scribe notes will be posted on TRACS and, along with class readings and handouts, will serve as study aids for the two quizzes.

**Citizen**

You will actively participate in each dialogue and will be familiar with the readings for the day, even those for which you are not serving as an interlocutor or scribe. Please come to class with at least one question or comment to contribute to the dialogue.

You may further achieve the status of **exemplary citizen** (and enhance your class participation grade) by participating in **service learning opportunities** connected to the expansion of the philosophy dialogue series to the San Marcos Public Library. More information will be forthcoming on these nine off-campus dialogues.

**Scholar**

**Papers: Guidelines for all papers will be posted on TRACS.**

You will write three short (1½-2 page) papers and one final thesis-defense paper.

* Paper #1 will deal with the question “Are Justice and Mercy Incompatible?” and will be the basis for our dialogue on Thursday, September 13.
* Paper #2 will involve your identification and exposition of some “monstrous” error in reasoning (i.e. a logical fallacy) on the current social/political/scientific/religious scene. (So be on the lookout!) These papers will be the basis for an in-class “Monster Mash” Halloween party on Tuesday, October 31.
* Paper #3 will be a peer-review of another student’s final (thesis defense) paper, selected by random drawing on November 14.
* Paper #4 will be a thesis-defense (argumentative) paper with references and should relate to a philosophical topic discussed in one of the dialogues from Part II of the course (the Dialogue Series). Typically, students choose to write on a topic related to their dialogue presentation, which provides an opportunity to delve more deeply into an issue you have already started to research. However, it is acceptable to write on any topic of interest to you as long as it **directly** relates to the issues discussed in the class and you have consulted with me in advance. Papers written for other classes will not be accepted.

**Quizzes:** Two content quizzes over the readings, handouts, and scribe notes on TRACS.

**GRADING**

**Note: Late work will receive a grade 10% lower than it would otherwise have received.**

**Part I: Background 20%**

**10% Short Paper #1 (Due 9/14)**

**Topic: “Are Justice and Mercy Incompatible?”**

**(2 pages, typed, double-spaced, 12-point font, single sided)**

**10% Content Quiz #1 (Due 10/3)**

**Content Quiz #1 will cover the background readings and the first three weeks of the dialogue series.**

**Part II: Dialogues 50%**

**20% Dialogue Presentation and Handout (one page)**

**For full credit, handouts should be turned in the day before the dialogue for my review. Email is fine.**

**10% Scribe Notes**

**Edit and turn in within one week of dialogue; email is fine; suggested length is 2 pages.**

**10% Short Paper #2 (Due 10/31)**

**Topic: “Goodbye Reason, Hello (Logical) Monsters”**

**10% Content Quiz #2 (in class 11/16)**

**Content Quiz #2 will cover Weeks 4-8 of the dialogue series.**

**Part III: Main Paper 20% Note: I prefer hardcopies unless there are extenuating circumstances. Also, all papers should be single sided**

**and in 12-point font. (It is easier to write comments on single sided papers.) Be sure to include your name and the date on all papers.**

**15% Main Paper (Due 11/14)**

**Undergraduates: 5-7 pages. Graduates: 10-12 pages.**

**5% Peer Review Paper (Due 11/21); 1½- 2 pages.**

**Paper guidelines posted on TRACS**

**Please use Chicago (aka Turabian) style for references and footnotes.**

[**http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html**](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.html)

**Class Participation 10% Includes attendance, contribution to class discussion, and**

**optional participation in Wednesday dialogues (4:30 p.m.) at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins St.**

In all work students are expected to adhere to the Texas State University Honor Code

<http://www.txstate.edu/effective/upps/upps-07-10-01-att1.htm>

Students with a disability who will require accommodation to participate in this course should speak with me as soon as possible. Documentation from the Office of Disability Services (ODS) will be required.

