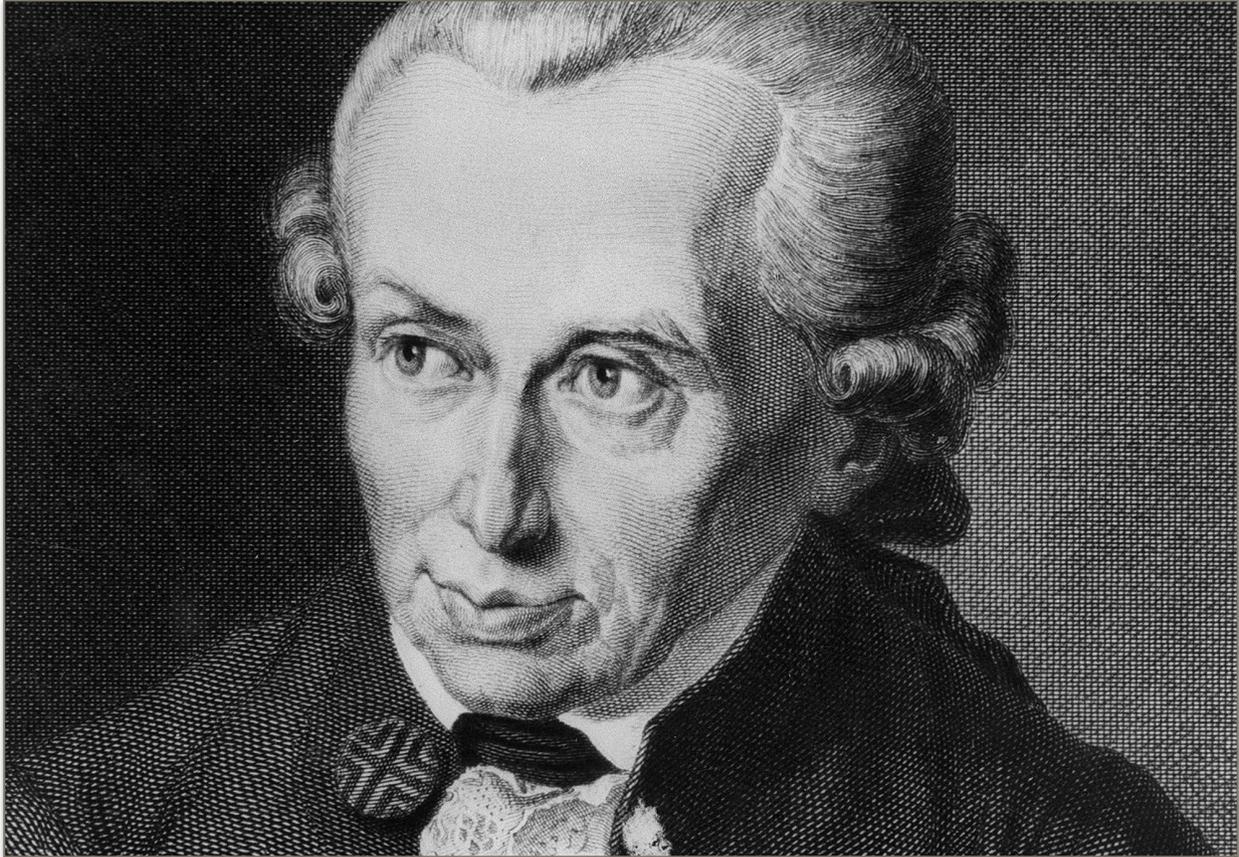

KANT

PHIL 4055/5055 | Fall 2021



Course Description

Immanuel Kant made influential and decisive contributions to a wide swath of philosophy. During the so-called Critical period (after 1780) he wrote foundational texts in epistemology, metaphysics, ethics, aesthetics, teleology, religion, anthropology, and religion. These works remain relevant to philosophy to this very day. Additionally, Kant took each of these particular doctrines to hang together in an overarching system of Critical philosophy. In this class, we synoptically study Kant's philosophy, paying especial focus to its contemporary relevance.

