

# History of Ancient Greek Philosophy

## PHL 3120: [Course Zoom Link](#)

### Instructor Information

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**Name:** Alex Madva (he/him)

**Office Hours Location:** [Office Hours Zoom Link](#)

**Office Hours:** Tuesday 4p-5p, Friday 11a-12p, and by appointment

**Email:** [ammadva@cpp.edu](mailto:ammadva@cpp.edu)

### Course Information

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#### Course Description

An introduction to Ancient Greek philosophy. We will primarily study Plato and Aristotle, and we will conclude with readings on stoicism, primarily by Epictetus. In examining these texts, we will reflect on how we ought to live and what we can know about religion, justice, virtue, happiness, love, ourselves, and the fundamental nature of reality.

#### Course Learning Objectives

##### Knowledge and Understanding

After completing this course, you will be able to demonstrate:

1. knowledge and understanding of the work of three key figures in Ancient Greek philosophy: Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle;
2. knowledge of the arguments in support of these figures' views, the problems facing their arguments and views, and comparisons between their views on specific topics;
3. appreciation of philosophical questions related to knowledge, ethics, religion, justice, happiness, love, the nature of the self, and the fundamental nature of reality.

##### Skills

After completing this course, you will be able to:

4. read, interpret, and synthesize complex texts and positions;
5. critically assess texts and arguments;
6. construct clear arguments;
7. present and debate ideas, both orally and in writing, in an open minded, respectful, and rigorous way;
8. take the perspectives of philosophers and classmates who may disagree with you or perceive the world very differently.

## Course Materials

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### Required Materials: **You must get the right translations!**

It is OK if you obtain digital versions of these texts.

1. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Translator: David Ross, ISBN: 0199213615 (Oxford World's Classics), Revised Edition
2. Epictetus, *Handbook (Encheiridion)*, Trans: Nicholas P. White, ISBN: 0915145693 (Hackett)
3. Plato, *Republic*, Trans: C.D.C. Reeve, ISBN: 0872207366 (Hackett)
4. Plato, *Symposium*, Trans: Alexander Nehamas & Paul Woodruff, ISBN: 0872200760 (Hackett)
5. Julia Annas, *Ancient Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford)  
**Note:** There is a free ebook for this text in the library [HERE](#). You'll need to create an EBSCO account and renew "borrowed" downloads after 7 days.
6. Additional materials will be accessible on Blackboard, the CPP Library website, or the web.

## Technical Requirements

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### Hardware

- PC, Mac, or tablet with camera
- Speakers or headphones
- Reliable access to a fast internet connection for teleconferencing

### Software

- A PDF reader, such as [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#)
- Word processing software, such as [Microsoft Office](#) or [Google Docs](#)
- Internet Browser - [Blackboard \(Bb\) supported browsers](#)
  - Note: Blackboard (Bb) and other CPP websites work best with Chrome and Firefox, and worse with Safari and Internet Explorer or Edge
- See all free software for CPP students [here](#) (includes Adobe & Microsoft products)

## Students' Obligations

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### Minimum Technical Skills

You are expected to have or develop basic computer knowledge including, but not limited to:

- Using Zoom: video and audio, raising hand, and setting virtual background
- Using email and attachments
- Downloading, editing, saving, and submitting files
- Copying and pasting
- Downloading and installing software

## Getting Help

I will work very hard to make this a fun, challenging, and worthwhile learning experience for you. I will provide you with the support you need to succeed in the course. I will ask you for suggestions for improvement and I will take those suggestions seriously.

Please let me know if you need help of any kind! If you are having trouble understanding concepts, or with any aspect of the course, it is your responsibility to seek help by contacting Alex. I want every one of you to succeed, and I'm committed to doing my best to ensure that you can learn and flourish during this difficult and uncertain time. **I am on your side!**

If you are having difficulties with using Blackboard-specific tools or features, refer to [Blackboard eHelp](#). More complicated Blackboard inquires can be directed to the [IT Service Desk](#). Both links to the Blackboard eHelp page and IT Service Desk can be found under the "Technical Support" section located on the left navigation menu of this course.

