PHIL 429, Section DL1
Spring 2024   **M W 3:00 – 4:15 PM: online, synchronous**
Seminar in Philosophy: Critical Philosophies of Race

Instructor: Prof. Cherubin
Office: virtual office hours
Office Hours: Mondays 4:30 – 5:30 via Zoom; if you would like to speak with me (your
    instructor) at a different time, please contact me and we can set something up
Office hours are "student hours": times faculty have set aside specifically to meet with students.
Email: rcherubi@gmu.edu

Description

What is race? Is it a feature of a person's biological makeup, a product of certain kinds of social and political structures, a historical artefact, an axiom, an unwarranted assumption, a way of living, a way of seeing and a way of being seen, something else, several of these, none of these? What does it mean for race to be "real"? What exists when we say that humans have races? What are the origins of current notions of race? What might be the future of race as an idea, as a feature of social and political landscapes, as a feature of social and political and scientific ontology, as a consideration in the quest for social and political and economic justice? What are the relationships between race and racism? In what ways have racial formation, class formation, and gender formation interacted? Going forward, how if at all might it be just and appropriate to use the term 'race' to describe current and future situations? Should the term be gradually abolished, reformed, replaced? Why?

This course will explore the roles philosophical inquiry can play, and the resources it can offer, to address these and related questions critically and constructively. The course centrally involves political philosophy, for modern and contemporary notions and functions of race came about as elements of political developments. To open the way to a better understanding of this, we will also look extensively at the metaphysics and epistemology of race. Authors studied will include but not be limited to L. Alcoff, K. Crenshaw, T. Curry, A. Davis, W.E.B. Du Bois, E. Dussel, F. Fanon, D.T. Goldberg, L.R. Gordon, Hippocrates/Hippocratic writers, Homer, M. Lugones, A. Locke, T. McMullan, Melissus, Parmenides, V. Plumwood, Q. Spencer, P.C. Taylor, S. Wynter, Xenophanes, G. Yancy.

This course fulfills 3 credits of the 400-level philosophy course requirement for PHIL majors. **As is the case in all sections of 400-level PHIL courses, students are expected to have completed at least 9 credits in philosophy.** Students with fewer than 9 credits in philosophy may be admitted to the course with permission of the instructor.

The course also fulfills the Mason Core requirement for a Capstone course.

This course is designated as a writing-intensive (WI) course. See the WI web site for details of this requirement: https://wac.gmu.edu/wi-course-resources/wi-course-criteria/ and the WI learning outcomes page: https://wac.gmu.edu/writing-intensive-courses/wi-learning-

outcomes/. The course fulfills the WI criteria for the PHIL major by requiring the completion of several writing assignments, all of which count substantially toward the final grade in the course; by requiring written work totalling over 3500 words; by assigning a short paper and in-class discussion presentations designed to develop skills and understanding that can be used in the writing of the long semester paper; and by providing the opportunity for comments on a draft of the semester paper with the aim that the comments be used in the revision of that paper. The longer paper will be due on May 6. See the section entitled **Written Work** below for details including due dates.

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Aims

The course aims to give students a background in historical and current work in the philosophy of race, and particularly in philosophical work that explores conceptions of race critically, analytically, and constructively. Students will develop skill in reading philosophical texts closely and critically; in communicating both analytically and constructively; and in assessing secondary sources. Students will develop familiarity with current approaches to philosophical questions regarding race.

The class will also investigate whether or to what extent the questions, ideas, and ways of thinking developed by some earlier philosophers - roads not taken previously - may be used to address issues of present-day significance; and they will learn to assess, criticize constructively, and further develop these earlier contributions.

In addition, as befits a writing-intensive course, students will develop skills at cogent communication of in-depth analyses, and at writing as a component of inquiry.

Technology Skills

By the end of the semester students should be able to use e-mail; to use the Blackboard course management system to attend and participate in class meetings; to use on-line library catalogs and other library databases; to find reserve and non-reserve materials such as books and journal articles; to use word-processing programs to format documents with correct margins and footnotes or endnotes; to be able to access documents and other materials on the Blackboard site, on other web sites, and on the GMU electronic reserve system.

