



Literature & Philosophy

9 Week Elective

How to Contact Ms. Grady

I will be available to meet with you by appointment each day between 7:15-7:30 OR 2:25-2:45. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions or concerns. If this causes a conflict in your schedule, feel free to email me and we can figure out a better time that works.

Email: lgrady@haverfordsd.net

Website: Canvas

Course Overview:

This course explores how literature can help readers understand basic philosophical questions about knowledge, truth, existence, and ethics. Students will read literary texts and apply the problems and ideas raised by those texts to philosophical concepts. We will also look at how philosophy impacts pop culture and other fields of study. The course stresses student-initiated discussion, intensive reading, and clear, concise writing. You should be aware that philosophical work often requires engaged reading, critical thinking, charitable discussion, active listening, and a desire to understand. Without this commitment, you may struggle to enjoy the benefits of this class.

Course expectations and outcomes:

- Students will begin to develop an understanding of fundamental philosophical problems and how these problems are dramatized in literary texts.

Course requirements:

- Your willingness to think, listen, respond, question, and communicate thoughtful ideas
- Your desire to evaluate your thinking and be receptive to challenges regarding your thinking
- Logic. Logic. Logic.
- A few projects based on student-selected topics
- Writing assignments (creative and critical)
- Daily journal writes
- Student-initiated symposiums

Outline:

- I. What is Philosophy?
 - a. How to engage in philosophical dialogue
- II. Epistemology
 - a. The study of knowledge
 - b. How do I know that I know it?
- III. Metaphysics
 - a. The study of existence and reality
 - b. What is out there and is it real?
- IV. Ethics
 - a. The study of action
 - b. What should I do and why should I do it?
- V. What is the meaning of life (Is there a meaning or purpose to any of it)?



Materials & Daily Supplies:

- Chromebook (charged) & Charger (just in case it is not charged)
- A Binder or notebook and folder for
 - Class Notes and Handouts
 - Graded Work
- Journals (this could be done on loose-leaf, in a personal journal, or it could be completed on Google Docs--they will be collected approximately every three weeks)
- Something to write with – a pencil or pen
- A planner – to help you keep track of homework assignments and upcoming projects
- Any books, packets, handouts

General Expectations

- The students and the teacher will adhere to the [*Haverford High School Student & Family Handbook*](#)
- The students and the teacher will be respectful of the classroom environment and considerate of others and their personal property and respectful of each other's ideas.
- The students and the teacher will come to class prepared with binders, pens, books, and assignments.

Assignments and Grading

- Students should expect weekly reading and/or review **homework**. Written homework may be assigned several times a week. Quality counts just as much as completeness.
- Student **assessments** will include projects, presentations, and writing assignments. Grading is done on a point basis--no 80/20 percentages here!
- **Late Work:** All work is expected to be completed on time.
- **Lateness to class:** If you arrive after the bell, you must have a pass.
- **Absences.** Please avoid them. You really need to be in class to “get” the importance of the class. If you have chronic absences, this class may not be for you. It is based in discussion and attendance is imperative. Of course, occasional circumstances beyond your control restrict you from being present; therefore, see below:
- **Make-up Work:** It is the student's responsibility to complete all work missed due to EXCUSED absence. You must have an excused absence or missed work will not be graded. However, should you be absent the date a long-term assignment is due, the assignment is due the day you return. You are responsible for any notes that you may have missed. Talk to your friends in class & see Canvas!
- **Submitting Work:** Written assignments are expected to be typed and turned in through Canvas.
- **Plagiarism:** Copying, cheating, using AI of any kind, or plagiarizing is grounds for receiving a 0 and hence, failing the assignment. Parents may be contacted and you may be written up to the grade level principal. Original thought is the basis of this entire course, so, yeah....don't plagiarize.
- **“Journals”** will often be used daily to gather thoughts prior to discussion. Journals will be collected every 2-3 weeks in order to receive credit for completeness or entries may be revised and used as a more polished writing piece at your discretion. More on this when we get into projects.
- **Professionalism:** You will be evaluated on your professionalism which considers all of the above. It assesses your adherence to expectations such as arriving on time, having good attendance, submitting assignments on time, using appropriate communication strategies with peers and the teacher, actively engaging in class, and demonstrating self-reflection and improvement. The grade will reflect the level of professionalism you display throughout the course and serves as an indicator of your overall conduct and commitment to your education (see the attached rubric on the next page).

