

PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS ON FRIENDSHIP

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Office Hours: by appointment

Syllabus

Friendship has, since antiquity, been a topic of philosophical interest. In a world in which most of us have Facebook friends, a renewed philosophical reflection on friendship seems required. This course intends to make the students familiar with the major texts about friendship (Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine, Aquinas, Kant, Derrida ...) and with the wide array of questions about it. Topics that will be discussed: how do we define friendship in comparison to other human relations; are there different kinds of friendships; can friendship be explained by a "need" in human nature; what does it mean that my friend is my "alter ego"; the contribution of friendship to human happiness; the tension between ethical norms and friendship; does friendship have a "political" meaning?

Assessment

Attendance and minor assignments during the semester: 20% of the final grade.

Midterm requirement: 15 % of the final grade.

Take-home exam: 65 % of the final grade.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three unexcused absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic conduct

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Additional requirements: cell phones should be turned off during class. Use of computers is permitted only for academic goals.