## University Student Support

There are [many campus resources](#) available for students' needs. Here are a few that might be especially helpful:

- [Broncos Care Basic Needs](#) for students experiencing food or housing insecurity
- [Dean of Students](#), which includes the Cultural Centers, the Dreamers Resource Center, the Women's Resource Center, clubs, etc.
- [Learning Resource Center](#) for tutoring in many courses
- [Student Health and Wellbeing](#) – this website leads you to many student services including [Counseling](#), the [Disability Resource Center](#), [Health Services](#), the [Integrated Care Network](#), [Survivor Advocacy Services](#), and the [Bronco Wellness Center](#)
- [Student Success Central](#) – this website leads you to many resources including those related to COVID19.
- [Veterans Resource Center](#)

## Grading

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1. Attendance and Participation: 20%
2. Quizzes: 20%
3. First Paper: 15%
4. Second Paper: 20%
5. Third Paper: 25%

**Extra credit:** There will also be a variety of extra-credit opportunities, including responses to outside readings, films, and podcasts

**Note:** Blackboard will display your **Attendance** as your overall grade. I cannot program Blackboard to calculate your **actual** overall grade. I will distribute an Excel sheet for you to estimate your overall grade.

### Attendance & Participation (20%)

This includes attendance, participation, and in-class assignments. **Attendance is mandatory, as is showing up on time, as is remaining in class after attendance is taken.** I will track attendance and lateness on Blackboard. Excused absences, late arrivals, early departures, and long absences from the middle of class require some kind of documentation, e.g., from a doctor, employer, internet service provider, or mechanic. Time-stamped photos can serve as documentation, but you do **not** need to share personal details with me.

**Your web camera needs to be on during synchronous Zoom sessions.** If you would prefer for the class not to see where you are (e.g. to protect your privacy), [you can set up a virtual background](#). If you have to turn off your video for more than a few minutes, or you are not comfortable or able to turn on your video on a specific occasion, you have to let me know through email or private Zoom chat. **Note:** Some students are distracted by the video of themselves, so [you can hide the video of yourself from yourself](#) (while still letting the rest of us see you).

**Participation and preparation are crucial.** I will keep a running record of your participation throughout the term. There are a variety of ways to participate, including: actively contributing to discussions by speaking or typing in the Zoom chat window, demonstrating reflection on the assignments, listening carefully to others' contributions (not dominating discussion), and showing respect toward classmates. If you are uncomfortable participating in class, I encourage you to visit my office hours, arrange an appointment, or contribute more to the Discussion Board on Bb. (Consider subscribing to the Discussion Board so you receive emails when someone posts there.)

Speaking with me outside of class and posting (responsively and respectfully) on Bb are as valuable for your final participation grade as speaking in class. **You cannot get above a B for attendance/participation if you do not participate.** However, students who participate

regularly can **get above 100%**, which is one way to compensate for unexcused absences, or to (in effect) supplement your quiz average, etc. There will also be in-class debates and group work. PowerPoint slides will be posted to Bb after class. You are expected to remain engaged in the class and take notes. I may decide to stop posting lecture slides if students are not paying sufficient attention.

Put away phones: aside from the device you use to participate on Zoom (such as your PC, Mac, or tablet), put away smartphones or other secondary internet-connected devices during class, and refrain from checking social media—unless you get my express consent to have a secondary device. If I have to remind you to put away devices, I may deduct points from your attendance/participation grade.

**Extra Credit Typo Policy:** I give extra participation credit if you are the first person to identify typos in class handouts, assignments, and lecture slides (typos in assigned readings and in my emails and announcements don't count, unless my email gets a date or time wrong, or fails to include all the relevant attachments and links). Check Blackboard to make sure you got your extra credit—and then email me to remind me if it's not posted! I am the final authority on whether it's a "real" typo.

### Quizzes (20%)

Most classes begin with a closed-book Bb quiz (5-10 minutes) on the assigned material (readings, podcasts, videos, etc.). You will need an internet-connected device (phone, tablet, laptop) to take these quizzes (you can use either a web browser or the Bb mobile app). The time allowed per quiz depends on the number of questions. A quiz with 8 questions might be 7 minutes long. If you arrive or start the quiz late, you may not be able to finish in time. I will drop your lowest quiz score (Bb will drop the lowest score automatically when it calculates your quiz average).