Office Hours

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This is the time that I set aside to meet and to chat with students. We can talk about course topics and assignments, philosophy more generally, your program, or anything else. No appointment is necessary. Just show up!

Email Policy

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I try to keep up with my email, but it's hard, particularly in the present moment of chaos. I'll do my best to respond to emails within 48 hours of receiving them during the week. (I will wait until Monday to respond to emails received during the weekend.) If I don't respond in a timely fashion **please send me a follow up email** after 48 hours.

Course Objectives

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These describe the point of the class. The objectives are what you should get out of the course: all of the activities, assignments, readings, and discussions are geared toward developing your achievement of these objectives.

Basic Information

Instructor: Professor Bennett McNulty

Office: 805 Heller Hall + Zoom ([link](#))

ZOOM Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 10:00–11:00

Email: mcnu0074@umn.edu

Course Meetings: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:15–12:30

Location: Blegen Hall 250

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

1. Describe the fundamental tenets of Kant's philosophy
2. Explain ways in which Kant's philosophy is relevant to contemporary thought and times
3. Describe connections among various domains of Kant's philosophy
4. Summarize a body of philosophical literature
5. Defend a position on a historical or historically informed philosophical issue

Career Readiness

"At the College of Liberal Arts, our goal is "CLA alumni will be the most desirable graduates available." To accomplish this, CLA is focusing on career readiness through the acquisition of ten **Core Career Competencies**. Nine of these competencies reflect the very essence of liberal arts education - and the competitive advantage it represents in today's uncertain and dynamic economy. Career management, the tenth competency, gives you the necessary tools to seek and obtain the career you desire. Career Readiness is the ability to articulate how a liberal arts education prepares you for your future career to yourself, and to your family and future employers." Learn more [here](#).



Career Readiness

This course aims to develop skills that will serve students in their future careers, no matter what they may be. In particular, the course primarily focuses on students' skills of **Analytical & Critical Thinking** and **Oral & Written Communication** (especially written) Throughout the semester, students will reflect upon the utility of these skills and this course for their future careers. The **Analytical & Critical Thinking Career Competency** is described as follows. "Analytical & Critical Thinking comprehensively explores issues, ideas, knowledge, evidence and values before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion. Those competent in Analytical & Critical Thinking: recognize there may be more than one valid point of view; evaluate an issue or problem based on multiple perspectives, while accounting for personal biases; and identify when information is missing or if there is a problem, prior to coming to conclusions and making decisions." The **Oral & Written Communication Career Competency** is described as follows. "Oral & Written Communication intentionally engages with an audience to inform, persuade, or entertain. Those competent in Oral & Written Communication: consider relationships with the audience and the social and political context in which one communicates, as well as the needs, goals, and motivations of all involved; have proficiency in, knowledge of, and competence with the means of communication (including relevant language and technical skills); and ensure that communication is functional and clear." Through assignments, activities and in-class discussions, you will practice evaluating evidence, making arguments, engaging in fruitful and respectful debate, and justifying your own opinions rationally.

Texts

Required Texts

Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, translated by Mary Gregor and Jens Timmerman

All additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysics, translated by Gary Hatfield, was ordered by the bookstore, but, due to some last-minute changes in the plan for the course, we will not be reading it. I strongly encourage you to read it – the *Prolegomena* makes for an excellent resource for understanding Kant's metaphysics – but it won't be required.

Supplementary Resources

Kant's writings are notoriously difficult. Even though in this class we avoid some of the most knotty texts in his corpus, secondary resources and readings are supremely helpful. When I first worked through the *Critique of Pure Reason*, I read Henry Allison's *Kant's Transcendental Idealism* and Sebastian Gardner's *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*; I got much more out of those guides than the primary text itself.