Please be sure that your GMU e-mail account is activated, and please check it regularly. University policies now **require** students to activate their GMU e-mail accounts and to check their GMU e-mail regularly. (See https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/student-rights-responsibilities/#text .) Many official university communications (announcements; messages from Financial Aid, the Library, instructors, etc.) are sent by GMU e-mail to students' GMU email addresses, and students are responsible for knowing the information conveyed in this way. If I need to contact you for any reason outside of class hours, I must do so via your GMU e-mail address. **In addition, your GMU e-mail username and password are required in order to use our course management software, Blackboard.**

Course Requirements
Required Texts

1. You are not required to purchase any texts for this course. Some texts will be made available in Blackboard. See the Reading Assignments, Course Content, and Further Reading and Reference tabs. Some of these will be marked as required, some as recommended, and some as optional.

2. Some materials in the form of journal articles or e-books will be found in on-line databases accessible via the GMU Libraries(such as JSTOR, Project Muse, ProQuest, and others). Others may be open-access (thus, not available via GMU Libraries but available for free elsewhere on the Internet). Some of these will be required, some recommended, and others optional reading.

Please check Blackboard under the Reading Assignments tab at least once per week to see new postings and links concerning supporting materials (required secondary readings, recommended readings, things you might find useful in your papers, etc.).

Classwork

Class sessions begin at 3:00 PM. Students are expected to come to each class session having read the material assigned for that day, and prepared to discuss it or to ask thoughtful questions about it. **Thoughtful class participation is expected.** If signs indicate that students are not preparing for class by doing the reading, reading quizzes will be instituted and the results will become part of the participation grade.

If you've done the reading, you'll have questions!

A note about names in class discussions: If the name by which you'd prefer to be addressed in class is different from the name listed for you in PatriotWeb or on the class roster, please let your instructor and (if you wish) your classmates know. You can do this orally in class, or in the Zoom chat box (addressed either to the instructor or to the whole class), or via an email to the instructor.

Written and Oral Work
Written and oral assignments for this class will include four assignments: one longer paper, plus one shorter paper, plus one individual discussion-leading paper, plus one set of discussion questions (generated with a partner or team).

1. One short response paper.
This will involve a response to questions regarding primary texts and scholarly accounts of that text or texts. Due date and topic options will be posted to the Short Writing Assignments tab in Blackboard.

This paper should be about 3-5 pages in length. Papers must be in either .doc, .docx, or .pdf format. Do NOT use .pages format; Blackboard has problems with it. Submit the paper via Blackboard by February 12.

2. Leading class discussion twice (two different days):
(a) **One discussion-leading paper/presentation:** One short exegetical OR response presentation that will be due on the day that the readings treated in this

paper/presentation are discussed. (For example, if this paper addresses material that will be discussed in class on March 8, the paper must be submitted or the presentation given on March 8.) If for some reason you cannot do an in-class presentation, please do let the instructor know and we will work out an alternative; see below.

This presentation must be no more than fifteen minutes in length; and notes or a written version (about 3-5 pages) must be submitted on the day of the presentation. Submit the notes or written version via Blackboard.

The goal of this paper/presentation, distinguishing it from the first type of short paper, is that this short discussion-leading paper enables you to lead or open class discussion. If you are unable to present this in class yourself, please contact the instructor so that we can discuss other options (for example, pre-recording the presentation, having someone else present it, or some other modality).

There will be a sign-up sheet in Blackboard where you can choose your presentation date.

(b) **One additional set of discussion questions, for a different day:** You and a partner or team will come up with a list of two to four questions that you'd be interested in having the class discuss, concerning the readings for that day. You can develop the questions separately or together. Submit a copy of the discussion questions to me via Blackboard on the day of the discussion.

There will be a sign-up sheet in Blackboard where you and your partner(s) can choose your presentation date.

3. One longer paper: You'll be able to find instructions for this paper under the Long Writing Assignments tab in Blackboard. Papers must be in either .doc, .docx, or .pdf format.

(a) The longer paper must be on a topic pertaining to the readings from the course and must use at least some course texts (plus others including secondary sources). It is to be 8-10 pages in length. It is due on May 6. Submit this via Blackboard.