Name:

Professionalism in the Literature and Philosophy Classroom

Level	Expectations
10	Exemplary
	Cell phone is put away in pocket during class time every day without prompting.
	Student consistently arrives to class on time.
	Student has excellent attendance and seldom misses class. All absences are for valid and excused reasons.
	All assignments are completed and submitted on time; even assignments that may not directly go into PowerSchool are complete.
	Student consistently communicates with peers and teacher appropriately.
	Student is actively engaged in class, shows attentiveness, commitment to learning, & self-reflection, and participates by offering responses and ideas.
	Responsibly uses the bathroom pass—only when necessary and in a timely manner.
8	Proficient
	Cell phones are mostly put away (almost never needs to be asked) and is not a distraction during class time.
	Student usually arrives to class on time but may come a bit late from time to time.
	Student has good attendance with no unexcused absences.
	Most assignments are completed and submitted on time; even assignments that may not directly go into PowerSchool are complete.
	Student generally communicates with peers and teacher appropriately.
	Student is mostly engaged in class, shows attentiveness, is interested in learning, & self-reflection, and participates often by offering responses.
	Responsibly uses the bathroom pass—only once a class and in a timely manner.
6	Adequate
	Cell phones are occasionally not in the pocket (teacher needs to remind).

	Student frequently arrives to class on time, but may occasionally be tardy.
	Student has average attendance with a few unexcused absences.
	Assignments are mostly completed and submitted on time, with occasional delays; assignments that do not go into PowerSchool may not be completed.
	Student sometimes communicates with peers and teacher inappropriately and/or may not communicate enough.
	Student is somewhat engaged during class but may appear distracted or sleepy at times. Student does not seem to reflect or attempt to improve.
	Student uses the bathroom pass too often or fails to return in a timely manner
4	Developing
	Cell phones are often not in the pocket and teacher needs to remind.
	Student frequently arrives late to class
	Student has below average attendance with multiple unexcused absences.
	Assignments are sometimes incomplete or consistently submitted late. Student does not complete assignments that do not go into PowerSchool.
	Student occasionally communicates with peers and teacher in an inappropriate way–this may include limited consideration of the rhetorical situation–audience awareness and tone–and/or communication is rare.
	Student often appears distracted or sleepy in class. Student does not participate in lessons or offer responses or ideas often. Student does not self-reflect or attempt to improve.
	Student uses the bathroom pass irresponsibly by abusing it nearly every day and for more than ten minutes.
2	Limited
	Cell phones are consistently visible and a major distraction during class time even though the teacher reminds the student to put it in the pocket.
	Student is consistently late to class.
	Student has poor attendance with frequent unexcused absences.
	Assignments are often incomplete or submitted significantly late.
	Student frequently communicates with peers and teacher inappropriately–this includes a limited consideration of the nature of the course.

	Student is frequently distracted, falls asleep in class, and refuses to participate in lessons and activities. Demonstrates little to no honest self-reflection and rarely acknowledges or addresses their own behavior
	Student uses the bathroom pass irresponsibly by abusing it nearly every day and for more than fifteen minutes.
1	Insufficient
	Cell phones are consistently in use and highly disruptive during class time
	Student is late to class daily
	Student is consistently absent or rarely attends class
	Assignments are rarely completed or not submitted at all
	Student consistently communicates with peers and teacher inappropriately–this includes a failure to consider the rhetorical situation–audience awareness and tone–and/or doesn't communicate at all.
	Student is consistently disengaged in class, often sleeping or not paying attention, or leaving class and failing to return. Student does not demonstrate any honest self-reflection and shows no effort to assess or improve their own behavior
	Student abuses bathroom pass or leaves class without using pass.

Texts and topics are subject to change depending on student interest and time constraints.

Some Possible Texts

- “The Allegory of the Cave” ~Plato
- “The Lottery” ~Shirley Jackson
- “Belief” ~ DH Lawrence
- “When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer”
~Walt Whitman
- “Truth', Said a Travellor” ~ DH Lawrence
- “Sweet Skepticism of the Heart” ~ Dickinson
- “The Bet” ~Anton Checkov
- “The Secret Life of Walter Mitty” ~James Thurber
- *Every Day* (Excerpt)~ David Levithan
- “Story of Your Life” ~ Ted Chiang
- “--All you Zombies--” ~Robert Heinlein
- “White Christmas” *Black Mirror* episode
- “Just Lather, That's All” ~ Hernando Tellez
- “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas”
~Ursula Le Guin
- “Hills Like White Elephants” ~ Ernest Hemingway
- **The Truman Show*~Peter Weir
- **Blade Runner* ~ Ridley Scott
- **The Matrix* ~ *The Wachowskis*

Some Possible Concepts

- The Examined Life
- Skepticism
- Belief
- Truth
- Knowledge
- Platonic Realism
- Monism
- Common Sense Realism
- Materialism
- Dualism
- Dreams
- Ethics
- Morality
- Free Will vs. Determinism
- Good vs. Evil
- Deontological ethics
 - Categorical Imperative
- Teleological ethics
 - Utilitarianism
- Virtue Ethics
- Motive
- Logic
- Art
- Beauty
- **The Meaning of Life*
- **Absurdism*
- **Nihilism*

I have read and understand the class expectations and policies for Ms. Grady's Literature & Philosophy class. If I have any questions or concerns, I know that I can contact Ms. Grady at lgrady@haverfordsd.net

Print Student's Name: _____

Student's Signature: _____

Date: _____

Parent/Guardian's Signature (s): _____

Parent/Guardian's current email address:

Date: _____

Comments: