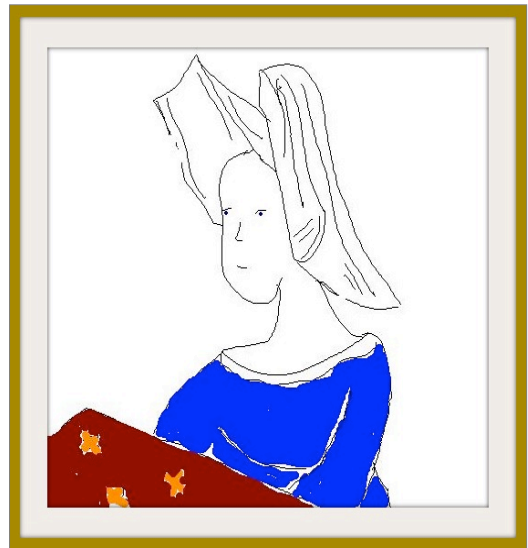


PHIL 243 Social and Political Philosophy I

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This pack includes

Course particulars

Assessment

Reading list

Syllabus

How to interpret a text

Weekly homework

Outline document

Essay writing guidelines

Course Particulars

Course details:

This class will meet for three hours weekly.

Each week before coming to class you will need to read the required text, as specified in the readings section of the syllabus. You will also need to prepare the relevant homework for that week, i.e. answer the questions (in note form) which are included in this pack. This will count towards your participation grade.

I will be available for consultation regarding any aspect of this course during my office hours to be specified in week one. If you cannot see me at these times you can either write me an email (berges@bilkent.edu.tr) or ask for an appointment at another time.

Course objectives:

Guarantee and Disclaimer:

These objectives may seem daunting. Remember that you're not meant to be able to do all these things at the beginning of the course: it's our job to teach them to you! We can guarantee that if you work reasonably hard and come to us when you have a problem, you will go quite a long way towards achieving these objectives. If you don't do the work, however...

Critical Thinking

One of the main purposes of this course is to develop your critical thinking skills. This includes analyzing philosophical texts, putting forward your own arguments orally and in writing, and responding to the arguments of other students.

Doing Philosophy

You will learn to recognise philosophical questions, to put forward reasoned answers to them, and to assess other people's answers (famous philosophers' and other students!).

Reading

You should develop an ability to read reasonably long philosophical texts in depth, i.e. you should be able to answer the following questions for most parts of the text:

- What is the thesis?
- How is it being argued?
- What problems are there in this passage?
- What do I think?

Writing

You should be able to write clear and well structured philosophical papers in which you:

- identify a philosophically interesting thesis and defend it by argument
- identify possible objections to your arguments/thesis and reply to them
- use examples effectively.

Class Participation

You should be prepared to:

- discuss the texts after reading them
- identify problems in a text and ask questions about these problems in class
- put forward your own ideas about the text or issue discussed
- listen to other students' ideas and respond to them philosophically

Why should you do all this?

By studying philosophy you will acquire skills which will be valuable throughout your life, in and out of academia. You will also learn to think independently about some important questions which you will face in your studies and afterwards.

Philosophy is relevant to almost every academic subject (there's even a philosophy of sport and a philosophy of quantum mechanics!). In particular, philosophy is relevant to your studies in two ways:

- philosophical questions will arise out your academic studies
- Many academic subjects rely on certain philosophical accounts of the state and human nature. This is particularly true of politics and international relations but also applies to disciplines such as education and even literature.

Assessment

You will be assessed on the following:

Test	Due date	Specifications	%
Essay 1	Week 7	1200 words long	25 (inc. 5% for outline).
Essay 2	Week 14	1700 words long	25 (inc. 5% for outline).
Final exam		To be announced	25
Participation		Includes evidence of reading, homework, and attendance	25

Attendance:

In order to pass this course, you must attend 80% of classes. It is up to you to keep count of how many classes you miss. If you must miss a class because you are sick, please let me know in advance.

Submission policy:

All material submitted must be typed and word-processed.

With each term paper you must submit an outline. I will not grade papers which do not include those.

You must submit a copy of your work electronically to Turnitin via Moodle.