There is a *lot* of literature on Kant's philosophy. I won't give a comprehensive overview here. Generally speaking, I find the volumes in two series to be really helpful guides to historical philosophers and their works: the *Routledge Philosophy Guidebooks* and the *Routledge Philosophers*. There are two general resources about Kant's life and thought that I'd recommend.

Kant by Manfred Kuehn (Cambridge, 2001)

Kant by Paul Guyer (Routledge, 2006 [1st ed.], 2014 [2nd ed.])

Otherwise, for each unit/topic, I'd recommend different secondary sources.

Prolegomena, Epistemology and Metaphysics

Gardner's *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason* (Routledge, 1999)

Groundwork, Ethics

Kant's Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals: An Introduction, by Sally Sedgwick (Cambridge, 2008)

Kant's Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals: A Commentary, by Henry Allison (Oxford, 2011)

Anthropology from a Pragmatic Point of View, Anthropology

What is the Human Being? by Patrick Frierson (Routledge, 2013)

Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, Religion

Kant's Moral Religion, by Allen Wood (Cornell, 1970)

Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant on Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason, by Lawrence Pasternack (Routledge, 2014)

Aesthetics

Kant and the Claims of Taste, by Paul Guyer (Cambridge, 1979)

Kant on Beauty and Biology, by Rachel Zuckert (Cambridge, 2007)

Teleology

Kant and the Human Sciences, by Alix Cohen (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009)

Kant on Beauty and Biology, by Rachel Zuckert (Cambridge, 2007)

Special Policies

Communication & Interaction

- Given the current state of the pandemic, out of respect for other community members, please explicitly ask for and receive consent before approaching another student or removing your mask in their presence (even while outside).
- Although masking is unequivocally a necessity, it interferes with our abilities to communicate and to be understood.
 - If others are having trouble hearing or understanding you, please do not under any circumstances remove your mask.
 - During class, I will try to keep track of and answer questions on Discord. Posing a question on Discord may be easier for many of you.

COVID Policies

- **Please** acquaint yourself with the University COVID Policies.
 - [Positive Test Guidelines](#)
 - [Masking Guidelines](#)
 - [Vaccination Guidelines](#)
- Highlights of student responsibilities
 - Get vaccinated (if you are medically able and hold no sincere religious objection).
 - Do not come to class if you are ill in any manner.
 - Do not come to class if have been exposed to COVID-19.
 - Wear your mask properly in all university buildings.
 - *Respect other community members.*

Assignments

Required Assignments for PHIL 4055 & 5055

Discord Discussion (up to 150 points; 10 points per week) — There is a Discord Server associated with the class. You can engage with your classmates about the answers to these questions there. Regular participation on the Discord (a few interactions per week) will earn you full credit.

Synthetic Journal (up to 375 points; 75 points per entry) — You are tasked with writing a journal throughout the semester in which you keep a log of interesting topics, the importance of course themes, and the relevance of course topics to issues and ideas in which you are interested. At the end of each unit, you will each submit a 1,000 word summary of the unit and your reflections on it.

Kant Lexicon (up to 100 points; 50 points per entry) — Kant’s philosophy is famously, if not notoriously, technical. Almost every term of note — “intuition,” “maxim,” “culture,” “reason,” “religion,” etc. — has a distinctive, technical meaning in his philosophical system. In order to grapple with and to learn these technical meanings, each student is going to be tasked with writings a sort definition and analysis of two terms or concepts in Kant’s philosophy. We’ll collect all these together, as well, to make a community reference work.