(b) Students **must** submit a research question and a preliminary annotated bibliography for the longer paper. The research question with preliminary annotated bibliography is not graded, but no points are earned if it is absent or does not fulfill the instructions. It is due by March 1, but will be accepted earlier. The earlier you submit these, the earlier I can get back to you so that you can get to work on the papers. Submit these via Blackboard.

(c) Students are also **required** to show drafts of their longer papers to the instructor for comments (comments to be offered via Zoom or Skype conferences) before submitting the papers. The draft is not graded, but no points are earned if it is absent or does not fulfill the instructions. If necessary (if many drafts arrive at one time) there will be a sign-up sheet in Blackboard where you can set up a time to meet with the instructor via Zoom. In order to be able to make most use of comments on the draft, it would make most sense to submit the draft by April 22.

5. For guides to writing in philosophy and other helpful resources, check the Writing Resources tab of our Blackboard page.

6. The GMU Writing Center is an excellent resource for writing-related questions: http://writingcenter.gmu.edu (see the web page for locations and their phone numbers).

Grading

1. The short paper and the individual presentation each account for 15% of your semester grade. The "long" paper accounts for 40% of your semester grade. The research question with annotated bibliography counts for 5% of the semester grade, and the draft also counts for 5%. The partnered/team discussion-leading session counts for 10% of your grade. The remaining 10% of the grade reflects class participation. This will be drawn from thoughtful contributions to class discussions and participation in conferences and/or peer-reviews of drafts.

If there is student interest in discussion boards, discussions in a Blackboard discussion board will also count. **If signs indicate that students are not preparing for class by doing the reading, reading quizzes will be instituted and the results will become part of the participation grade.**

To earn an A on a paper, you need to: answer the research question(s) correctly (there may be several ways to do this); cover your topic thoroughly; follow all instructions; *explain* how you came to your conclusions if any; support your conclusions (if any) or explain why you have doubts; show your reasoning; make no factual errors; write clearly. You must do this in a way that shows a high level of understanding and clarity (for example, presenting an especially comprehensive explanation or an especially detailed analysis or an especially nuanced conclusion).

A paper that earns a B is one that gets most parts of the question(s) right, but makes some noticeable and relevant factual error OR does not answer the question(s) completely (leaves out something fairly important) OR makes a relevant error in answering the question OR makes a relevant error in reasoning or in understanding of the point or text studied OR does not clearly show the student's understanding or reasoning OR does not adequately support its conclusions.

A paper that earns a C is one that answers the question somewhat, but leaves out crucial points OR makes several significant factual errors OR includes little explanation or shows little reasoning OR combines several of the problems mentioned in the paragraph on "B" papers and exams OR is not written clearly enough to convey your understanding of certain important points.

A paper that earns a D shows minimal understanding of the texts OR covers little of the question(s) correctly OR makes major factual errors that undermine your answers OR is so unclear that I can only tell whether a few parts are right OR includes no explanations.

A paper will get an F if it covers less than 60% of the question(s) or topic correctly OR if it does not address the question(s) OR if it is so unclear that I cannot tell what you are saying.

Grades of A-, B+, B-, C+, etc. will also be given. An A- paper is between an A paper and a B paper but closer to an A paper; a B+ paper is between an A paper and a B paper but closer to a B paper, etc.

As required by University policy, a letter grade of A+ is equivalent to a numerical grade of 4.0; a grade of A is also equivalent to a numerical grade of 4.0; a grade of A- is equivalent to a 3.67; a B+ is equivalent to a 3.33; a B is equivalent to a 3.0; etc.

For a full listing of the University's policy for converting letter grades into numerical grades to compute your GPA (grade-point average), see the University Catalog online at https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/#text .

2. **Late assignment policy**: Work that is submitted **late with a documented legitimate excuse will be accepted without penalty.** Examples of documented legitimate excuses include a doctor's note or emergency room receipt if the absence was due to illness; a receipt from a mechanic for emergency car repairs on the day of class; an official document (such as a syllabus) from one of your other courses proving that you had a required field trip for that class on the day our class meets; an official document from your workplace proving that your job sent you out of town on the day our class meets; an official document from an athletic team proving that you had a competition on the day our class meets; etc. **The documentation must account for the lateness**: for example, a medical note indicating that you were treated for an illness of a week's duration would **not** be sufficient documentation to excuse submitting an assignment a month late.