Plagiarism

For the university's plagiarism policy see:

<http://www.provost.bilkent.edu.tr/procedures/AcademicHonesty.htm>

These will be strictly observed.

Grading criteria

I will make an overall judgment of the quality of your work, but in forming my judgment I will pay particular attention to the following criteria:

Content: Knowledge and understanding of the relevant texts, facts, philosophical concepts and theories.

Argument: Quantity and quality of reasoning used in support of, or criticism of the positions discussed; consistency and coherence; depth of analysis.

Clarity: Clarity of essay structure and verbal expression; succinctness; use of language; and quality of presentation.

Independence: The extent to which you think for yourself, rather than regurgitating what you have read or heard; imaginative use of examples.

Relevance: Have you answered the question as set? Is everything you have written relevant to the conclusion you wish to establish (whether in support of it, or as an objection to be answered)?

Readings

You must read and bring the relevant text to each class (as specified on the schedule). Failure to do so will result in points being taken off your participation grade. It is compulsory for this course to have the complete texts i.e. not partial photocopies.

Plato, *Five Dialogues (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo)*, translated by G.M.A. Grube, revised by J.M. Cooper, 2nd edition, Hackett (2002)

Plato, *The Republic*, translated by G.M.A. Grube, revised by C.D.C. Reeve, 2nd edition, Hackett (1992)

Aristotle, *The Politics*, translated by T.A. Sinclair, Penguin (1992)

Augustine, *Political Writings*, translated by Tkacz and Kries, Hackett (1994), (in Meteksan in October).

Christine de Pizan, *The City of Ladies*, Penguin (2005)

Week	Date (Thursday)	Text	Note
1	10/09	<i>Apology in Five Dialogues</i>	
2	17/09	<i>Euthyphro in Five Dialogues</i>	
3	24/09	Bayram	No classes
4	01/10	<i>Meno in Five Dialogues</i>	Outlines due in class Thursday 01/10.
5	08/10	<i>Republic</i> Book I	
6	15/10	<i>Republic</i> Book II	
7	22/10	<i>Republic</i> Book IV and IX	Essay 1 due Friday 23/10 5pm
8	29/10	Republic Day Holiday	No classes
9	05/11	<i>Politics</i> Book I	
10	12/11	<i>Politics</i> Book III	
11	19/11	<i>The City of God</i> . Books I, pp.3-7 and XIV, pp.95-104.	
12	26/11	<i>The City of God</i> Books I, pp. 8-12 and XIV, pp.105-109; <i>The Status of Women</i> , pp.250-53.	Outlines for essay 2 due Friday 27/11.
13	03/12	<i>City of Ladies</i> Part I	
14	10/12	<i>City of Ladies</i> Part II	Essay 2 due Friday 11/12 5pm.
15	17/12	No class. Revisions for final exams.	.
16		Finals start Friday.	

How to interpret a philosophical text

When you present a piece of philosophical work, you will need to *evaluate* the material you have been reading. However, you can only evaluate something if you understand it.

In order to understand a philosophical text, you need to be able to answer two questions:

1. What is the author saying, i.e. what does he/she want you to believe?
2. How is the author defending his/her view? What reasons does he/she give you to believe that this view is right?

To answer question 1 you need to identify the author's **thesis** (there might be more than one in the text, but always work on one at a time).

A thesis is a statement of what the author wants the reader to believe is the case.

e.g. "There is no such thing as a just war"

"Plato's claim that the soul has three parts is not defensible because it is psychologically unsound".

When you state a thesis, whether your own or your interpretation of someone else's, must always be stated clearly and succinctly, i.e. one sentence long rather than one paragraph. Try to distinguish the actual thesis statement from contextual information the author gives.

e.g.: "Much has been argued in favour of a distinction between just and unjust wars", "One of the most interesting arguments in Plato's Republic is that for the division of the soul".
These remarks are **not** part of the thesis.

You should also try to find a quotation from the text in which the author states the thesis. However, this may be difficult if the author does not write in a clear and succinct manner. The thesis may be broken down and spread over several sentences. In this case you may quote parts from each of the sentences and link them this way: "part 1 [...] part 2 [...] part 3 [...]."

The thesis statement may also be ambiguous. This means that the sentence which expresses the thesis may have several distinct meanings. The author may only intend to mean one thing, or he/she may intend to mean more.