Term Paper (up to 425 points) — During the semester, students will write an argumentative essay on a topic related to course content. It is left open what particular topic students select. The paper could be **interpretive**, concerning how correctly to understand an aspect of Kant’s philosophy; **comparative**, concerning the comparison between Kant’s and another’s philosophy; **historical**, tracing a historical concept or idea appearing in Kant’s thought; **applicative**, applying Kant’s theories to another context; or otherwise involve any other sort of project! The paper ideally should be 3,000–5,000 words and involve a good deal of research. This sort of paper ought to be a sort of capstone of one’s undergraduate philosophical education or an opportunity genuinely and seriously to practice and to improve a graduate student’s developing philosophical skills. The components of the assignment are as follows:

Proposal (up to 50 points) — October 31st

Peer Review (up to 50 points) — Draft due November 23rd, feedback due November 30th

Draft (up to 50 points) — December 7th

Final Version (up to 275 points) — December 19th

RATE Assignment (up to 50 pts) — The RATE tool, developed by the College of Liberal Arts’ Career Readiness Initiative, allows you the opportunity to reflect on your learning process and to articulate the way in which your liberal arts education is useful for your future life and career. By December 14th, you will complete a RATE on the class as a whole. On that day, we’ll have a follow-up activity in which we’ll discuss our RATEs and what we got out of the course.

Optional Assignments for PHIL 4055/5055

Additional Kant Lexicon Entry (50 pts) — You can do one extra lexicon entry for up to 50 additional points.

Office Hour Meeting (50 pts) — I hold office hours every week to meet with students. During this time, I can discuss with you and provide guidance on anything from course topics to post-graduation plans, from philosophy of science to philosophy of sport, or from your schedule next semester to requirements for the philosophy major. You can receive points for meeting with me once during the semester. If you'd prefer, you can also meet with me as a pair or a triad with other students. Swing by my office hours!

Creative Ideas (0–∞ pts) — I am totally open to you coming up with any other ways to demonstrate your understanding of the course material, its connection to and relevance to your life, or popularizing the information. You could record a series of Kant TikTok videos, write a comic, post your Kant diss track on Youtube, and many other things that I am not creative enough to think of. Just pitch me the idea, I'll approve it, and we can talk about what sort of credit you'll earn.

Required Assignments for PHIL 5055

For participants in 5055, there are additional requirements. First, graduate students must attend a weekly, 1-hour workshop, in which dive deeper into the issues covered in the class and discuss additional literature. The topics covered in the workshop will be based on the interests of the participants. Attendance is expected, but ungraded. There is additionally one extra graded assignment for graduate students.

Presentation (200 pts) — Once during the semester, graduate students will be required to present during the usual class meetings. This presentation ought to provide a synoptic account of the secondary literature on a particular topic and should be around 20 minutes long. The goal of the presentation is both to provide participants with the lay-of-the-land, as it were, as well as to practice reading, understanding, and synthesizing a wide domain of literature. Graduate students may suggest particular articles that they'd like to discuss for the graduate student workshop sessions. There will be no specific due date for these presentations; we will instead discuss the intended presentation topic and come up with an appropriate presentation date.

Semester Schedule

Introduction

Tuesday — September 7th

Introduction to the class

Recommended Guyer, *Kant*, Introduction

Thursday — September 9th

Read Guyer, *Kant*, A Life in Work

Read Rohlf, “Immanuel Kant,” *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, Life and Works ([link](#))

Tuesday — September 14th

Read Kant, “What is Enlightenment?”

Recommended Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, Excursus II

Unit 1: Epistemology and Metaphysics

Thursday — September 16th

Read Kant, *Prolegomena*, Preface and Preamble

Read Kant, 1772 Letter to Marcus Herz

Prof. McNulty’s Parental Leave Begins; Prof. Hanks takes over

Tuesday — September 21st

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Prefaces

Thursday — September 23rd

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Introductions

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, The *Stufenleiter* (A319–20/B376–7)

Recommended Kant, *Prolegomena*, General Question of the Prolegomena, General Question

Tuesday — September 28th

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, The Transcendental Aesthetic, On Space (A19–30/B33–45)

Recommended Kant, *Prolegomena*, First Part

Thursday — September 30th

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, The Transcendental Aesthetic, Conclusion from These Concepts, Elucidation, and General Remarks (A32–49/B49–66)

