

PI 410: Community Engaged Philosophy
Course Syllabus

Section Information

Section 01

Course Delivery Mode Face-to-Face

Instructor Information

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HSS 120F


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Office Phone Number: (671) 735-2816

Office Hours: Monday: 8:30-9:30 AM; 12:30-1:30 PM

Tuesday: 9:00-11:00 AM

Wednesday: 8:30-9:30 AM; 12:30-1:30 PM

Consultations during office hours are offered on a first-come, first-served basis. Students may wish to reserve one or more time slots (depending on the nature of the meeting) at 

COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course explores ways philosophical concepts and skills can serve communities outside of academia and make positive changes in society. In addition to learning how to convey concisely, accessibly, and engagingly moral and other philosophical issues raised by current events and popular culture, the course focuses on various principles and practices of engaging communities in philosophical conversation and inquiry: Deweyan inquiry, Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Philosophy for Children (P4C), Logic-Based Therapy (LBT), Experimental Philosophy, or others. As such, this course is highly recommended not just for students interested in philosophy, but also for those interested in education, psychology, social work, politics, law, or community organizing. As a course with the Carnegie Foundation's Elective Classification for Community Engagement, students in this course are required to complete a project or to conduct fieldwork beneficial to the public.

COURSE CONTENT

This course focuses on either or both of the following, as time and student interests and needs dictate: (1) the application of philosophical knowledge and skills to convey concisely, accessibly, and engagingly moral and other philosophical issues raised by current events and popular

culture: clarifying terms of a debate, writing Op-Ed essays, etc; (2) the application of various principles and practices of engaging communities in philosophical conversation and inquiry: Deweyan inquiry, Freire's Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Philosophy for Children (P4C), Logic-Based Therapy (LBT), or others. As one of several courses at University of Guam with the Carnegie Foundation's Elective Classification for Community Engagement, students in this course are required to complete a project or to conduct fieldwork beneficial to the public.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES ALIGNMENT MATRIX

Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO)	Program (PLO)	Institutional (ILO)
Justify your own claims by formulating a sound argument	(A) Justify positions with reasoned argument in a rigorous way	Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving
Apply principles and strategies of the course to facilitate philosophical discussions to an advanced level	(B) Express themselves orally and in writing precisely and clearly	Effective oral and written communication
Use principles and strategies of the course to understand and engage with perspectives different to their own to an advanced level.	(C) Understand and engage with perspectives different to their own	Understanding and appreciation of culturally diverse people, ideas, and values in a democratic context
Analyze real-world problems to an advanced level using principles and strategies of the course.	(D) Analyze real-world problems using philosophical tools	Responsible use of knowledge, natural resources, and technology
Display the values of philosophical inquiry to an advanced level by engaging the public in philosophy.	(F) Practice philosophical virtues in their interactions with others	An interest in personal development and lifelong learning

REQUIRED TEXTS

Course readings will be made available by the instructor free of charge on Moodle.

STUDENT SUPPORT:

The following is a list of resources that students can turn to when they need support:

- Problems with the course instructions or other content?
Contact your Instructor for clarification and assistance.
- Technical problems with UOG Moodle system?
Contact the UOG Moodle Help team by email at moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu or by phone at (671) 735-2620.
- Problems with WebAdvisor or GoTritons student email service?
Contact the UOG Office of Information Technology (aka: the Computer Center) by email at helpdesk@uog.edu or by phone at (671) 735-2640.
- UOG Library Resources and Services
Go online to <https://www.uog.edu/student-services/rfk-library/>
- UOG Student Services
Go online to <https://www.uog.edu/student-services/enrollment-management-student-success/> to contact the Admissions and Records office, Financial Aid office, Student Life office, Housing and Residence, Counseling, Student Health, and other services.

In addition:

Office hours and outside appointments. There's only so much that you as a student can get out of the direct instruction and conversation that takes place during classes. At a small university like ours, office hours are a highly important extension of the classroom.

GRADING INFORMATION

COURSE FINAL GRADES

A+	97-100%	C+	76-79%
A	93-96%	C	70-75%
A-	90-92%	D	60-69%
B+	87-89%	F	≤59%
B	83-86%		
B-	80-82%		

NC No Credit. *Note: This Course Grade must be stated in the approved Course Catalog Description.*

UW: Unofficial withdrawal assigned by Registrar. Student stopped attending classes and did not submit required documents to the Admissions & Records office.

W: Withdrawal assigned by Registrar. Student stopped attending classes and submitted required documents to the Admissions & Records office.

ASSIGNMENTS AND PERCENTAGES

Attendance	20%
Classroom Activities and Homework	30%
Course Project	50%

Attendance & Active Participation (20% of final course grade): Most of our class time will be devoted to discussion and other forms of active learning. Attendance and participation are therefore required for you to get the most out of this course. Some people are more comfortable than others in speaking up in class, but if you have always been shy about speaking up, a course like this is a good opportunity to become more comfortable with it.

Classroom Activities and Homework (30% of final course grade): This course seeks to develop the skills and knowledge so that students may engage meaningfully in public philosophy. To this end, students in this course will complete and discuss readings that take up the issues of the nature and best practices of publicly engaged philosophy. Students will also practice public philosophy in the sage confines of the classroom-as-laboratory. Grades on these scaffolding and preparatory activities and assignments will comprise this component.

Course Project (50% of final course grade): As one of several courses at University of Guam with the Carnegie Foundation's Elective Classification for Community Engagement, students in this course are required to complete a project or to conduct fieldwork beneficial to the public. Student projects will be the focus of the second half of the semester. Students will spend class time planning and preparing for their respective projects—which may be individual or group projects—as well as supporting their peers' projects. The instructor has a list of possible projects for inspiration.