Work that is submitted late, without a documented legitimate excuse, will lose one grade increment per day that it is late. For example, an assignment that would have received a B+ if handed in on time will receive a B if submitted within 24 hours of its deadline, a B- if submitted between 24 and 48 hours late, and so on. The maximum penalty is two full letter grades: assignments will not be accepted more than 1 week late without a documented legitimate excuse.

3. **Policy on assignments that are not submitted at all**: Any required assignment that you do not submit by the time that the last assignment is due will receive a grade of F, **unless** you have requested a grade of IN (see #4 below).

4. **Policy concerning grades of IN (incomplete)**:
University policy specifies that instructors are to assign an IN only if the student is passing the course so far, has a limited amount of work to complete so that it can be completed before the IN deadline, and there is a non-academic reason that prevents them from completing the work within the semester:
https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/#ap-3-3
Grades of IN will be given **only** in either of the following situations:
(1) If your situation fits the guidelines specified by university policy above, AND you request a grade of IN in writing at least 24 hours before the last assignment is due, AND you submit an Incomplete Grade Contract (available at
https://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/IGC.pdf), OR
(2) If your situation fits the guidelines specified by university policy above AND a sudden emergency arises less than 24 hours before the assignment is due AND you can provide appropriate documentation of this emergency (as described in the section on late assignments, above) AND a written request for a grade of IN along with the Incomplete Grade Contract mentioned above.
If you do not make a written request for a grade of IN and cannot provide documentation of emergency, you will receive a grade of F for each assignment that is missing.

5. **Policy on plagiarism/ Honor Code policy**: You are responsible for knowing, understanding, and obeying the University Honor Code and the Honor Code Statement for this course. **For details please see the Honor Code Statement at the end of this syllabus.** The

policy for this class is in accordance with University policy as outlined in the online University Catalog at https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/#text ; see also oai.gmu.edu. If you have any questions, please ask your instructor.

6. **Academic accommodations**: **If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 703-993-2474. See also this page: ds.gmu.edu .**

All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS. By 'disability' I mean a learning disability, physical disability, or other condition that requires that you receive accommodations such as modified assignments, note-takers, extended exam time, or something else as specified by the ODS.

The need for accommodations must be identified to the ODS and the instructor at the beginning of the semester (unless the need for accommodations develops after that point, in which case it should be identified as soon as possible after it arises). Please get the proper documentation from the Office of Disability Services concerning the specific accommodations you will need at the beginning of the semester, or as soon as it is available, so that we can set up appropriate arrangements. Then please take a moment (before or after class, in office hours, etc.) to show me the documentation and to make sure I understand exactly what you will need.

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Schedule

Please note that this schedule may change slightly should that become necessary. Any changes that occur will be announced as soon as the instructor knows of them. **For details of reading assignments for each session, see the Reading Assignments tab of our Blackboard page.**

Jan. 17: Intro; overview of course; how accounts of race figure in social and political philosophy; some recent philosophical approaches to questions of what "race" is and how it might figure (or not) in social and political justice

Jan. 22 – 24: More introductory material; prehistory of modern notions of race, part 1: ancient Greece and Rome

Jan. 29 – 31: Prehistory of modern notions of race, part 2: late antiquity, medieval and early modern eras; the beginnings of global colonization by European countries

Feb. 5 – 7: The 18th and 19th centuries; philosophy and early "scientific" notions of race

Feb. 12 – 14: Early 20th-century critical and constructive accounts of race ideas

Feb. 19 – 21: Logics of race accounts and racisms; presumed racial binaries

Feb. 26 – 28: What is it for race to be "real"? (biological, political, sociocultural, legal, and other kinds of "realness"); is race "real" in some, all, or none of these ways? And what would the answers imply for political and social inquiry?

March 11 – 13: Race as "biological"

March 18 – 20: Race as "socially constructed"; indigeneity and racialization

March 25 – 27: What is critical race theory, in philosophy and across disciplines?

