

# PHIL 170: Love and Sex

**Instructor:** Ricardo Friez

**Email:** [friazr@gmail.com](mailto:friazr@gmail.com) or [rfriez@uoregon.edu](mailto:rfriez@uoregon.edu)

**Office hours:** Monday and Tuesday 10-11am in SCH 11B

**Availability:** You are welcome to make appointments outside my office hours, and we may meet in any accessible format (phone call, video, or other). I answer all emails within 48 hours.

## Course Description

Western philosophy has rarely directly engaged with love and sex. This is surprising because love and sex are taken to be of primary importance to our lives. The history of our arts and religions similarly reflect the importance of love and sex in our lives. This is not to mention the concrete relation that our lives have to sex as reproduction. In this course we will study philosophical concepts related to love and sex. The course is divided into four units: treatments of love and sex in canonical Western philosophical texts, our contemporary social relation to love and sex, analysis of gender and sexual orientation with attention to the relation between science and culture, and interpretations of history's role in contributing to how we think about love and sex. This course will focus on reading texts, though we will also watch some videos and listen to music. This course deals with difficult and sensitive topics, and warnings will accompany each text or class as appropriate.

## Expected Learning Outcomes

- Demonstrate critical thinking, reading, and writing skills through written essays and discussion.
- Develop methods of philosophical inquiry with regard to the study of love, relationships, marriage, sex, sexuality, gender, and sexual representation.
- Interpret and present views that differ from one's own.
- Compare and critique representative authors from various philosophical traditions and historical periods.

## Estimated Student Workload

This course meets for about four hours a week, and time spent outside of class will focus mainly on reading and writing. You're expected to spend a significant amount of time reading and attend class prepared to discuss the texts. Essays take a while to write, and given you're going to be working on an essay every other week of the class, you should aim to budget your time wisely when essay due dates are approaching.

## Course Requirements

### Grade Breakdown:

Essays (3):	60%
Final:	20%
Participation:	20%

**Three Essays:** Over the course of the class you will submit three essays. A week before the essay is due, you will be given a selection of essay prompts to choose from for your assignment. You will submit your essays through

Vericite on Canvas. You should expect to receive feedback and your grade within one week of submitting the assignment. Essay prompts will outline the expected length, and you should expect to write around 1500 words for each assignment. All assignments are due on the date listed unless otherwise noted. If there is an issue, please contact me as soon as possible.

**Final:** The class final will consist of a take-home writing prompt that will be assigned on Thursday, December 5th, and is due on Canvas through Vericite by midnight **before** Thursday, December 12th. In other words, the final is due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, December 11th.

**Participation:** Attendance and active participation are required, both in lecture and discussion section. See “grading” below. “Active participation” means you attend lecture and discussion sections, you read before you come to class, you bring your printed out reading to the lecture and discussion section, and you participate in discussion in a way that shows evidence of careful reading beforehand.

**Grading Rubric:** *The following rubric reflects the general standards of the Philosophy Department at the University of Oregon.*

A = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.

B = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.

C = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.

D = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.

F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.

**Materials and Readings:** All course readings are available on the course Canvas website. I highly encourage you to print them out and bring them to class. You are required to have the course readings available in class, whether in print or electronically.

## Course Policies

**Discrimination and sexual harassment:** I am a student-directed employee. For information about my reporting obligations as an employee, please see Employee Reporting Obligations on the Office of Investigations and Civil Rights Compliance (OICRC) website. Students experiencing any form of prohibited discrimination or harassment, including sex or gender-based violence, may seek information and resources at [safe.uoregon.edu](http://safe.uoregon.edu), [respect.uoregon.edu](http://respect.uoregon.edu), or [investigations.uoregon.edu](http://investigations.uoregon.edu) or contact the non-confidential Title IX office/Office of Civil Rights Compliance (541-346-3123), or Dean of Students offices (541-346-3216), or call the 24-7 hotline 541-346-SAFE for help. I am also a mandatory reporter of child abuse. Please find more information at Mandatory Reporting of Child Abuse and Neglect.