For example Plato says in the Republic that it is always in one's interest to be just. However, if one reads the entire text, it appears that being just means either of two things. The first is the conventional meaning, i.e. to treat others fairly. The second is a Platonic meaning, i.e. achieving harmony of the soul. One could argue that it is possible to achieve harmony without treating others fairly. By disambiguating Plato's thesis, we find that there is a need for further argument. Is Plato right to believe that conventional justice and psychic harmony always go together? If so does he give reasons?

This is how you can end up 'doing philosophy' by identifying a thesis.

When you state the thesis in your own words (which you must always do), you must do so clearly even if the author doesn't.

To answer question 2 you need to identify the author's **argument**.

An **argument**, in the critical thinking sense, is a set of statements which together provide good reasons for believing something. The reasons are called **premises**, and what you give reasons for is called the **conclusion**. Hence, when asked to identify an argument in a text, you should identify a set of statements some of which you will call premises and one of which you will call the conclusion.

Your answer to the question 'what is the argument presented?' should look like this:

Premise 1:
 Premise 2:
 (Premise 3, 4, etc:.....)
 Conclusion:....

Each statement, premise or conclusion, should be **no longer than one short sentence.**

There are ways to recognise which part of a text constitutes premises and which part is a conclusion: look for **argument indicating expressions.**

There are two kinds:

Conclusion Indicating Expressions - CIE

Premise Indicating Expressions - PIE

When you see a CIE, it probably means that a premise comes before it, and a conclusion follows:

Premise 1 (and 2 and 3) CIE Conclusion

When you see a PIE, it probably means that a conclusion comes before it, and a premise follows:

Conclusion PIE Premise 1 (and 2 and 3).

Here are some CIE:

Premise	CIE	Conclusion
The little cat is dead	Therefore Hence So Thus It follows that	I am sad

Here are some PIE:

Conclusion	PIE	Premise
I am sad	Because As Since For Follows from	The little cat is dead

Note:

Not all written or spoken arguments contain argument indicating expressions. Sometimes you just need to look at the meaning and context of a set of statements to realise that it is an argument.

The expressions listed above do not always indicate arguments.

E.g. the word 'so' in the sentence 'this is so boring' does not indicate an argument.

Again, you need to look at the meaning, context, and **use your common sense.**

Weekly homework

The following pages give you the weekly readings and homework.

You should prepare answers to the questions in the spaces provided and bring them to class with you each week.

Your answers should be in note form. You will be asked to discuss them in class in small groups and in short, individual presentations.

Not doing the homework will lower your participation grade significantly.

Introduction: What is Philosophy?

AIM: By the end of week 2, we want to have as clear as possible a statement of the nature and purpose of philosophy. In other words, we want answers to the questions: 'What is philosophy?' and 'What is it for?'

Some definitions:

Exercise:

For each of these, note the weaknesses, i.e. find ways in which they either describe something that you think is not philosophy, or fail to describe what you think counts as philosophy.

Take five minutes and write your answers down.

Process review:

We have discussed several possible definitions. In particular we have tried to figure out what the necessary and sufficient conditions for something to count as philosophy were. If we now make a list of these conditions, we should come up with a good definition of philosophy.

Socrates as a horse-fly – *The Apology*.



Reading: The Apology in the Five Dialogues.

AIM: Learning how to engage with a philosophical text.

When you read a philosophical text you need to read slowly and aggressively. This means that when you come across a statement you do not think you understand, or agree with, stop and ask yourself: what does the author mean here? Is he/she saying something clearly and convincingly? Can I rephrase what they say in a way that makes sense to me? Can I think of examples in support of their claim, or, if I disagree, counterexamples?

This has two implications:

- 1) Reading philosophy takes time! You might find that after an hour you're no further than the first page! But don't worry, you don't need to read every page that intensively. If you're able to stop and ask questions of the author every few pages, that's enough. Another student may well have looked closely at the pages you've missed, and it will all become clear in discussion.
- 2) Not understanding a statement is not the same thing as not understanding a sentence, i.e. you must make sure you know what the words mean first of all! So when you first read, underline words you don't understand and look them up or ask your English teacher.

