



MLAP 36100: FOUNDATIONS OF ETHICAL THOUGHT
RESIDENTIAL SEMINAR
SEPTEMBER 18 – 25

Course Instructor: Jason Bridges, Associate Professor, Philosophy

Discussion Leader: Clare Pearson, Instructor, Basic Program of Liberal Education

Description:

In this course we will examine five ideas that lie at the root of our ethical thinking. These ideas are: happiness; concern for the good of others; rights and duties; the rule of law; and political action. We'll consider these ideas both from a philosophical standpoint and in some of their myriad manifestations in real-world problems and concerns.

Readings will be drawn from a long and rich tradition of philosophical reflection upon these ideas—a tradition initiated by the ancient Greeks, transformed in the Enlightenment, and put under pressure by skeptics and critics of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries. Authors read include: Aristotle, Kant, Max Weber, and John Stuart Mill, as well as various contemporary thinkers. We'll seize the opportunity provided by our presence in Chicago with field trips that consider the city's place in the history of one the defining ethical projects of modern times: the African-American struggle for civil rights.

Sunday September 18

- Students arrive for orientation & campus tour
- Group Dinner the first evening

Monday September 19

AM Seminar: 9am – 11:30

Happiness

- Aristotle, *Ethics* I and XIII, excerpts
- Epictetus, selections from *Discourses*, book I
- Tatarkiewicz, "Happiness and Time"
- Annas, "Happiness as Achievement"

Lunch & Learn: 12pm-1pm

Speaker and topic TBD

PM Seminar: 1:30pm-4pm

Concern for the Good of Others

- Mill, *Utilitarianism*, chapters 1-2, 5
- Rawls, "Classical Utilitarianism", in *A Theory of Justice*
- Weil, "*The Iliad* or the Poem of Force"



Tuesday September 20

AM Discussion: 9am – 11:30

Building on Aristotle: the ultimate role of benevolence & friendship

- *NE* Book IX (partial), Book X (partial)

Break for Lunch: 11:30am – 1:30pm

PM Discussion: 1:30pm-4pm

Building on Mill: conscience and mutual obligation

- *Utilitarianism* Chapter 3, Chapter 5 revisited/continued

Wednesday September 21

- AM: Chicago History Museum with Professor Bridges (until lunch)
- Court Theater Performance of *Arsenic and Old Lace* in the evening

Thursday September 22

AM Discussion: 9am – 11:30

Plato: Ethics = Justice = "Minding Your Own Business"

- *Republic* Bks 2 & 4 (selections)

Lunch & Learn: 12pm-1pm

Speaker and topic TBD

PM Discussion: 1:30pm-4pm

Ethics as First Philosophy- The Face of the Other

- Excerpt from Levinas, *Totality and Infinity* chapter 1
- Alphonso Lingis, *The Community of Those Who Have Nothing in Common* (excerpts)
- Toni Morrison, Noble Prize Lecture

Friday September 23

AM Seminar: 9am – 11:30

Rights and Duties

- Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, section 2
- Korsgaard, "Creating the Kingdom of Ends: Reciprocity and Responsibility in Personal Relations"

Lunch & Learn: 12pm-1pm

Speaker and topic TBD

PM Seminar: 1:30pm-4pm

The Rule of Law

- Hampton, "Democracy and the Rule of Law"
- Waldron, "The Concept and the Rule of Law," sections I-II, V



Saturday September 24

AM Seminar: 9am – 11:30

Political Action

- Weber, excerpt from “Politics as a Vocation”
- King, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”

Break for Lunch: 11:30am – 1:30pm

PM Discussion: 1:30pm-4pm

Intersections of Character, Politics, Speech

- Rousseau, excerpt from *Discourse on Political Economy*
- Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, chaps 7 & 8
- Mill, *On Liberty*, chap 2 "On Liberty of Thought and Discussion"

Sunday September 25

AM Meeting: 9:30am-11:30am

Final Conversation, roundtable discussion with Jason Bridges & Clare Pearson

Group Farewell Lunch: 12-1pm

Departures



Schedule Table:

Date	AM Session 9:00-11:30 AM	Lunch 12-1pm	PM Session 1:30-4pm	Evening
Sun Sep 18		Arrivals	Campus Tour	Welcome Dinner & Reception
Mon Sep 19	Seminar: <i>Happiness</i>	Lunch & Learn: <i>Topic TBD</i>	Seminar: <i>Concern for the Good of Others</i>	
Tues Sep 20	Discussion: <i>Benevolence & Friendship</i>	Break	Discussion: <i>Conscience & Mutual Obligation</i>	
Weds Sep 21	Chicago History Musuem	Break	Break	Court Theater: <i>Arsenic and Old Lace</i>
Thurs Sep 22	Discussion: <i>Plato: Ethics = Justice</i>	Lunch & Learn: <i>Topic TBD</i>	Discussion: <i>Ethics as First Philosophy</i>	
Fri Sep 23	Seminar: <i>Rights and Duties</i>	Lunch & Learn: <i>Topic TBD</i>	Seminar: <i>The Rule of Law</i>	
Sat Sep 24	Seminar: <i>Political Action</i>	Break	Discussion: <i>Character, Politics, & Speech</i>	
Sun Sep 25	Roundtable Conversation	Group Lunch	<i>Departures</i>	