

Date prepared: 1/22/14

Syllabus
The University of New Orleans
Dept. of Philosophy

PHIL 2222: Philosophy of Sex and Love (3 credits)

SECTION 721: Jefferson Center 202, Wednesdays, 7:00 – 9:45pm

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Edward Johnson
Office: UNO: LA 395
Office Hours: MWF, 11:00 – 12:00 (and by appointment)
Office Telephone: (504) 280-7193
Email: erjohns1@uno.edu
Course Webpages: [Moodle](#) login page

Required Texts

- [1] Power, Nicholas et al, eds., *The Philosophy of Sex* (6th ed., Rowman and Littlefield) ISBN 978-1-4422-1671-6
- [2] Soble, Alan, ed., *Eros, Agape and Philia: Readings in the Philosophy of Love* (Paragon House), ISBN 1-55778-278-4

Course Description

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

An investigation of the nature of sex and the nature of love, and of the conceptual relationship between them. The course draws on both classical and contemporary philosophy, and addresses social and ethical issues about sexual behavior and love.

COURSE OVERVIEW: We will examine a number of issues in the philosophy of sex and love. What counts as (having) sex? Does sex have a purpose? Does it have a meaning? What is good sex? What is bad sex? How is sex to be evaluated – morally, and otherwise? What is the role of consent? Fidelity? What issues are raised by rape, prostitution, pornography? What is love, and how is it related to these questions about sex? We will focus on philosophical issues about sex for roughly the first two third of the semester, and on issues about love for the last third.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successfully completing this course, students will be able to:

- Identify features of practical situations relevant to evaluation of sexual situations
- Define key concepts in the philosophy of sex and love
- Evaluate the persuasiveness of arguments of different types
- Apply philosophical concepts studied to new kinds of cases
- Synthesize, in effective English essays, central aspects of philosophical debate in this area
- Distinguish different analyses of what sex and love are
- Articulate the differences between *eros*, *agape*, and *philia*
- Explain the significance of the paradoxes of love
- Discuss leading views about the connection between sex and love

Grades will be based on a 100 point scale distributed as follows:

Requirement		Final grade	
Participation	(10%) 10 points	A	100 – 90 points
Exam 1	(30%) 30 points	B	89 – 80 points
Exam 2	(30%) 30 points	C	79 – 70 points
Final Exam	(30%) 30 points	D	69 – 60 points
		F	59 — 0 points

Course Requirements

PARTICIPATION: The class will meet on Wednesdays, from 7:00 to 9:45pm, in JC 202. The Undergraduate/ Graduate Catalog states: “Students are expected to attend all classes regularly and punctually. **A student who is not present when attendance is checked in a class is considered absent.**” The Attendance Policy of the Department of English states: “When a student has missed a total of 1½ weeks of classes ... the instructor may request that the student’s dean put the student on attendance probation. ... Continued absences from any ... class will subject the student to full penalties ... including failing the course....” That reasonable policy, in the case of a class meeting once a week, would allow for, say, two absences. **Each additional absence (beyond the two) will incur a two-and-a-half-point penalty deduction from the student’s final semester average.** Attendance means attending the entire class: **attendance may be checked more than once during class.** Students who leave early without permission will be assessed ½ absence for that day. Students should be on time; those who arrive more than 20 minutes late will be assessed ½ absence for that day. Attendance at public events requires a commitment to contribute to the maintenance of public order for the sake of a shared benefit: this includes paying attention and participating appropriately.

EXAMS: There will be three in-class exams, in which you will respond to questions about the material covered. These will be mostly essay, with some short answer, and each will count for 30% of the course grade. You will be expected to analyze issues and arguments from our readings and discussions, showing an ability to understand and evaluate the arguments of various thinkers and the reasons that support, or tell against, their views. Your responses will be judged not only for their mastery of information, but also for their clarity, coherence, and relevance.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and to evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism, tampering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being an accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available online

ATTENDANCE: Required. See the section on Participation above.

ELECTRONICS: Use of electronic devices is, in general, not allowed during class. You may use a laptop computer or a tablet to take notes, but not during exams (unless required for disability accommodations). Use of phones, e-mailing, texting, online surfing, etc., are not permitted during class.

MAKE-UP EXAMS: Make-up exams are discouraged, and the absence of support staff makes scheduling flexibility difficult. Any make-up exam (if the instructor determines that it is justified) will have to take place during regular office hours.

DISABILITY ACCOMODATIONS: UNO is committed to providing for the needs of students who have disabilities under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA). Students who qualify for services will receive academic modifications to which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of students who may require such services or modifications to register each semester with the Office of Disability Services (UC 260, 280-6222) and follow its procedures for obtaining assistance.

WARNING: Learning philosophy requires the ability to examine critically, from a variety of perspectives, one's most basic assumptions about what is true and what is valuable. Critical examination involves challenging what we take for granted. Students occasionally find such an experience unsettling, as it may instill doubt about matters thought to be secure, or may require a serious engagement with ideas, language, or viewpoints the student finds threatening, or offensive, or absurd. This is especially possible in connection with controversial topics in ethics, politics, and religion. We will deal with any controversial matters in an explicit, candid, and analytical fashion. Your continued enrollment in this course constitutes acceptance of the right of other students, and the right of the professor, to explore relevant ideas, language, and viewpoints in a frank and open manner. If you object to that – if you think rational adults should be prevented from discussing certain subjects, or speaking certain words, or viewing certain images – then this is not the course for you.

PHIL 2222 Timeline

(subject to revision)

DAY	TOPIC/READING
Jan 15	Introduction to the course
Jan 22	Alan Soble, "The Analytic Categories of the Philosophy of Sex," in PS, 1-24; Greta Cristina, "Are We Having Sex Now or What?," in PS, 25-32
Jan 29	Thomas Nagel, "Sexual Perversion," in PS, 33-46; Janich Moulton, "Sexual Behaviour: Another Position," in PS, 47-56
Feb 5	Alan Goldman, "Plain Sex," in PS, 57-76; Seiriol Morgan, "Sex in the Head," in PS, 101-122
Feb 12	Alan Soble, "On Jacking Off, Yet Again," in PS, 77-100; John Portmann, "Chatting Is Not Cheating," in PS, 123-139
Feb 19	First Exam
Feb 26	Mappes, Klepper, and Soble on sexual use, in PS, 271-334
Mar 5	No class: Spring Break
Mar 12	Wertheimer and West on consensual sex, in PS, 289-324
Mar 19	Rape, prostitution, and pornography; including Baber, in PS, 485-502
Mar 26	Second Exam
Apr 2	Plato and Vlastos on <i>eros</i> , in EAP, 46-56, 96-128
Apr 9	Aristotle and Badhwar on <i>philia</i> , in EAP, 57-70, 165-186
Apr 16	St Paul and Nygren on <i>agape</i> , in EAP, 71-74, 85-95; Newton-Smith and Hamlyn on love and hate, in EAP, 199-234
Apr 23	Mendus and Burch on love and responsibility, in EAP, 235-253
Apr 30	Ehman and Diorio on love and equality, in EAP, 254-283
May 7	Final Exam (8:00-10:00pm – <i>note change in time!</i>)