Here are some questions that will help you focus on the relevant parts of this week's text as you read it. (Note that I will only guide you in this way in the first week: after that, you should use the discussion questions to help you focus on the relevant parts of the text).

- 1) p.24 (19b): What is Socrates first accused of?
- 2) pp25-27 (21a-23b) Why did Socrates' friend, Chaerophon, go to Delphi, and what were the consequences of what he found there?
- 3) p.28 (24b) What is Meletus' second accusation and how does Socrates respond to it?
- 4) p.34 (29c-d) What is Socrates' reply to the hypothetical demand that he give up philosophy?
- 5) p.35 (30d-e) How does Socrates see his divinely assigned role in Athens?

Discussion questions :

Please come to class prepared to discuss these questions. You should have thought about them after reading the text and wrote down some answers in note form.

1) Ancient skeptics believed the following:

The truth cannot be apprehended – the world is too obscure. So in order to achieve peace of mind, we should give up the search for knowledge.

Do you think this is what Socrates believe in the Apology? If so why? If not what are the main differences between Socrates's view and the skeptic view?

2) Why does Socrates 'urge the Athenians to set their thoughts on goodness'? If he is the wisest but does not know what goodness is, then what good will it do the Athenians (who are less wise) to think about it? If he does know what goodness is, then, given that they are not so wise as him, why doesn't he tell them?

Does he mean that :

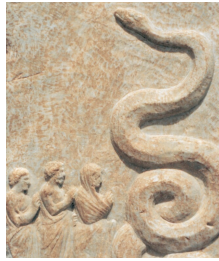
A – more inquirers will, together, succeed where Socrates on his own failed.

B – what matters is not finding answers but asking questions.

C – something else?

Argue for your answers and give examples.

The Definitions Game - Euthyphro



Reading: *The Euthyphro* in *The Five Dialogues*

AIM: To understand the use of definitions in philosophy, learn how to evaluate a definition.

- 1) Where are Euthyphro and Socrates meeting? What are they both doing there?
- 2) Does Socrates think that what Euthyphro is about to do is right?
- 3) If you were Euthyphro, would you prosecute your own father? Are there any circumstances in which you think it is morally acceptable for someone to prosecute their parent?
- 4) Socrates is asking Euthyphro to define piety. Why?
- 5) Choose one of Euthyphro's attempt at defining piety. Why does Socrates reject it? Do you think Socrates is right?
- 6) How would you define piety? How would Socrates object to your definition?

Socrates as torpedo fish – the Meno.



Reading: The Meno in The Five Dialogues

AIM: To understand the use of arguments in philosophy, analyse them in texts and construct them yourself.

1) Definitions again.

A good definition should:

- pick out the thing it defines uniquely.
- be explanatory, or make some sense of why we choose to apply a concept to a certain group of things.

e.g. defining water.

Meno's definition: There's the stuff you get in bottles, from taps, swimming pools, the sea, rivers, and when it rains. You can wash with it, cook with it, drink it, swim in it, drown in it.

Objections:

Good definition: Water is H₂O.

Objections:

2) The Paradox of Inquiry.

'How will you look for something when you don't know what it is?'

Examples: the holy grail, 'rosebud' in *Citizen Kane*.

Counter example: the key that opens the tiny door to the Queen of Heart's garden in *Alice in Wonderland*.

The theory of recollection: what does it achieve?

3) Elenctic teaching.

Dialogue with the slave boy: what does it show?

The possibility of innate knowledge: mathematics and logic. Is this enough?

4) Arguments:

Philosophy involves arguing for one's views rather than asserting them, and looking carefully at arguments for other views.

Example of an assertion:

Candidate: 'You should vote for me!'

For the above to become an argument rather than an assertion, the candidate should

offer reasons for our consideration : i.e. persuade us that we should vote for her.

Terminology:

'argument': a proposition along with some reasons for accepting that proposition.

'conclusion': the proposition for which reasons are offered.

'premise': reasons given for a conclusion.

'valid': an argument is valid when it is impossible for the premises to be true and the conclusion false.

'sound': and argument is sound when it is valid and has true premises.

An example of a valid but unsound argument:

If I roll a double six then Elvis is alive.
I rolled a double six
Therefore Elvis is alive.