April 1 – 3: Criticisms of critical race theory from across political spectra

April 8 – 10: Other critical philosophies of race

April 15 – 17: Other critical philosophies of race

April 22 – 24: Whiteness and race; racializations into and away from "whiteness"; changing social ontologies

April 29: The future of notions of race

<div align="center">Important Dates this Semester</div>

Last day to add classes: Jan. 23
Last day to drop classes with full tuition refund: Jan. 30
Last day to drop classes with partial tuition refund: Feb. 6
Last day to drop classes (with no tuition refund): March 25
Student self-withdrawal period: Feb. 7 – 20
Selective withdrawal for undergraduate courses: Feb. 21 – March 25
Spring Break: March 4 – 10
Last class meeting for this course: April 29
May 6: Final writing assignment due

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<div align="center">Resources: philosophy and research</div>

The GMU Library page: http://library.gmu.edu
The Library's "Ask a Librarian" service: http://library.gmu.edu/ask
GMU Philosophy Department: http://philosophy.gmu.edu

<div align="center">Some other useful resources at GMU</div>

GMU Writing Center, Robinson A114: http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS): http://caps.gmu.edu: SUB I Room 3129, 703-993-2380
Learning Services (academic skills, tutoring, etc.) : https://learningservices.gmu.edu/
Disability Services (ODS): http://ds.gmu.edu : SUB I Room 2500, 703-993-2474
University Catalog: http://catalog.gmu.edu
University policies: http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu
Career Services: http://careers.gmu.edu

Student Support Resources (extensive list of various kinds of resources):
https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/knowing-mason-students/student-support-resources-on-campus/

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Honor Code Statement

This course is conducted in accordance with the GMU Honor Code, as outlined in the University Catalog. The GMU Honor Code is as follows:

> To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this honor code: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.

Please see the Office for Academic Integrity for a full description of the code and the honor committee process. The full Honor Code document of the Office for Academic Integrity appears here.

What does the phrase "academic integrity" refer to with regard to your coursework? Essentially this: when you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task. When you rely on someone else's work as part of of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form (for example, clear citations in written work). Another aspect of academic integrity is the free exchange of ideas. Vigorous discussion and debate are encouraged in this course, with the firm expectation that all aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions. When in doubt about anything to do with this course, please ask your instructor for guidance and clarification.

As part of the practice of academic integrity, all members of the Mason community (students, faculty, staff) should follow these fundamental principles, as noted by the Honor Code: (1) All work you submit is to be your own, without the use inappropriate assistance or resources, as defined by the assignment; (2) When you use the work, the words, the images, or the ideas of others–including fellow students, online sites or tools, or your own prior creations–you must give full credit through accurate citations; (3) In creating your work, you do not use materials you are not authorized to use, and do not falsely represent ideas or processes regarding your work. (You are of course welcome to discuss your ideas with others and to show them drafts of the work you are preparing; however, it is not appropriate to have someone else – or something else, such as an AI program – revise your paper.)

As in many classes, some assignments for this class are designed to be completed by working with a group of classmates. When submitting such collaborative work, names of all the participants should appear on the work. Collaborative projects may be divided up so that individual group members complete portions of the whole.

If you are uncertain about the ground rules or ethical expectations regarding adhering to

academic integrity in your work either in the course in general or on a particular assignment, please ask your instructor for clarification.[1]

Examples of plagiarism and examples of proper (non-plagiarizing) citation are provided at http://mason.gmu.edu/~rcherubi/plagiarism.html .

Statement regarding use of Generative AI tools
Any student use of generative AI tools must follow the fundamental principles of the Honor Code.

Use of generative AI tools will sometimes be in alignment with the learning goals and assignment specifications for this course, and sometimes it will not. For example, using these tools for brainstorming, for finding possible reference sources to check out and assess, would be acceptable as **part** of your work.. But for those aspects of a given assignment that require original human action, creativity or knowledge – for example, analyzing and criticizing arguments, synthesizing information, drawing and examining inferences, constructing new valid arguments, and so on - AI tool use would **not** align with the stated assignment and course goals.