**Accessibility:** The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Accessible Education Center in 164 Oregon Hall at 541-346-1155 or [uoac@uoregon.edu](mailto:uoac@uoregon.edu).

**Attendance:** This is a discussion-based class, so you are required to attend each class session as a vital

component of the course content for which there is no substitute. You are allowed two unexcused absences. Your participation grade will be reduced by 3% for each subsequent absence. If you know will be absent from class, please contact me beforehand, especially as concerns late work arrangements.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional unacknowledged use of someone else's work as one's own in all forms of academic endeavor (such as essays, theses, examinations, research data, creative projects, and so on). Plagiarized material may be derived from books, journals, Internet postings, student or faculty papers, and so on including the purchase or "outsourcing" of written assignments for a course. See <http://www.libweb.uoregon.edu/guides/plagiarism/students/>. Plagiarism is grounds for failing the course.

## **Reading and Assignment Calendar**

### **Unit 1      Love and Sex in the History of Philosophy**

*Week 1*      *Love and Philosophy*

T 10/1      First day

W 10/2      Plato, "Symposium," pages 1-33

Tr 10/3      Plato, "Symposium," pages 34-63

*Week 2*

M 10/7      Augustine, *Confessions*, pages 1-7

T 10/8      Descartes, *Meditations on First Philosophy, Meditation III*, pages 1-13

W 10/9      Spinoza, *Ethics*

Tr 10/10      Spinoza, *Ethics*

*Week 3*

M 10/14      Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, pages 1-16; **Essay 1 assigned**

T 10/15      Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, pages 1-16

W 10/16      Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, pages 1-8

Tr 10/17      Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, pages 1-8

### **Unit 2      Bodies and Ethics**

*Week 4*

M 10/21      Wojtyla (Pope John Paul II), "Analysis of the Verb 'To Use'", pages 1-14; **Essay 1 due**

T 10/22      Bordo, *The Male Body*, pages 1-11

W 10/23      Katz, *The Macho Paradox*, pages 1-11

Tr 10/24      Discussion

*Week 5*

M 10/28      Phillips, *Flirting with Danger*, pages 1-24; **Essay 2 assigned**

T 10/29      Phillips, *Flirting with Danger*, pages 1-24

W 10/30      Wittig, *The Straight Mind*, pages 1-8

Tr 10/31      Wittig, *The Straight Mind*, pages 9-20

### **Unit 3      Sexuality and Ontology**

*Week 6*

- M 11/4 Eribon, *Insult and the Making of the Gay Self*; **Essay 2 due**  
 T 11/5 Eribon, *Insult and the Making of the Gay Self*  
 W 11/6 Diamond, *Sexual Fluidity*, pages 1-10  
 Tr 11/7 Diamond, *Sexual Fluidity*, pages 1-10

*Week 7*

- M 11/11 Burke, "Sexuality as Becoming," pages 1-25; **Essay 3 assigned**  
 T 11/12 Burke, "Sexuality as Becoming," pages 1-25  
 W 11/13 Lewontin, *Biology as Ideology*, pages 1-29  
 Tr 11/14 Lewontin, *Biology as Ideology*, pages 1-29

**Unit 4****Love and Politics***Week 8*

- M 11/18 Lugones, "Towards a Decolonial Feminism," pages 1-15; **Essay 3 due**  
 T 11/19 Lugones, "Towards a Decolonial Feminism," pages 1-15  
 W 11/20 Edelman, *No Future*, pages 1-32  
 Tr 11/21 Edelman, *No Future*, pages 1-32

*Week 9*

- M 11/25 Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. I*, pages 1-12  
 T 11/26 Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. I*, pages 1-12  
 W 11/27 Discussion  
 Tr 11/28 No class (Thanksgiving holiday).

*Week 10*

- M 12/2 Schulman, *Gentrification of the Mind*, pages 1-10  
 T 12/3 Schulman, *Gentrification of the Mind*, pages 1-10  
 W 12/4 Mount Eerie, *A Crow Looked at Me* (audio)  
 Tr 12/5 Discussion; **Final assigned; due 12/12.**