The form is fine but the premises are false.

An example of a sound argument:

If you miss class a lot you will get a low attendance grade
You've missed class a lot
Therefore you will get a low attendance grade.

It is valid (same form as the one above) and the premises are true.

How to identify and argument in a text: Argument Indicating Expressions.

PC expressions

Premise – argument indicating expression – conclusion
therefore, so, thus, hence

CP expressions

Conclusion – argument indicating expression – Premise

since, follows from, for.

Examples:

You should vote for me since if you don't , the extreme right will probably get in and that will be a disaster.

P1
P2
C

If I'm not elected I will not be in a position to give your brother a job. So you should vote for me.

P1
P2
C

In each of these, use the argument indicating expression to identify the premises and the conclusion.
In the second argument premise 2 is missing. Can you guess what it is?

More PC expressions:

More CP expressions:

Here are two arguments in the Meno for the claim that virtue can be taught – can you find them in the text?

A.
Everything that is good is good because it is a kind of knowledge.
(All *Fs* are *G*)
Virtue is good.
(*x* is *F*)
Therefore Virtue is knowledge.
(*x* is *G*)

B.
If there are no teachers and learners of something, then we should be right to assume that that thing cannot be taught.
(If not *p* then not *q*)

There don't seem to be any teachers of virtue.
(not *p*)

Therefore virtue cannot be taught.
(not *q*).

Note: *F* and *G* are predicates, i.e. attributes of things. *P* and *q* are propositions, i.e. an assertion, which is true or false.

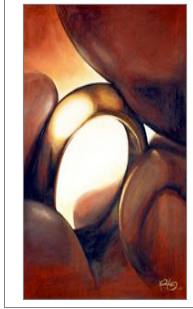
e.g. 'is human', and 'is mortal' are predicates. 'Humans are mortal' or 'if Socrates is human then Socrates is mortal' are propositions.

Discussion questions.

1) Is Meno's paradox any good? Is there an answer to it? If not, is there any point to philosophy or any other knowledge seeking activity?

2) In the arguments A and B, above, how does Socrates establish the premises? Look for evidence that is given in the text. Are either of the two arguments convincing?

Is Virtue Beneficial? *Republic* Books I and II



1) Definitions.

2) Calicles and Thrasymachus

Whatever justice might be, it is not worth acquiring.

3) Two kinds of life again: Gyges' ring.

Which life is more worthwhile?

4) Justice and human life: the function argument.

An answer to Glaucon and Adeimantus as well as Thrasymachus?

Soul and City – *Republic* IV and IX.



1) The Soul and the City.

Who are the guardians and what they must be like.

2) Justice as Harmony :

Plato bases his claim that justice is beneficial for human beings on a theory of the human soul, This theory is outlined in book IV (see 441e, 444e) and book IX (588c).

Read these passages carefully. What is the theory? Do you thin it is a good one? Does it support Plato's claims about justice being beneficial?

2) The Guardians' education.

- poetry, imitation and falsehood.
- music and gymnastic: harmony.

Citizenship and Happiness



Read Aristotle's *Politics*, Book I.

1) The priority of the city

Aristotle considers the Polis to be the most natural political arrangement for human beings. Why? What does he mean when he says that 'man is a political animal'? (Find the relevant passages in the text before you attempt to answer the question.)

2) Slaves.

Aristotle gives an infamous argument why slavery is legitimate. Can you identify the argument in the text, find the premises and conclusion, and tell why it's a bad argument?

3) Women.

Aristotle doesn't think women should be citizens in the same way that men should be. Can you find his arguments for this? How do you think Aristotle's views on women have affected how we think about women's role in society?

The constitutions – good and bad



Reading: Aristotle's *Politics*, Book III.

1) How many constitutions?

Aristotle distinguishes between different kinds of constitutions according to the answer to two questions:

- who is in charge?
- whose benefit do they pursue?

What are the different sorts of constitutions Aristotle distinguishes? Can you find examples for them?

2) The mixed constitution.

What is the best constitution according to Aristotle and why? Do you agree with him?

The Two Cities



Reading: Augustine, *Political Writings, The City of God*, Books I, pp.3-7 and XIV, pp.95-104.