### Estimated Quiz Curve

The quizzes tend to be very difficult, but they are graded on a generous curve. The curve will be applied at the end of the term, but a rough guide to the quiz curve is the following:

93% = A+ (100; if above 93% → then above 100 after curve); 86% = A (94), 78% = A- (90), 73% = B+ (87), 66% = B (84), 61% = B- (80), 56% = C+ (77), 51% = C (74), 46% = C- (70), 41% = D+ (67), 38% = D (64), 35% = D- (60), 33% or below = F

Grades Scored Between	Will Equal
93 % and 100 %	A+
86 % and Less Than 93%	A
78 % and Less Than 86%	A-
73 % and Less Than 78%	B+
66 % and Less Than 73%	B
61 % and Less Than 66%	B-
56 % and Less Than 61%	C+
51 % and Less Than 56%	C
46 % and Less Than 51%	C-
41 % and Less Than 46%	D+
38 % and Less Than 41%	D
35 % and Less Than 38%	D-
0 % and Less Than 35%	F

**Note:** some students find that quizzes don't represent the work they put into the assignments. All students therefore have the option of supplementing their quiz scores by writing one response to the homework assignments per week. Upload the assignment response to Blackboard before the class that the reading is assigned for. See Assignment Response Guidelines at the end of this syllabus.

**Note:** If you miss a quiz, your score for that quiz will be zero, unless you have an excused absence.

### Papers (60%)

There will be three short paper assignments (600-1,000 words). There may be additional activities paired with the writing assignments, which would form part of your grade for that paper, such as peer evaluation workshops for rough drafts. Estimated deadlines: 9/25, 10/23, and 12/4. These due dates are very rough approximations.

My expectation is not that you already know how to write an excellent philosophy paper but that you will develop the necessary skills to do so by taking this course. We will dedicate significant time and work to developing these skills in class. All papers will be graded according to a rubric, which we will review in a future class, and which you can download now from Bb in the "Syllabus & Course Guidelines" section on the left navigation menu.

The grading scheme both for your papers and for calculating your final grade is as follows:

97 and above	A+	74 and less than 77	C
94 and less than 97	A	70 and less than 74	C-
90 and less than 94	A-	67 and less than 70	D+
87 and less than 90	B+	64 and less than 67	D
84 and less than 87	B	60 and less than 64	D-
80 and less than 84	B-	Less than 60	F
77 and less than 80	C+		

### Make-Up and Late Work Policies

I will do my best to grade your work in a fair and timely manner. I will work with you if life gets in the way of completing the work for this class. I am open to granting extensions on paper assignments if there are extenuating circumstances. However, I cannot work with you if you don't contact me about events that obstruct the completion of classwork. So, please contact me before assignments are due, if you anticipate having a problem with turning work in when it's due. Of course, sometimes there are genuinely unforeseen events that prevent you from completing work in a timely fashion. If that happens I'll work with you to help you successfully complete the course.

Late papers will be penalized one third of a letter grade for every day late. After 1 day late, an A becomes an A-; after 2 days, an A becomes a B+, and so on. There is no final deadline for how late I will accept work (it is never too late to get some credit for a paper!).

## Course Policies

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### Academic Integrity

The University trusts each student to maintain high standards of honesty and ethical behavior. I will observe Cal Poly Policies on Honesty and Plagiarism. While teamwork is encouraged, any kind of cheating is unacceptable. We will use TurnItIn and other digital tools to help ensure that assignments are not plagiarized. **Students that fail to observe honesty and plagiarism policies will fail the course, and their cases will be reported to the Judicial Affairs Committee.** We will go over the expectations of academic integrity in a future class, and I will distribute a handout on this for each student to sign and return to me. For more information, visit [Academic Integrity Policies](#).

### Netiquette

Netiquette refers to the behavior that you are expected to follow when communicating online. It covers both common courtesy in an online environment and the informal ground "rules" for navigating in cyberspace. For this course, you are asked to follow these basic guidelines:

- When writing an email to Alex, include the class name and section, along with a description, in the subject line. For example: PHL 1234.01 RE: Truth.