Recommended Kant, *Prolegomena*, First Part

Tuesday — October 5th

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, The *Leitfaden* (§§9–12) (B91–116)

Thursday — October 7th

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, Transcendental Deduction (§§13–14) (A84–95/B116–129, System of Principles (A148–62/B187–201)

Recommended Kant, *Prolegomena*, Second Part

Tuesday — October 12th

Read Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, The Second Analogy (A189–211/B232–56)

Recommended Kant, *Prolegomena*, Second Part

Thursday — October 14th

Read Brook, “Kant, Cognitive Science and Contemporary Neo-Kantianism”

Recommended Kitcher, *Kant's Transcendental Psychology*, Ch. 8, “Cognitive Constraints on Empirical Concepts”

Recommended Brook, *Kant and the Mind*, Ch. 1, “The Contemporary Relevance of Kant's Work”

Recommended Schlicht and Newen, “Kant and Cognitive Science Revisited”

Prof. McNulty's Parental Leave Over, Returns

Unit 2: Ethics

Tuesday — October 19th

Read Kant, *Groundwork*, Preface and Section I

Synthetic Journal, Unit 1 due

Thursday — October 21st

Read Kant, *Groundwork*, Section II

Recommended Korsgaard, “Kant’s Formula of Universal Law,” “Kant’s Formula of Humanity” in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*; Wood, “The Formula of Humanity as End in Itself” in *Kant’s Ethical Thought*

Tuesday — October 26th

Read Kant, *Groundwork*, Section III

Recommended Allison “The Deduction in *Groundwork* III” in *Kant’s Theory of Freedom*; Korsgaard, “Morality as Freedom” in *Creating the Kingdom of Ends*

Thursday — October 28th

Read Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, On the Deduction of the Principles of Pure Practical Reason, and On the Warrant of Pure Reason

Tuesday — November 2nd

Read Kant and Maria von Herbert, “Correspondence”

Read Langton, “Duty and Desolation”

Recommended Wolf, “Moral Saints”

Kant-Lexicon, Entry 1 due

Thursday — November 4th

Read Caranti, “The Foundation of Human Rights: The Dignity Approach,” in *Kant’s Political Legacy*

Unit 3: Anthropology

Tuesday — November 9th

Read Kant, *Anthropology*, Anthropological Characteristic, Character of the Person, Character of the Sexes

Synthetic Journal, Unit 2 due

Thursday — November 11th

Read Kant, *Anthropology*, Anthropological Characteristic, Character of Peoples, Character of the Races, Character of the Species

Tuesday — November 16th

Read Kant, “On the Different Races of Human Beings”

Recommended Bernasconi, “Who Invented the Concept of Race?”

Thursday — November 18th

Read Mills, “Black Radical Kantianism”

Read Huseyinzedegan, “For What Can the Kantian Feminist Hope?”

Recommended Mills, “Kant’s *Untermenschen*,” “Kant and Race, Redux”; Allais, “Kant’s Racism”

Unit 4: Religion

Tuesday — November 23rd

Read Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason*, Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason, §§IV–VI

Read Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Preface to the First Edition

Recommended Wood, “Rational Theology, Moral Faith and Religion”

Draft for Peer Review due

Tuesday — November 30th

Read Kant, *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason*, Part One

Synthetic Journal, Unit 3 due

Feedback from Peer Review due

Thursday — December 2nd

Read Anderson-Gold, “Kant, Radical Evil, and Crimes against Humanity”

Read Wood, “Kant and the Intelligibility of Evil”

Kant-Lexicon, Entry 2 due

Unit 5: Teleology and Human History

Tuesday — December 7th

Read Kant, “Idea for a Universal Natural History from a Cosmopolitan Point of View”

Read Kant, *Critique of the Power of Judgment*, §§83–84

Recommended Wood, “The Historical Vocation of Morality” in *Kant’s Ethical Thought*

Synthetic Journal, Unit 4 due

Term Paper Draft Due

Thursday — December 9th

Read Mensch, “What’s Wrong with Inevitable Progress? Notes on Kant’s Anthropology Today”

Read Pippin, “The Curious Fate of the Idea of Progress”

Conclusion

Tuesday — December 14th

Complete RATE for the course

Synthetic Journal, Unit 5 due

General Policies

Attendance

Please attend if you can. But if you can't make it, especially in these times, that's okay. Chat with classmates, post Q's on Discord, and come to my office hours to cover the material you missed.

