

**Venture Course in the Humanities:  
Philosophy**  
6:00-8:00 p.m.  
Horizonte Instruction and Training Center  
Library  
1234 Main St., Salt Lake City

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Philosophy is to be studied, not for the sake of any definite answers to its questions, since no definite answers, can as a rule, be known to be true, but rather for the sake of the questions themselves; because these questions enlarge our conception of what is possible, enrich our intellectual imagination, and diminish the dogmatic assurance which closes the mind against speculations; but above all because, through the greatness of the universe which philosophy contemplates, the mind is also rendered great, and becomes capable of that union with the universe which constitutes the highest good.—Bertrand Russell, *The Problems of Philosophy*

### **Course Goals**

In this class we will explore some of the questions and issues philosophers have addressed throughout history, and we will focus primarily on Western philosophy. As we critically examine some well-known philosophers' ideas, we will work toward developing a clear understanding of the answers to these questions:

- What is philosophy?
- What do philosophers do?
- What is the value of philosophy?

Specifically, we will

- Read primary texts in philosophy
- Develop critical and analytical thinking skills
- Respond to philosophical texts orally and in writing

My hope is that the course helps you to develop some level of enjoyment and/or appreciation for philosophy and philosophical thinking.

### **Course format**

This will be a discussion-based class. Although I will take time to highlight the important points and positions presented in the readings, I do not plan to lecture every day. We will all learn more if we discuss the issues together. Therefore, *everyone is expected to read all of the readings before class, and everyone is expected to come to class prepared to participate in the class activities*. This does not mean that you need to understand all aspects of the readings before you come to class. The plan is to learn about and explore the issues together.

### **Book**

*Voices of Wisdom: A Multicultural Philosophy Reader* (5<sup>th</sup> ed.) by Kessler

### **Assignments**

1. In class discussion and group work
2. Short papers due February 20, March 20, April 17
3. Class participation

## **Reading Schedule**

### **Tuesday Jan. 9 Philosophy**

**Discussion topic:** What is philosophy? What will we do in philosophy class?

### **Thursday Jan. 18 Philosophy**

**Read:** The Apology by Plato p. 44+

### **Thursday Jan. 25 Philosophy**

**Read:** Crito by Plato p. 162+

**Questions to consider:**

### **Tuesday Feb. 6 Philosophy**

**Read:** Letter from Birmingham Jail by King p. 168+

**Writing Assignment Given Today.**

### **Tuesday Feb 13 Philosophy**

**Read:** How to Tame a Wild Tongue by Anzaldua and Crossing by Deirdre (Donald) N. Mc Closkey

### **Tuesday Feb 20 Philosophy**

**Read:** Beyond God the Father by Daly p. 525+

**Writing Assignment Due Today.**

### **Thursday March 1 Philosophy**

**Read:** Meditations I and II by Descartes p. 263+

**Writing Assignment Given Today.**

### **Tuesday March 13 Philosophy**

**Read:** Existentialism by Sartre p. 419-427

### **Tuesday March 20 Philosophy**

Ain't I a Woman by hooks p. 197+

**Writing Assignment Due Today.**

### **Thursday March 29 Philosophy**

Where am I? by Dennett p. 478+

**Writing Assignment Given Today.**

### **Thursday April 17 Philosophy**

Plato's Cave handout

**Writing Assignment Due Today.**