

**PHI 2600: Ethics and Critical Thinking CRN: 14034**

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| *Days/Time:* | M/W 10:00 | *Professor:* | Dr. Peter Furlong |
| *Classroom:* | West 4-204 | *Office:* | 5-249 |
| *Credit Hours:* | 3 | *Contact Info* | **BEST: Canvas inbox**  [pfurlong@valenciacollege.edu](mailto:pfurlong@valenciacollege.edu)  Office Phone: (407) 582-1479 |
| *Prerequisites:*  *Term:* | none  Fall 2021 | *Office Hours* | |  | | --- | | M: 11:30-3:00  T: 8:00-10:00am  W: 11:30-12:30  H: 8:00-12:30  F: 1:00-2:00  (Virtual hours are through Canvas inbox) | |

We must follow the argument wherever it leads.

Socrates (5th century BC)

A man who will not reason about anything is no better than a vegetable.

Aristotle (4th century BC)

A moment’s thought would have shown him. But a moment is a long time, and thought is a painful process.

E. Housman (20th century AD)

Never ignore, never refuse to see what might be thought against your own thought.

F. Nietzsche (19th century AD)

**General Course Information**

**Course Description**

Study of major theoretical principles on which claims to good life and moral action have been based, such as consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics. Each theory will be illustrated by representative selections from works of great philosophers from the classical period to the present. This is a Gordon Rule course, which requires demonstration of college level writing skills through multiple assignments. Minimum grade of C required if used to satisfy Gordon Rule requirement.

**Required Texts**

* All readings will be available through Canvas.

A Note on the Readings: You should not presume that I have picked readings that represent what I take to be the best views. I have not. Instead, I chose the readings with particular pedagogical views in mind.

Don’t be concerned if I have left your favorite view or arguments out. I have left out most of my favorites too. We probably know our own favorites well, anyway, and it is worth spending time on things we don’t.

**Valencia College Core Competencies**

The faculty of Valencia College has identified four core competencies that define the learning outcomes for a successful Valencia graduate. These competencies are at the heart of the Valencia experience and provide the context for learning and assessment at Valencia College. You will be given opportunities to develop and practice these competencies in this class. The four competencies are:

1. **Think** – think clearly, and creatively, analyze, synthesize, integrate and evaluate in the many domains of human inquiry
2. **Value** – make reasoned judgments and responsible commitments
3. **Communicate** – communicate with different audiences using varied means
4. **Act** – act purposefully, effectively and responsibly.

**Learning Outcomes**

* Think

Students will develop the ability to understand and evaluate arguments. This will include the ability to identify arguments and their constitutive parts, classify them according to standard divisions, and evaluate their truth and inferential claims.

* Value

Students will begin to evaluate their particular and general ethical beliefs with an eye toward improving overall consistency and grounding particular norms in larger normative and meta-ethical framework.

* Communicate

Students will improve their verbal and written communication through class discussions, small (in-class) group projects, and reports on their projects to the entire class.

* Act

Students will begin to investigate the theoretical foundations of rational action, both on the level of personal action (ethics) and communal action (politics). This will empower them to become rational, purposive, and reflective members of society.

**Instructional Method**

We will use a variety of methods, including lecture, class discussion, and in-class tasks (both as individuals and in groups).

**Course Requirements**

**Grades**

In this course you will have the opportunity to earn a maximum of 1000 points. Each graded assignment will be given a particular number of points. You can calculate your own grade at any time by dividing the number of points you have earned by the total number of points that have been available up to that point. It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades. This is part of taking control of your own education.

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| **Assignment** | **Points** |  |
| 4 Short Written Assignments  1 3-5 pg. Argumentative Paper | 300 points (75 pts each)  200 points |  |
| 3 Exams | 500 points (150 pts each for the first two, 200 points for the final exam) |  |

Tentative schedule of graded assignments and weekly topics

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| **Assignment** | **Due Date** |
| Fictional Character’s Flourishing | September 12th (through Canvas) |
| Goals and Excellences | September 19th (through Canvas) |
| Desires and Hedonic Adaptation | September 26th (through Canvas) |
| Exam 1 | September 29th (in class) |
| Changing Time | October 10th (through Canvas) |
| Exam 2 | October 27th (in class) |
| Exam 3 | December 6th (in class) |
| Paper Submission | No later than during final exam (both physical and Canvas submission required) |

**PLEASE NOTE:** the grades in Canvas for each assignment will be in terms of points. Receiving a 100 on an exam means you received 100 out of 150 points, and so answered about 67% of the questions correctly.