1. Read the beginning of Book I: What do you think Augustine's purpose in writing this book is? Can you distinguish between a historical and a philosophical purpose?
2. Read the first part of book XIV: What are the two cities, where do they exist, who lives in them?
3. What do you think are the conditions of human happiness according to Augustine? How do they differ from Aristotle's conditions? Can you find any passages in which he discusses happiness?
4. From his remarks on human nature in Book XIV what sort of politics do you think Augustine would favour?

Men and Women



Reading: Augustine, *Political Writings, The City of God* Books I, pp. 8-12 and XIV, pp.105-109; *The Status of Women*, pp.250-53

1) Read the texts listed above carefully. What does Augustine say about the differences between men and women? Is there any sense in which he believes in gender equality?

2) In several parts of the text, Augustine discusses rape. One famous rape narrative in Antiquity to the Renaissance was the rape of the Roman woman Lucretia by Tarquin. The earliest version of the story is by Livy (text below). Augustine gave his own interpretation of the tragedy (the chapter is missing from your book, I have pasted below), and it is later discussed by Christine de Pizan.

Carefully read and analyse the two texts below (Livy and Augustine). How do they differ? Are they at all enlightening about rape? What would you agree and disagree with in these texts and why?

Trigger warning: the texts on the next page are reports of a rape, and some of the attitudes portrayed are highly upsetting.

Livy: The Rape of Lucretia

“A few days afterwards Sextus Tarquinius went, unknown to Collatinus, with one companion to Collatia. He was hospitably received by the household, who suspected nothing, and after supper was conducted to the bedroom set apart for guests. When all around seemed safe and everybody fast asleep, he went in the frenzy of his passion with a naked sword to the sleeping Lucretia, and placing his left hand on her breast, said, ‘Silence, Lucretia! I am Sextus Tarquinius, and I have a sword in my hand; if you utter a word, you shall die.’

When the woman, terrified out of her sleep, saw that no help was near, and instant death threatening her, Tarquin began to confess his passion, pleaded, used threats as well as entreaties, and employed every argument likely to influence a female heart. When he saw that she was inflexible and not moved even by the fear of death, he threatened to disgrace her, declaring that he would lay the naked corpse of the slave by her dead body, so that it might be said that she had been slain in foul adultery. By this awful threat, his lust triumphed over her inflexible chastity, and Tarquin went off exulting in having successfully attacked her honour.

Lucretia, overwhelmed with grief at such a frightful outrage, sent a messenger to her father at Rome and to her husband at Ardea, asking them to come to her, each accompanied by one faithful friend; it was necessary to act, and to act promptly; a horrible thing had happened. Spurius Lucretius came with Publius Valerius, the son of Volesus; Collatinus with Lucius Junius Brutus, with whom he happened to be returning to Rome when he was met by his wife’s messenger.

They found Lucretia sitting in her room prostrate with grief. As they entered, she burst into tears, and to her husband’s inquiry whether all was well, replied, ‘No! what can be well with a woman when her honour is lost? The marks of a stranger, Collatinus, are in your bed. But it is only the body that has been violated the soul is pure; death shall bear witness to that. But pledge me your solemn word that the adulterer shall not go unpunished. It is Sextus Tarquinius, who, coming as an enemy instead of a guest forced from me last night by brutal violence a pleasure fatal to me, and, if you are men, fatal to him.’ They all successively pledged their word, and tried to console the distracted woman, by turning the guilt from the victim of the outrage to the perpetrator, and urging that it is the mind that sins not the body, and where there has been no consent there is no guilt ‘It is for you,’ she said, ‘to see that he gets his deserts: although I acquit myself of the sin, I do not free myself from the penalty; no unchaste woman shall henceforth live and plead Lucretia’s example.’

She had a knife concealed in her dress which she plunged into her heart, and fell dying on the floor. Her father and husband raised the death-cry.”