- Use a signature with your full name at the end of your emails.
- Remember that slang can be misunderstood or misinterpreted – use your “academic” voice. pls dnt use txt lang when sending messages 2 me.
- Be aware of your tone and avoid sentences typed in all caps – it implies online “screaming” or “shouting.”
- Do not use offensive language.
- Be sensitive to those with different cultural and/or linguistic backgrounds, as well as different political and religious beliefs.
- Respect different views and opinions.
- Provide constructive feedback and use good judgment when composing responses to your classmates.
- Be professional and use good grammar and spelling. Consider writing your discussion posts, assignments, and online correspondence in a text editor to check for spelling and grammar before pasting it into an online submission.

### Response Time and Feedback

I will reply to emails within 24 hours. I will grade papers and optional assignment responses within 1 to 2 weeks. I will check Discussion Board posts a few times a week. If I don't get back to you within these timeframes, please send a follow-up email to remind me!

### Accessibility

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I am dedicated to providing students with the support they need to succeed in this class. Students with disabilities are encouraged to meet with me during office hours early in the semester to discuss your DRC authorized accommodation needs for this course. For additional information or assistance, contact the [Disability Resource Center](https://www.cpp.edu/drc/) (<https://www.cpp.edu/drc/>) ((909) 869-3333, Bldg. 9-103).

### Course Schedule

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**Note:** the readings, assignments, deadlines, and schedule are **tentative and subject to change**. I will confirm the specific upcoming assignments in every class and shortly after class via email. **You are therefore responsible for checking your CPP email after every class.** (If you are not already registered for the class, I need your email address now so I can add you to Blackboard and/or email you the first assignment. If you do not receive the first assignment via email, then you should proactively email me to make sure that I send it to you.)

- If you check your email with Outlook on a smartphone, beware that my announcement emails might go into your “Other” tab. So: move them to “Focused,” or make sure to check “Other,” or tell Outlook not to distinguish “Focused” and “Other.”



## Week 1: Get started (8/20)

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1. Log into Blackboard and poke around the site
2. Read the syllabus
3. Set up a Zoom account through CPP
4. Test your Zoom video and audio by starting a Zoom chat with a friend or family member
5. Meet me and your classmates

## Week 2 (8/25; 8/27): Euthyphro

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### General course prep

1. Complete the “Tell Me About You” survey
2. Watch all the Syllabus videos and memorize...
  - Course grading and requirements (determinants of final grade)
  - Attendance and participation requirements
  - Quiz guidelines
  - Optional Assignment Responses guidelines
  - Technology requirements
  - (You do NOT need to memorize the class schedule or dates!  
You do NOT need to memorize the quiz curves)
3. Watch “[Introducing FOH: Faculty Office Hours](#)” (video)
4. Set up a [Zoom virtual background](#) for the beginning of class on 8/25
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the above on the first Blackboard Quiz

### Course content

1. Read Plato, *Euthyphro*
2. Watch “[Euthyphro Dilemma, Part 1](#)” by SoccerTees and PlayDough
3. Jesse Roach, “[The Good Grounded in God: A Response to the Euthyphro Dilemma](#)”
4. Michael W. Austin, “Divine Command Theory,” [Sections 3-4](#).

## Week 3 (9/1; 9/3): Socrates on Writing, Begin *Republic*

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1. David Roochnik selection regarding why Socrates didn't write down his ideas
2. Julia Annas, Ch.2, “Why do we read Plato's *Republic*?”
3. Plato, *Republic*, Book I, pp.1-16, up to 339e5
4. **1<sup>st</sup> Paper Assignment Distributed**

## Week 4 (9/8; 9/10): *Republic*

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1. *Republic*, Finish Book I, start Book II, pp.17-46, up to 368c5
2. *Republic*, Finish Book II, up to p.65, 383c5
3. *Republic*, Book III selections: pp.84/401d4 [begin with “SOCRATES: Then aren’t these...”] to p.90, 407a [ends with Socrates saying “it would not profit him to go on living”]; one paragraph on p.93 [from “Then won’t you establish...” to “they will themselves put to death”]; from p.96 [Socrates saying “All right. Now...”] to end of book 3, p.102

## Week 5 (9/15; 9/17): *Republic* and Writing Guidelines

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1. *Republic*, Book IV selections: pp.103-21 [beginning of IV up to top of 434d1, where Socrates says “makes the city just?”]
2. Finish Book IV, pp.121-135, up to 445e1
3. Jim Pryor, “[Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper](#)”
4. Watch Alex’s “How to Write a Philosophy Paper” videos
5. Study Paper Rubric and prepare to answer questions about it