If I notice that insufficient numbers of students are prepared for class, I will institute weekly quizzes. If this happens, the distribution of points will be changed at my discretion.

The final exam will include true/false, fill in the blank, and multiple choice.

Makeup tests will be allowed only for serious, documented reason.

Since the paper may be submitted on any day of the semester, up until the final exam, there is no possibility of late submission. I will not accept papers after the scheduled final exam date. Other written assignments may be submitted within a week after the due date, but there will be a penalty of 10 points (note, 10 points, not 10%).

Any uncompleted assignments will receive a grade of 0.

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| **Letter Grade** | **Quality Points (per credit)** | **Point Value** | | **Description** | |
| A | 4.0 | 900-1000 | | Excellent | |
| B | 3.0 | 800-899 | | Good | |
| C | 2.0 | 700-799 | | Average | |
| D | 1.0 | 600-699 | | Passing Below Average | |
| F | 0 | 0-599 | | Failure | |
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**Cell Phone Policy**

Phone use in class is not permitted. Phones must be put away (out of sight) and silenced. The first two violations of this policy will result in a warning. Upon the third violation, the student will be referred to the Dean of Students in violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

**Class Reading Schedule**

The dates listed display when we will discuss the reading in class. The readings must be done ***before***we discuss it in class. The quizzes are there to ensure that these readings are done before we discuss them.

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| **Week** | **Date** | **Reading/Assignment** |
| 1 | Aug 23, 25 | * Levels of Thinking * The Biases of our Time |
| 2 | Aug 30, Sept 1 | * Flourishing and The Experience Machine * Things for their own sake * Introduce topics for next week |
| 3 | Sept 8 | * Resume vs eulogy virtues * Aristotle on Eudaimonia and character * Moral Grandstanding? |
| 4 | Sept 13, 15 | * Frankfurt on Freedom and Desires * Frankfurt on Equality * Hedonic Adaptation * Money and happiness |
| 5 | Sept 20, 22 | * Aristotle on virtue and kinds of character * Stoic Exercises * On the Shortness of Life * Digital minimalism |
| 6 | Sept 27, 29 | * Review (27th) and **Exam (29th)** |
| 7 | Oct 4, 6 | * An Introduction to the Logic of Arguments |
| 8 | Oct 11, 13 | * Moral Principles * Deontology |
| 9 | Oct 18, 20 | * Utilitarianism * “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” |
| 10 | Oct 25, 27 | * Review (25th) and **Exam (27th)** |
| 11 | Nov 1, 3 | * Obligations to the Poor |
| 12 | Nov 8, 10 | * DeGrazia on Moral Vegetarianism |
| 13 | Nov 15, 17 | * The Death Penalty |
| 14 | Nov 22 | * Flex Day (catch up or move ahead) |
| 15 | Nov 29, Dec 1 | * Abortion |

**Final Exam: Monday, December 6, 10:00am – 11:30am**

**Policies, Procedures, and Resources**

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance is required and will be checked. You have two unexcused absences without penalty. Each additional absence will result in a drop of 30 points off of the course grade. If you need to be excused for a serious reason, make every effort to inform me before class. If this is impossible, please inform me as soon as possible. Documentation will be required for excused absences.

Students who are late (i.e. who show up during or after attendance has been checked) are to see me after class so that they are marked as present—this is your responsibility, and I will not alter the roll book based upon claims that you arrived late and forgot to make sure you were marked as present. Each time a student is late (or leaves early) after the first time, 10 points will be deducted from the final score. Excuses for late arrivals will be given only in emergencies and only if the student speaks to me at the end of the class in which the student is late.

**Make-up Assessments**

Make-up exams will only be allowed for serious, documented reasons beyond the student’s control. Please note the date and time of the final exam now, and plan accordingly.

**Late Papers**

The paper may be submitted any date up until, and including, the scheduled final exam day. No papers will be accepted after this date.

**Extra Credit**

There will be no special extra credit assignments for individual students. Please do your best on the assignments that are scheduled for this course.

**Withdrawal Deadline and Policy**

A student who withdraws from class before the withdrawal deadline of **Nov 3** will receive a grade of “W.” A student is not permitted to withdraw from this class after the withdrawal deadline; if you remain in the class after the withdrawal deadline, you can only receive a grade of A, B, C, D, F or I. An I grade will only be assigned under extraordinary circumstances that occur near the end of the semester. If you receive an I, the work missed must be made up during the following semester, at which time you will get an A, B,C,D or F. Failure to make up the work during the following semester will result in you getting a grade of F in the course. Any student who withdraws from this class during a third or subsequent attempt in this course will be assigned a grade of “F.”