Augustine on Lucretia:

“We maintain that when a woman is violated while her soul remains inviolably chaste, the sin is not hers, but his who violates her’ [...] “For the sanctity of the body does not consist in the integrity of its members, nor in their exemption from all touch; for they are open to various accidents which do violence to and wound them. [...]But how is it, that she who was no partner to the crime bears the heavier punishment of the two? For the adulterer was only banished along with his father; she suffered the extreme penalty. If that was not impurity by which she was unwillingly ravished, then this is not justice by which she, being chaste, is punished. To you I appeal, you laws and judges of Rome. Even after the perpetration of great enormities, you do not suffer the criminal to be slain untried. If, then, one were to bring to your bar this case, and were to prove to you that a woman not only untried, but chaste and innocent, had been killed, would you not visit the murderer with punishment proportionably severe? This crime was committed by Lucretia; that Lucretia so celebrated and lauded slew the innocent, chaste, outraged Lucretia. Pronounce sentence. But if you cannot, because there does not appear any one whom you can punish, why do you extol with such unmeasured laudation her who slew an innocent and chaste woman? [...]She herself alone knows her reason; but what if she was betrayed by the pleasure of the act, and gave some consent to Sextus, though so violently abusing her, and then was so affected with remorse, that she thought death alone could expiate her sin?” (I, 19).

The Medieval Glass Ceiling



Reading: The City of Ladies, part I

Biographical note: Christine de Pizan (1363-1430) was the daughter of an Italian astronomer called to the court of the French king Charles V.

Unusually for that time, her father insisted that she be educated (although she did not read classical languages as well as Heloise d'Argenteuil, two hundred years before, did). She married at 15, but was widowed at 24. There were legal difficulties about collecting her husband's salary, so in order to support herself and her family, she became a writer. She wrote ballads, at first, i.e. romantic poetry, then became an important part of the debate on the Roman de la Rose – she was one of its critiques – and was commissioned to write several pieces on moral education for royalty. She was a successful and prolific writer.

Note on the vocabulary: Christine uses 'prudence' the French translation of 'prudencia' which is Cicero's Latin translation of 'phronesis', Aristotle's word for the kind of wisdom which is necessary for making virtuous decisions. So it does not mean prudence in the modern sense, which is to carefully weigh pros and cons before acting, mostly to protect our own interests.

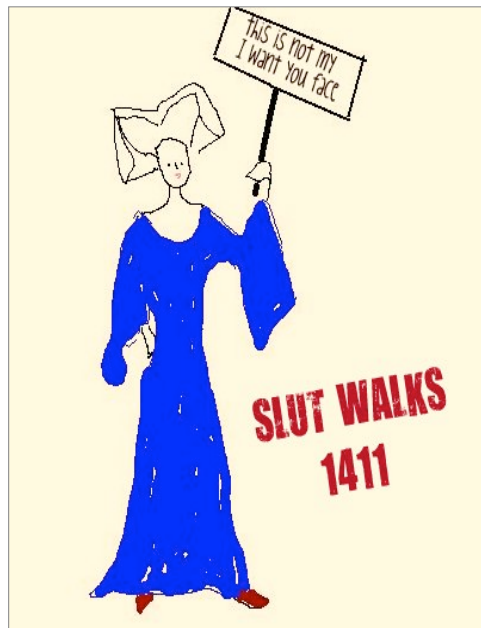
Questions to focus on while you are reading:

- 1) What sort of criticisms of women is Christine responding to? Are they the criticisms you'd expect to find in Medieval Europe? Do people still believe such things?
- 2) What seems to be her attitude to philosophers and philosophy? What is 'philofolly?' (p.6, and p.12)
- 3) What does the metaphor of building a city stand for? Focus on its various aspects, choosing the grounds, digging, carrying away dirt, laying foundations.
- 4) Lady Reason tells Christine that men and women are equal as far as intellectual capacities are concerned. Christine replies with potential objections:
 - a – If women are as intelligent as men, why are there no women lawyers or judges?
 - b – Have there ever been any wise women?
 - c – Have there ever been any women scientists or inventors?

Consider the responses. Are you satisfied with them? Would you have answered differently?

Now considered the questions: how many of them does it still make sense to ask today? Are there other similar questions we might ask when questioning female/ male equality?

A Medieval Lady fights back



Reading: *City of Ladies*, Part II.

1. Passive victims?

In part II, chapter 53, Christine asks why women do not respond to male writers who write lies about them. What is lady Rectitude's reply? Do you find it convincing? Would you reply differently?

2. Sex discrimination:

In part II, 54, Christine proposes an argument against writers who slander women on the grounds that it helps protect innocent men against bad women p.95.