**Dialogue, Discussion, and Dialectic**

Topics and Readings

Fall 2017

**PART I: BACKGROUND**

**Class Date**

1 8/29 Preliminaries: Dialogue and Dialectic

2 8/31 Metaphors and Methods

Read: Syllabus

George Lakoff & Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (excerpts)

Edward Damer, “Code of Intellectual Conduct”

(from *Attacking* *Faulty Reasoning*)

3 9/5 Dialectical Reasoning Today

Read: Deborah Tannen, *The Argument Culture*

(Chpt. 1, “Fighting for Our Lives”)

Anthony Laden, *Reasoning: A Social Picture*, Prologue & Chpt. 1

4 9/7 Form, Content, and Dialectical Reasoning in Plato, Aristotle, and Hegel:

A Thumbnail Sketch

Read: Dimitri Nikulin, *Dialectic and Dialogue*, Preface and Chpt. 1

(“In the Beginning: Dialogue and Dialectic in Plato”)

Norman Melchert, “Aristotle on the Reality of the World”

(from *The Great Conversation*)

Jerome D. Levin, “G.W.F. Hegel: The Dialectic of the Self”

(from *Theories of the Self*)

**Part II: DIALOGUES**

**Note: This part of the class coincides with the Philosophy Dialogue Series and is open to all interested persons.**

**Week I: Searching for Justice**

5 9/12 Varying Conceptions of Justice

Read: Michael Sandel, “Doing the Right Thing”

(Chpt. 1 of *Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do?*

Alasdair MacIntyre, “Rival Justices, Competing Rationalities”

(Chpt. 1 of *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?*)

9/13 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 p.m. at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Jose-Antonio Orosco (Oregon State University, Philosophy), “The Human Story of Justice and Peace”

6 9/14 Are Justice and Mercy Incompatible?

Read: Bryan Stevenson, excerpt from *Just Mercy*

**Paper #1 (1½-2 pages) Due: “Are Justice and Mercy Incompatible?”**

**Be prepared to talk from your paper and turn it in at the end of class.**

**Week II: Constitution Week**

7 9/19 Academic Freedom and the Living Constitution

Read: Rodney Smolla, “Five Constitutional Ideas that Have Influenced the Identity of American Universities” and “Academic Freedom and the Living Constitution” (Chpts. 1 & 2 of *The Constitution Goes to College)*

9/20 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 p.m. at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Donald S. Inbody (Texas State, Political Science), “Military and Absentee Voting”

8 9/21 The Future of Privacy and Free Speech in the Age of the Internet

Read: Jeffrey Rosen, “The Deciders: Facebook, Google, and the Future of Privacy and Free Speech”

(Chpt. 5 of *Constitution 3:0: Freedom and Technological Change*)

**Week III: Ancient Ethics**

9 9/26 Epicureans, Stoics, and Skeptics on Happiness

Read: Norman Melchert, “Epicureans, Stoics, and Skeptics:

Happiness for the Many,” (Chpt. 8 of *The Great Conversation*, 6th edition)

Epictetus, *Enchiridion* (“The Manual” of Stoicism)

Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations*, excerpt

9/27 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

L. Stephanie Cobb (University of Richmond, Religious Studies),

“Ancient Christian Martyrs: Divine Deliverance from Pain”

10 9/28 Cosmic Justice and Natural Law

Read: Sophocles, *Antigone*, excerpt

Cicero, excerpts from *De Re Publica* (*On the Commonwealth*), *De Officiis* (*On Moral Duties*), and *De Legibus* (*On Laws*)

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Martin Luther King, *Letter from a Birmingham Jail*

**Content Quiz #1 distributed (take home)**

**Week IV: Restorative Justice**

11 10/3 When the Moral Sphere is Broken

Read: Robert Kane, “The Spirits of the Times” and “The Ends Principle”

(Chpts.1 & 2 of *Through the Moral Maze:*

*Searching for Absolute Values in a Pluralistic World*)

**Content Quiz #1 Due**

10/4 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Vincent Luizzi (Texas State, Philosophy), “Can Restorative Justice Be Applied to (Crimes against) the Environment?”