The professor will not withdraw students who stop attending class; it is the responsibility of the student to withdraw themselves before the withdrawal deadline and to be aware of the date of the withdrawal deadline.

Students on financial aid should consult an advisor or counselor before withdrawing from a course; there may be financial implications to the student which he or she must know about to make an informed decision before withdrawing from a course. Students with some scholarships who withdraw or are withdrawn from a class must pay the college for the cost of the class. Other scholarship sponsors may also require repayment.

**Maintaining Financial Aid**

In order to academically maintain financial aid, students must meet all of the following requirements:

* Complete 67% of all classes attempted, and
* Maintain a Valencia GPA of 2.0 or higher, and
* Maintain an overall GPA of 2.0 or higher, and
* Complete  degree within the 150% timeframe

Detailed information about maintaining satisfactory academic progress (SAP) can be found at:

<http://valenciacollege.edu/finaid/satisfactory_progress.cfm>

For a complete policy and procedure overview on Valencia Policy 4-07 please got to:

<http://valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/policy/default.cfm?policyID=75&volumeID_1=4&navst=0>

**ADDITIONAL CLASSROOM INFORMATION**

**Security Statement**

We want to reassure you that our security officers are here around the clock to ensure the safety and security of the campus community. It’s important to remain alert and aware of your surroundings, especially during the early morning or evening hours. Remember that you can always call security for an escort if you feel uncomfortable walking alone on campus. White security phones can also be found in many of our buildings; simply pick up the phone and security will answer.

Finally, report any suspicious persons to West Campus Security at 407-582-1000, 407-582-1030 (after-hours number) or by using the yellow emergency call boxes located on light poles in the parking lots and along walkways.

**Covid Guidelines**

Throughout the COVID pandemic, Valencia College has been primarily focused on the health and well-being of its students and faculty and staff. This continues to be our priority as we return to more face-to-face classes, and college policy continues to be guided by science and the guidelines issued by the CDC and our partners at Orlando Health. Valencia urges all students who are able to do so to get vaccinated and encourage friends and family to do so as well.

Should you become ill with COVID, please inform me and your professors and coworkers both for your safety, the safety of our Valencia community. I will do what I can to assist you in completing successfully our coursework. Please inform our COVID liaison Tanya Mahan (COVIDillness@valenciacollege.edu) as well, so she can support you in this process. We are in this together! For more information, please consult: <https://valenciacollege.edu/about/coronavirus/>.

**Faculty/Student Communication**

The best way to contact me with your concerns is to see me in person before or after class, or during my office hours. You may also contact me by Canvas inbox. **This is much better than using the college email**.

Please check your Canvas frequently concerning updates on this course (every other day at the least, although daily checking is recommended).

Valencia College is committed to providing each student a quality educational experience. Faculty members have set high standards of instruction for themselves and for you. If you have a problem in a class, your first step is to talk to your instructor. If you are still dissatisfied, you may talk with the academic dean of the division for your class. We will work together to resolve any issues that arise.

**Academic Honesty Statement**

Any act of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with Valencia policy as set forth in the Student Handbook and Catalog.

Any student discovered to be cheating on an exam, or committing any form of academic dishonesty will receive a zero for the assignment.

Each student is required to follow Valencia policy regarding academic honesty. All work submitted by students is expected to be the result of the student’s individual thoughts, research, and self-expression unless the assignment specifically states ‘group project.’

Sufficient (although not necessary) conditions for being academically honest include the following:

* Avoiding all plagiarism of others. You commit plagiarism when you use someone’s else work without appropriately documenting that you are doing so (for example, by citing the author of the original). Other people’s work includes not only their written work, but also their ideas, works of art, designs, and any other forms of creation and intellectual property. Note Well: Copying someone else’s work, then changing a few words still counts as plagiarism.
* Avoiding self-plagiarism. You commit self-plagiarism when you “double-dip” by using the same work (whether an essay or other work) for multiple assignments in different courses.
* Refraining from allowing others to write the assignments for you.
* Refraining from inappropriate behavior before, during, and after exams, quizzes, and other assignments, including (but not limited to): looking at other’s work, discussing details of exams and quizzes with others during the exam period, looking at notes during closed-book assignments (quizzes and exams). Note Well: Even looking at your phone during an exam raises suspicions of cheating. Keep your phone packed away and only look at it once you have finished the assignment.