Compare this argument to the following argument against positive discrimination:

'Positive discrimination promotes the good of only a portion of society, women, sometimes at the expense of men's benefit. Therefore it cannot be just.'

What, if anything, can you conclude from the fact that Christine uses an argument of the very same form against misogynist writings?

3. Blaming the victims

In part II, chapters 44 and 62, Christine discusses the absurdity of the beliefs that women want to be raped, and that wearing attractive clothing is a signal to men that they can be raped. What are her arguments? How do they compare to the arguments of the supporters of the 'slut walks' movement? (If you don't know what the movement is, Google it).

Compare Christine's account of the rape of Lucretia to Livy's and Augustine's. What are the main differences?

Outlines

Before you hand in your essay, you should submit an outline. The outline will be graded, and I will only accept essays from students who have submitted an outline on time.

- 1) Read the question carefully.
- 2) Do the reading specified in the question you have chosen. You will read the text by yourself first, and discuss it in class after you have completed your outline. Class discussion will contribute to your first draft, but the outline calls for independent work.

For the first essay, your outline should contain:

- An analysis of the argument you are asked to discuss, in terms of premises and conclusions.

You should write down each premise both in your own words, and copy the text which you identified as expressing that premise.

- An example of your own illustrating the argument (or part of the argument).
- An objection to the argument and a reply.

For the second essay your outline should contain the same plus a second argument, you own, in which you put forward your own conclusion defended with your own premises.

Jack Woods' Advice on Writing Philosophy Essays.

1. Use clear, simple prose. There is a temptation in philosophy to try to sound deep, grand, sophisticated, or literary. Resist! These sorts of touches come later. Professional philosophers should also aim for clear, simple prose. But often they fail at this. It is partially your job to make up for their failure by explaining their point clearly and simply in your own words. For example, if their name is "the highest one", do not write "that than which no higher can be conceived" as (a) this does not mean the same thing and (b) makes the reader do far too much work.
2. Less is more. Do not attempt to kick out the chocks from underneath, say, Rationalism or Theism in your first paper. Rather, pick a small issue which makes a major point and go after it with tweezers and a scalpel. Be clear about what the issue is, what is plausible about some solution to it, what is not and then decide on the basis of reasons whether or not this solution is tenable. I guarantee you that you will learn far more about the entire topic in this way.
3. Give examples. Philosophers love examples. A freshly thought-up accurate example of your own is incontrovertible proof that you understand something. For every claim you make, give an example to illustrate it (within reason!) This will make me happy.
4. Similarly with counterexamples. Whenever you make a claim, think about how someone might respond (again, within reason!). Then modify your position or include a pair of responses and your rebuttal.
5. Minimize long quotations---though be generous with citations to the work that you draw on, both explicitly and implicitly. It will serve you better in the long run to be able to paraphrase arguments in your own words. An eye for when to include a quote and when to paraphrase is a valuable and difficult thing to develop. Start early.
6. Be generous. Most philosophers are not left speechless at objections; try to respond on the behalf of the person or view you are raising problems for. Again, among the valuable skills you should endeavor to develop is the sense for what is appealing about a view that you find false. It is a good assumption that the people we will read are NOT STUPID. Do them the service of believing it of them.
7. Keep the structure simple. If you are arguing that Q on the basis of P, then structure your essay thus: I will argue that Q because P. Here is an argument that Q on the basis of P. I am arguing Q on the basis of P. Here are objections to Q because of P or just to Q. These objections don't work. I am rebutting criticism of my thesis: Q on the basis of P. In this essay, I have argued that Q on the basis of P and then addressed some criticisms of this claim. The end. This might sound too simple. It is not. Philosophy can be incredibly difficult; it is thus important to be as clear as possible as to what you are doing while you do it.
8. Finally, everything in your essay should be aimed at establishing your conclusion. Do not waste words. If it doesn't support your thesis, have to do with an objection to it, or serve to inform the reader where they are in the paper, delete it. Except your name. Keep this at the top left of the first page.

See also Angela Mendelovici's Prezi on how to write a philosophy essay:
http://prezi.com/z4h1_fwilbxj/a-sample-philosophy-paper/