## Week 6 (9/22; 9/24): *Republic*

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1. Review Academic Integrity in class; fill out online integrity survey
2. Annas, Ch.1 “Humans and beasts: understanding ourselves”
3. *Republic*, Book V, pp.136-152, 449a-461e4, up to where Socrates says “if the lottery works out that way and the Pythia approves”, 164-175 (end of V), 471c1-480a12, starting from Glaucon “Yes, let’s establish it”
4. **1<sup>st</sup> Paper Assignment Due**

## Week 7 (9/29; 10/1): *Republic*

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1. *Republic*, Books VI-VII, pp.199-214, 504c9-520d4 (from Socrates saying “He will have to take the longer road then...” to “the opposite kind of rules is governed in the opposite way”)
2. Annas, Ch.4, “Reason, knowledge and skepticism”
3. **2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Assignment Distributed**

## Week 8 (10/6; 10/8): Finally finish *Republic*!

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1. *Republic*, scattered selections on philosopher-kings (p.166, 473c5-473e5; p.176-top of 183, 484a-489d5, beginning of Book 6 to “I admitted that what you said was true, didn’t I?”); pp.214-top of 221, 520d5-526b1, from “Yes, indeed” to “compels the soul to use understanding itself on the truth itself” pp.227-237, 532a-541b5, from “Then isn’t this at last, Glaucon...” to end of Book 7

2. Scattered selections on democracy and tyranny (pp.251-255, 555b2-558c5; pp.259-262, 562a7-564a9; pp.264-269, 565bc9 to end of Book; p.275, 575e2-576b1)
3. Maybe selections from Books IX and X... or maybe we're ready to move on!

### **Week 9 (10/13; 10/15): Begin *Symposium***

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1. Begin Plato, *Symposium* (172A-178A)
2. *Symposium*, up to "Socrates Questions Agathon" (178A-201C)

### **Week 10 (10/20; 10/22): Finish *Symposium***

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1. *Symposium*, (pp.45-77, 201D-223D)
2. Simon Rippon, "[A Brief Guide to Writing the Philosophy Paper](#)"
3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book I.1-9
4. **2<sup>nd</sup> Paper Due**

### **Week 11 (10/27; 10/29): Begin *Nicomachean Ethics***

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1. Annas, Ch.3, "The happy life, ancient and modern"
2. *Nicomachean Ethics*, Finish Book I.13, Book II (selections)
3. **3rd Paper Assignment Distributed**

### **Week 12 (11/10; 11/12): *Nicomachean Ethics***

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1. *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books III-V (selections)
2. Miles Burnyeat, "Aristotle on Learning to Be Good"

### **Week 13 (11/17; 11/19): *Nicomachean Ethics***

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1. *Nicomachean Ethics* Book VIII, 1-3 (pp.142-6), 12
2. *Nicomachean Ethics* Book IX, 9 (176-8), 12 (181-2)
3. 11/19: WORLD PHILOSOPHY DAY! We might have a Philosophy Department Zoom event.

## Week 14 (11/24; 11/26; NO CLASS ALL WEEK; HAPPY THANKSGIVING)

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## Week 15 (11/24; 11/26): Finish *Nicomachean Ethics*

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1. *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book X

## Week 16 (12/1; 12/3): *Epictetus*

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1. Epictetus, *Handbook*
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Paper Due

## Finals Week

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There is no final exam, just a final paper. Try to follow Epictetus' advice this week...

## Guidelines for the Quizzes and Optional Assignment Responses

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I recognize that many of the readings and other assignments are difficult.

- Most quiz questions will not assume that you have perfectly understood the material.
- **Pointer #1**: pay attention to the **specific examples (metaphors, stories, etc.)** used by the authors to make their points. The specific examples are the most likely to show up on the quizzes.
- **Pointer #2**: bear in mind that I often try to come up with questions that don't show up in summaries of the material, e.g., on Wikipedia or other online sources. I want you to complete the actual assignment and not just get a quick summary from somewhere else.

Still, some students find that the quizzes don't represent the work they put into the assignments.