Valencia uses software called SafeAssign to detect plagiarism. We will use this software during this course. More details will be provided during the course of the semester, but note the following:

* All written assignments must be uploaded to SafeAssign before you hand them in during the class period in which they are due.
* Uploading your assignment to SafeAssign does not count as handing in your assignment. If you have not handed in a paper copy of the assignment to me by the due date, then you will be penalized *even if* you have uploaded it to SafeAssign.
* For assignments that combine text with other visual elements (such as argument diagrams), the visual elements need not be included in the version uploaded to SafeAssign.

**Classroom Rules of Student Behavior**

I will direct any student who engages in any prohibited or unlawful acts that result in the disruption of a class to leave the class. Disruptions will result in referral to the academic dean and/or the calling of security

College policy prohibits children from attending class sessions; please, do not violate this policy.

Proper classroom etiquette is required for you to attend this class; please do not create distractions. More than one warning for improper classroom behavior will be grounds for being dropped from the course.

Violations of any classroom or Valencia rules may lead to disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion from Valencia.

**Electronic Device Policy**

I do not allow the use of electronic devices (including but not limited to laptops, tablets, phones, and e-books). Exceptions will be made with those with documented learning disabilities requiring the use of such devices.

**Baycare Behavioral Health’s Student Assistance Program**

Valencia is committed to making sure all our students have a rewarding and successful college experience. To that purpose, Valencia students can get immediate help that may assist them with psychological issues dealing with stress, anxiety, depression, adjustment difficulties, substance abuse, time management as well as relationship problems dealing with school, home or work. Students have 24 hour unlimited access to the Baycare Behavioral Health’s confidential student assistance program phone counseling services by calling (800) 878-5470. Three free confidential face-to-face counseling sessions are also available to students.

**Recording:**

Students may record video or audio of class lectures for their own personal educational use. A class lecture is defined as a planned presentation by a college faculty member or instructor, during a scheduled class, delivered for the purpose of transmitting knowledge or information that is reasonably related to the pedagogical objective of the course in which the student is enrolled. Recording class activities other than class lectures, including but not limited to class discussions, student presentations, labs, academic exercises involving student participation, and private conversations, is prohibited. Recordings may not include the image or voice of other students in the class, may not be used as a substitute for class participation and class attendance, and may not be published or shared without the written consent of the faculty member. Failure to adhere to these requirements may constitute a violation of federal or state law and the College’s Student Code of Conduct.

**Students with Disabilities Information:**

Students with disabilities who qualify for academic accommodations must provide a letter from the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) and discuss specific needs with the professor, preferably during the first two weeks of class. The Office for Students with Disabilities determines accommodations based on appropriate documentation of disabilities.

West Campus SSB, Rm. 102 Phone: 407-582-1523 Fax: 407-582-1326

**College Catalog/Student Handbook/Policy Manual**

* A full description of all College policies can be found in the College Catalog at <http://valenciacollege.edu/catalog/>
* The Student Handbook can be found at: <http://valenciacollege.edu/studentdev/CampusInformationServices/>
* The Policy Manual can be found at <http://www.valenciacollege.edu/generalcounsel/>
* The college calendar can be found at <http://valenciacollege.edu/calendar/> for important dates.

**Support Services**

Tutoring services are available in bldg. 7-240 (extension 1633)

Valencia College offers a variety of Skill Shops: short seminars covering a variety of topics which deal with student success, goals and purpose. To check out Valencia’s Skillshop offerings, go to: <http://valenciacollege.edu/studentservices/skillshops.cfm>

Free online tutoring is also available through Smarthinking. To learn more, click on the Smarthinking link in the Courses tab in Atlas.

**Weather Emergencies**

In the case of weather emergencies, you can find out about school closings by signing up to update your information for Valencia Alerts.

**Study tips**

Most students need to do more than just sit through lectures and reread their notes. **Spend 1-2 hour blocks of time every day** actively writing or discussing concepts to make them a part of your memory.

Here are some study and classroom management tips that have assisted former students:

* Attend class daily and don’t be tardy. The introduction to each lecture explains the purpose of the entire lecture. Students who follow this rule won’t miss important information.
* Rewrite your notes soon after the lecture.
* Use mnemonic devises and other games to remember concepts; go to Google images, YouTube and Khan Academy for additional pictures and videos to clarify concepts.
* Make lists of confusing topics from your studying and ask questions.
* Take advantage of the professor’s office hours.
* Join a study group and predict what questions the professor could ask on the test.
* Get the telephone number or email address of one or more buddies in case you are absent from a class. You will need to get notes and learn of any announcements ASAP.

**Disclaimer**

The course outline and syllabus are subject to change as needed; changes will be announced in class in a timely manner, when necessary. Your continued participation in this course after the drop-add deadline period constitutes an agreement with and an acceptance of the conditions presented in this syllabus.