12 10/5 Prison Education: Changed Lives, Reduced Recidivism

Guest Interlocutor: Daniel Palomares, MAAPE Graduate

Read: TBA

**Week V: Meaningful Lives**

13 10/10 The Will to Meaning: Viktor Frankl’s Case for a Tragic Optimism

Read: Viktor Frankl, “Logotherapy in a Nutshell” and

“The Case for a Tragic Optimism”

(Chpt. 2 and Postscript of *Man’s Search for Meaning*)

10/11 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Jeffrey Gordon (Texas State, Philosophy), “Do We Know What We’re Talking about When We Talk about the Meaning of Life?”

14 10/12 A Psychoanalyst and a Philosopher Walk into a Dialogue about the Meaning of Life

Special Guests: Wynette Barton, Jungian Psychoanalyst, interviewed by Jeffrey Gordon, Philosophy

Read: Carl Jung, “The Fight with the Shadow,” “On Synchronicity”

Optional: Joseph Campbell, Editor’s Introduction to *The Portable* Jung; “Aion: Phenomenology of the Self”

**Week VI: Democracy and Disagreement**

15 10/17 Why Rational Disagreement is Essential to Democracy

Read: Amy Gutmann and Dennis Thompson,

“What Deliberative Democracy Means”

(Chpt. 1 of *Why Deliberative Democracy*)

10/18 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Vince Bagnulo (Notre Dame, Political Science), “Alexis de Tocqueville on Democracy and Difference”

16 10/19 Compromise: Abandonment of Principle or Necessary Principle?

Read: Martin Benjamin, “The Meaning of Compromise” and

“Compromise and Integrity in Politics”

(Chpts. 1 & 6 of *Splitting the Difference*:

*Compromise and Integrity in Ethics and Politics*)

**Week VII: Hidden Histories**

17 10/24 Statutes and Statues:

The Hidden Link between Jim Crow and Confederate Monuments

Read: C. Vann Woodward, “Capitulation to Racism”

(Preface, Foreward, and Chpt. 2 of *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*)

10/25 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Shannon Fitzpatrick (Texas State, Attorney for Students), “The Roots of Texas Prisons:

From Slavery to Mass Incarceration”

18 10/26 Strange Fruit and Lemonade: Music, Race, Gender, Class and Place

Special Guests: Margaret Menninger (History) & Caroline Gnagy, author of *Texas Jailhouse Music, A Prison Band History*

Read: TBA

**Week VIII: Deliberative Dialogue**

19 10/31 Good-bye Reason, Hello Monsters

Read: Edward Damer, *Attacking Faulty Reasoning*, excerpts

**Paper #2 (1½-2 pages) Due: Goodbye Reason, Hello (Logical) Monsters**

11/1 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

John (Jay) Theis (Lone Star College, Director of the Center for Civic Engagement),

Deliberative Dialogue on the Question: “Safety and Justice: How Should Communities Reduce Violence?”

20 11/2 Workshop: Leading Deliberative Dialogues on Difficult Questions

John (Jay) Theis, Director of the Center for Civic Engagement, Lone Star College

Read: “Safety and Justice: How Should Communities Reduce Violence?”

**PART III: PAPERS**

21 11/7 Writing Philosophy Papers

11/8 Service Learning Opportunity: 4:30 at the San Marcos Public Library, 625 E. Hopkins

Paul Wilson, Moderator (Texas State, Philosophy), Al Armstrong and Alan Kolby (Vietnam Veterans, U. S. Army), “The Tet Offensive Conundrum: A Panel Discussion with Vietnam Veterans”

22 11/9 More About Papers

**Thesis Statement (undergraduates)/Abstracts (graduates) Due**

(will count as part of Quiz #2)

23 11/14 Papers Due: Trade for Peer Review

Bring two extra copies; one for me, one for your peer reviewer

24 11/16 **Content Quiz #2 (in class)**

25 11/21 Class will not meet: Peer review papers due (email)

11/23 Thanksgiving: Class will not meet

26 11/28 Paper Reviews/Discussion

27 11/30 Paper Reviews/Discussion

28 12/5 Lunch

29 12/7 **Optional Revised Papers Due**

*Here’s to a good semester!*