Course, Program, and University Policies and Other Information

Academic Misconduct—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UOG community, students

accept the expectations of the Student Code of Conduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the Student Code of Conduct Policy in the Student Handbook. (http://www.uog.edu/sites/default/files/student_handbook_10.7.16.pdf) For this class, any plagiarism will be evaluated by incident. All incidents, at minimum, will automatically receive a failing grade for the assignment. If an incident of plagiarism occurs more than once in the same course, the student may receive a failing grade for the class.

Copyright—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. **The university will neither protect nor defend you nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws.** Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies.

The University is committed to providing an inclusive and welcoming environment for all members of our community free of all forms of discrimination and harassment in all programs, activities and employment practices as required by Title VII and Title IX and other applicable statutes and policies. If you experience harassment or discrimination, report it immediately to the Director of EEO/ADA & TITLE IX Office, at 671-735-2244, 671-735-2971, TOD 671-735-2243 or eeo-ada@trlton.uog.edu. For immediate assistance in an emergency call 911.

For individuals covered under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), if you are a student with a disability requiring academic accommodation(s), please contact the Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodations Office to discuss your confidential request. Please provide an accommodation letter from the Disability Support Services/Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodation counselor. To register for academic accommodations, please contact or visit the Student Center, Rotunda office #6, disabilitysupport@triton.uog.edu or telephone/(TOD) 671-735-2460.

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) — The goal of teaching is to impart a process of gathering, understanding, and synthesizing relevant information, inclusive of critical thinking and project details. Language Learning Models (LLMs) essentially eliminate the need for developing technical writing skills, as they can produce polished prose consistently. This technology is likened to word processors that have made handwriting redundant. LLMs efficiently gather and present information, making the task of accumulating and presenting routine information redundant as well. *With the advent of LLMs, then, a well-informed, competently written piece of prose is now a baseline expectation rather than a goal.* This shifts the question to what value-add teachers and students can bring beyond what an AI model can generate in seconds, potentially requiring a rethinking of teaching approaches and pedagogical

institutions. Like other labor-saving devices, LLMs allow us to shift our focus to areas that cannot be mechanized, raising the bar for what constitutes acceptable performance.

There are several implications. This shift could potentially increase the focus on critical thinking, creativity, and innovation, as the basics of information gathering and writing are covered by LLMs. Pedagogical methods may need to evolve to accommodate this new reality. Teachers might need to redesign curricula and assessments to emphasize the skills that LLMs can't replicate. The definition of student success and accomplishment could be revised to reflect these changes. It might help level the playing field for students with varying writing abilities, as everyone would have access to the same standard of written work through LLMs, allowing them to focus more on content and critical thinking. On a broader level, this development could reshape the landscape of education, leading to increased emphasis on developing soft skills like problem-solving, creativity, and emotional intelligence.

But, there are also worries. Some might suggest that the students themselves are not producing the smoothly written, well informed text. Or that there's no evidence of learning in work created through the use of LLMs. Finally, some might believe that students working at a C level will be demotivated by AI working at a B or A level.

It is true that Language Learning Models (LLMs) may generate the polished prose, but this doesn't negate the value of the learning process. The role of students in this new paradigm shifts from being just scribes to becoming editors, synthesizers, and critical thinkers. They would need to direct the AI, verify its outputs, integrate diverse pieces of information, and ensure that the final product aligns with the task at hand. These are high-level cognitive tasks that contribute significantly to their learning.

The evidence of learning might not be as direct as in traditional assignments, but it is still present. The LLM-generated output will still be guided and refined by students. They will have to engage with the topic at a deep level to guide the model effectively. Evaluating the quality, relevance, and accuracy of the information produced will require understanding the topic. It's a shift from assessing learning based on writing ability to assessing learning based on understanding, critical thinking, and the ability to synthesize and guide an AI to produce quality content.

It's understandable that students may feel demotivated when an AI tool can easily produce work that surpasses theirs. However, this is where it's crucial to redefine success and progress in the classroom. Rather than judging students solely based on the final product, educators can shift towards a model that values the learning process itself. This involves reinforcing the idea that these tools are just that – tools, meant to assist in the learning journey, not replace it. Education must pivot towards fostering skills that AI cannot replicate – empathy, creativity, critical thinking, ethical reasoning, etc. Students should understand that their unique human

qualities, ideas, and perspectives hold immense value, and they are not in competition with AI, but instead, learning to leverage it as a resource.

For these reasons, AI Writing tools such as ChatGPT are welcome in this class, provided that you cite when and how you use the tool (see below) or submit a transcript of your interaction with AI.

Here is an example of **Example of attribution language**:

“The author generated this text in part with GPT-3, OpenAI’s large-scale language-generation model. Upon generating draft language, the author reviewed, edited, and revised the language to their own liking and takes ultimate responsibility for the content of this publication.”

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Class Schedule

Part 1: On Public Philosophy

August 19-August 28

In this Part, we will read a small selection of essays that explore the possibility, nature, and practice of public philosophy from a contemporary perspective. Essays will come from a special edition of *Essays in Philosophy*, Volume 15, Issue 1 (2014).

Part 2: Conveying Philosophical Issues

September 4-October 2

In this Part, we will identify, research, and write philosophically about important issues and current events. Our goal is to convey concisely, accessibly, and engagingly moral and other philosophical issues raised by current events and popular culture.

Part 3: Public Philosophy Projects

October 7-December 4

In this Part, students will complete at least one public philosophy project; the course instructor has a list of possible projects from which to choose or to be inspired. The development of background knowledge and skills will be the focus of class time. Students will also make use of class time by planning and troubleshooting projects, as well as supporting peers in their pursuits.