

FORM E-1-A FOR BOSTON COLLEGE CORE CURRICULUM

Department: Philosophy
Course: Philosophy of the Person

1) **Have formal learning outcomes for the department's Core courses been developed?**

Yes. By introducing students to the great philosophical questions, philosophy offers a perspective which makes possible an integrated vision of physical, human and spiritual reality; it weighs propositions fundamental to personal identity, dignity, religious belief, and social responsibility, and examines moral issues facing individuals and communities. The Philosophy core teaches analytical and interpretive skills so that students develop an intellectual and moral framework for considering questions of ultimate value and significance, challenging them to translate philosophical principles into guides for life. Thus, the philosophy (ophy0gn)-1 (os)5 (ophyw (g)0gn)w es0gnoophywg

- 1) Understand the historical origins of values and principles that ground, and are questioned, in contemporary culture
- 2) Reflect on their individual, social, and religious identities and relationships
- 3) Examine their values in light of their reflection on philosophical views
- 4) Develop the ability to analyze arguments in order to create a moral fra oTJO Trk fSr cNsidering questions of ultimate value
- 5) Consider the nature of notions like reason, evidence, belief, and certainty such that they are able to think critically about the kinds of claims made in different disciplines from the natural sciences to theology
- 6) Critically engage with contemporary problems and questions using the tools of philosophical reflection and argument

2) **Where are these learning outcomes published? Be specific.** (Where are the department's expected learning outcomes for its Core courses accessible: on the web, in the catalog, or in your department handouts?)

Expected learning outcomes for Core courses in Philosophy are published on the 'Philosophy Core' section of our departmental website:

<https://www.bc.edu/bc-web/schools/mcas/departments/philosophy/undergraduate/core-in-philosophy.html>

They are also included on faculty syllabi

to oversee all the sections or provide additional resources and support to instructors (unlike Perspectives or PULSE).

Starting in Fall 2024,

SUMMARY OF EVIDENCE COLLECTED

1) Of all the texts and/or authors that you covered this term (or year), please name one or two that you think worked the best, and that you would certainly use in future versions of this course.

Marx/Engels, <i>Capital</i> , and Plato's <i>Dialogues</i> (required)
Essays from Amia Srinivasan's <i>The Right to Sex</i> (elective)
Students responded to and were most engaged with Aristotle's <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , specifically Books I, II, VIII, and IX. The content on moral virtue and its examples, and the material on friendship, resonated strongly with their own experiences. This was also some of the most memorable for them. I was surprised to see

(2) Of all the texts and/or authors that you covered this term (or year), please name one or two that you think worked the worst, and that you would not use in future versions of this course (or would prefer to see dropped from the Philosophy of the Person syllabus).

Mill's *Utilitarianism* was—surprisingly—one with which the students engaged least. I anticipated they would agree most with Mill, given the influence of his thought on American politics today. He provided a useful critique of Kant's *Groundwork*, but it might be worth making the Mill text optional.

The easy answer is someone like Kant or Hegel. Students frankly did not care for their writing style. One that was surprising, though, was Nietzsche. Students did not care for the polemic nature of his writing. I think I spent too much time on Kant and Hegel and chose the wrong Nietzsche reading so I will find a way to alter those elements. But I think that Kant is essential if only for understanding what comes after him and Hegel on recognition is great especially when played off of Fanon.

It's blasphemy, but

It would be great to have a list of interesting articles or books about the most resurgent topics, like artificial intelligence, new forms of racism, question of tolerance, and cultural Marxism, which we could integrate into our teaching or assignments. Based on my teaching experience, students like topics that are connected with their lives.

I think that intuitionism (Sidgwick, Moore, Ross, etc) is overlooked on many syllabi, though I am not sure I would go as far as to say that it ought to be required. After looking at 19th-20th century challenges to 'ideal moral theory', or the dominant Utilitarian/Kantian paradigm (e.g. Schopenhauer, Nietzsche)

I do not think so, given my current knowledge.

I'm not sure what a course director would do, so I will remain ambivalent.

I could see a director functioning well. I have heard (from my students and fellow part-time faculty) that there is substantial variability in how the course is taught. For instance, I know that some faculty members assign far fewer readings and engage through film. I think that having a standard of writing requirements, reading requirements, etc could help ensure a uniform experience. I have also heard that some part time faculty members do not encourage as much discussion (this is from students who transferred to my class). Since this is likely the first philosophy course for many of our students, ensuring that students are doing philosophy (e.g. participating, discussing, engaging in dialectic with each other) is key. I am not sure whether a centralized director could bring this about, but I could see benefits to some form of centralized pedagogical goal setting.

(5) Do you think the Philosophy of the Person course could benefit from more events and/or shared resources specifically for Philosophy of the Person instructors? If so, what events and/or shared resources do you think would be most helpful for instructors?

Not events but resources might be helpful. Maybe a shared Google doc of folders containing lesson plans and outlines etc for individual thinkers like one for Descartes and one for Kant.