- All students therefore have the option of supplementing quiz scores by writing one homework assignment response per week. (P.S. Writing the responses helps with the quizzes!)

## Optional Assignment Response (O.A.R.) Guidelines

Option to supplement your quiz score:

- Once per week, you can write a homework assignment response and upload it to Blackboard
- You can start uploading Optional Assignment Responses (or OARs) right away, for the first assignment
- **The OARs are entirely optional.** There is no penalty for not doing them. You can skip it one week, then do it the next, etc. There will be other extra-credit opportunities, which usually go toward your quiz grade.

## Upload Instructions

- Click on the “Optional Assignment Responses” link on the Bb Course Menu (left ribbon).
- Click on “CLICK HERE...” and then scroll all the way down to “Attach Files” and then click on “Browse my computer” to upload your document.
- You will upload every response to this exact same link.
- Submit your assignment response in .pdf, .doc, or .docx form. (If you write your papers in Apple *Pages*, you must [take extra steps](#) to convert the file to a format Blackboard can read.)
- If you have difficulty uploading your paper, you can email it to me to establish that it's on time, but **you must upload it to Blackboard eventually.**
- **You must upload the response before the class that the reading is assigned for.** Not *after* we have already discussed the material in class!
- Upload it up to 1 minute before class begins.

## Assignment Response Requirements

- **OARs should be at least 350 words (the word count does not include the date, your name, etc.). Formatting: Times New Roman, 12 point font, double-spaced. This should come out to about 1-and-a-half pages.**
- **If you do not meet the word minimum, you will get no extra credit for your response.**
- No maximum length. You get more extra credit if you create more thorough responses (actual engagement with the assignment rather than just bull\$#!++ing)!
- The more work you put into it, the more extra credit you get.

- Do not artificially inflate the length of your OAR in any way (e.g., by padding the header and starting midway through the first page). That just irritates me and does not benefit you.
- You only need to write one response per week in order to get the extra credit.  
**You will not get additional extra credit if you write two responses in one week.**
- On weeks when there is only 1 class, you will have only 1 opportunity to do an assignment response.

### What is Alex looking for in the optional homework assignment responses?

- Expectation #1: I am looking for **more than summaries** of the assigned material.
- Expectation #2: I am looking for **thoughtful reflection and personal engagement** with the assigned material.
  - o This includes connections between the material and personal experiences (life experiences, stuff going on in the news, film/TV/music/podcasts (but **please avoid spoilers!**), etc.), connections between new assignments and old assignments, connections to other classes you've taken or things you've learned, as well as other sorts of reactions and questions (even puzzlement!!!) about the material.
  - o OARs can, but do not have to, be in essay form. They can be creative: poems, short stories, comic strips, vlogs, songs, etc. (If your response is, say, a vlog, then upload a document in the normal way to Blackboard, but include a link.)
- Expectation #3: **show that you did the entire homework assignment, rather than just the first few pages.**
- Expectation #4: If there are multiple assignments for one class, **refer to all the readings and other assignments, at least briefly.**
  - o It's perfectly OK for you to focus primarily on the assigned material that most interested you, but you must mention them all.
  - o **If you do not mention all the assigned materials, then you will get no extra credit for your response.**

### How do the optional extra-credit assignment responses affect my overall grade?

→ For every week that you do this, I will add more extra credit to your overall quiz average.

- Example: let's say you completely bomb the Tuesday quiz. You can then write a response for the Thursday homework assignment (on the material assigned for Thursday!) to make up for the failed Tuesday quiz.
- Hypothetical grade impact: suppose there are two 6-question quizzes in one week and you get a 0/6 on both quizzes, but you submit one very thoughtful assignment response. I might give you 6 points of extra credit total. That would (effectively) boost your score to 3/6 on

both quizzes (from an F to a C). If you get 3/6, it will boost to 6/6 on both quizzes. If you get 6/6, it will boost to 9/6.

- There are always a few students who get above 100% on their final quiz score!
- I will post a running record of your assignment-response extra credit on Blackboard, and your posted quiz average will automatically update to reflect this.
- I will grade papers and optional assignment responses within 1 to 2 weeks.
- **Last pointer:** if you are struggling to manage your time, then consider writing your responses for Tuesday classes, and doing them over the weekend (on Friday, Saturday, or Sunday).