When explicitly stated by the instructor, generative AI tools are allowed on the named assignment in the ways mentioned above (brainstorming, etc.). If you use generative AI tools, a citation/statement-of-usage (including tool, date, query, and role the tool played) is required. Use of these tools on any part or aspect of an assignment not specified will be considered a violation of the academic integrity policy. Instructors are required to report all academic integrity violations to the office of Academic Integrity.[2]

If you use AI programs e.g. ChatGPT to help generate ideas and brainstorm, please be aware that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, or otherwise problematic (possibly politically biased, for example, depending in the sources of information that the program has used). You will be responsible for any errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or otherwise problematic passages that make it into the work you submit.[3]

Penalties/Responses to Plagiarism, Cheating and Impermissible Kinds of Usage of Generative AI Tools:
A. For a first offense in this course, on assignments other than the final assignment: If there is **evidence** that a student has collaborated with others in prohibited ways, or **evidence** that a student has presented others' words or sequences of ideas as his or her own, or **evidence** that a student has used AI tools in ways that are not permitted in the course, then that student's paper will be invalidated, and the student will be required to complete a paper on a different topic, in a

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[1] The language used in this section is drawn, with some modifications for clarity, from this page: https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/designing-your-syllabus/
[2] Adapted from https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/knowledge-center/ai-text-generators/
[3] Adapted from an entry by Holly Fernandez-Lynch, University of Pennsylvania, presented at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1RMVwzjc1o0Mi8Blw_-JUTcXv02b2WRH86vw7mi16W3U/edit

satisfactory manner within a one-week deadline. The work submitted will be assessed a penalty of one letter grade. Work submitted after the one-week deadline will be assessed a late penalty as outlined above under "Late Assignment Policy." No credit will be given until the work is re-submitted satisfactorily. If the work is not re-submitted satisfactorily, that assignment will receive a grade of F.

B. On the final assignment, or for a second offense on earlier assignments: If there is **evidence** that a student has collaborated with others in prohibited ways or has presented others' words or sequences of ideas as his or her own (including presenting unanalyzed and unchecked AI-generated material as one's own reasoning and conclusions), **the case will be reported to the Honor Committee.** No credit will be given unless the case is resolved with a finding of "Not Guilty."

Note. By 'evidence' I mean something in writing that clearly shows proof of plagiarism or illegitimate collaboration. For example, if two students submit essays that are worded identically or that clearly appear to be paraphrases of the same wording; if a student submits a paper which I find to consist substantially of material copied from a book or web site or other source or tool without attribution and I can get hold of a copy of the source — all of this is evidence of an Honor Code violation. If there is any question in my mind, I will speak to the student(s) involved before making the determination as to whether to take action.

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Diversity Statement

Philosophia began in respect for diversity in ideas, cultures, beliefs, and ways of thinking. The first written documentation of the development of a practice that was called *philosophein* (philosophizing) was in Miletus, a Greek-speaking city on the western coast of what is now Turkey (Turkiye). Miletus was a crossroads for a variety of cultures including Greeks, Persians, Egyptians, Babylonians, and other cultures of the Middle East, southern Europe, and northern and eastern Africa. In Miletus, the first philosophers sought out, investigated, and tested a variety of ideas and ways of thinking, treating foreign ideas and familiar ideas with equal respect — including subjecting them to equal scrutiny. The fact that an idea or person was Greek in origin did not incite in philosophers more respect or less respect than was due a foreign person or idea; and the fact that an idea was new did not make it any more suspect or any more trusted than an older one.

For the first philosophers, respect for the diverse and the familiar was compatible with — it even required — inquiry and testing. This is because what they valued was understanding, even where this went beyond and challenged what passed for understanding in their communities.

PHIL 429 endeavors to continue this philosophical project. Only by respectful yet critical systematic questioning will we be able to discover and move beyond the prejudices and gaps in knowledge, prejudices and gaps we might not yet realize we have, to a more comprehensive and powerful understanding.

To this end, the course will function in keeping with the University Diversity Statement, http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/ , and the Women and Gender Studies Program Commitment to Diversity Statement:

"We seek to create a learning environment that fosters respect for people across identities. We welcome and value individuals and their differences, including gender expression and identity, race, economic status, sex, sexuality, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age and ability. We encourage all members of the learning environment to engage with the material personally, but to also be open to exploring and learning from experiences different than their own."