If you are going to miss class for an extended period of time — for instance, due to illness or care for another — that will be no problem for the purposes of the course, and we'll figure out how to proceed, including potentially taking a grade of Incomplete.

Late Work

You will have the opportunity to hand in required assignments late. If you can, let me know before the assignment is due that it'll be late, but if you can't, that's no problem.

Missing Assignments

Unless we have some other arrangement, following the end of the final examination period, all missing assignments will receive a score of 0.

Regrading Policy

It is important for each student to understand the grade she received and how to improve. If you have any questions about the grade you received, please let me know and I can walk you through the evaluation. We can examine your response and my evaluation in detail, and, if I made an error, I will be happy to revise it.

Student Conduct Code

The University seeks an environment that promotes academic achievement and integrity, that is protective of free inquiry, and that serves the educational mission of the University. Similarly, the University seeks a community that is free from violence, threats, and intimidation; that is respectful of the rights, opportunities, and welfare of students, faculty, staff, and guests of the University; and that does not threaten the physical or mental health or safety of members of the University community.

As a student at the University you are expected adhere to Board of Regents Policy: Student Conduct Code. To review the Student Conduct Code, please see: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf.

Note that the conduct code specifically addresses disruptive classroom conduct, which means “engaging in behavior that substantially or repeatedly interrupts either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. The classroom extends to any setting where a student is engaged in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.”

Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis. (Student Conduct Code: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Student_Conduct_Code.pdf) If it is determined that a student has cheated, he or she may be given an “F” or an “N” for the course, and may face additional sanctions from the University. For additional information, please see: <http://policy.umn.edu/education/instructorresp>.

The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: <http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html>. If you have additional questions, please let me know, either by email or in office hours. I can respond to your specific questions regarding what would constitute scholastic dishonesty in our class. It never hurts to ask.

In this class, academic dishonesty is most common in the written assignments. It is all-too-easy to copy or to mimic a thesis, phrase, or passage (whether accidentally or purposefully), from a secondary source (e.g., Wikipedia, Sparknotes, the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy). This, however, constitutes plagiarism. Make sure that when you are writing for a class assignment, you put away all such materials, so that there is no chance of you doing something in violation of university standards.

Sexual Harassment

“Sexual harassment” means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working or academic environment in any University activity or program. Such behavior is not acceptable in the University setting. For additional information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: <http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/SexHarassment.pdf>.

Equity, Diversity, Equal Opportunity, and Affirmative Action

The University provides equal access to and opportunity in its programs and facilities, without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital status, disability, public assistance status, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression. For more information, please consult Board of Regents Policy: http://regents.umn.edu/sites/regents.umn.edu/files/policies/Equity_Diversity_EO_AA.pdf.

Disability Accommodations

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. The Disability Resource Center is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations.

If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact Disability Resource Center at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with Disability Resource Center and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, please contact your me as early in the semester as possible (either by email or in person during office hours) to discuss how the accommodations will be applied in the course.

For more information, please see the Disability Resource Center website, <https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/>.

Mental Health and Stress Management

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance and may reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Student Mental Health Website: <http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu>.

Instructional Time & Student Effort

Instructional time per course credit is a consistent minimum expectation set by the University for the amount of effort your instructor must spend engaging directly with you in your courses. For this 3-credit course, you will spend approximately 450 minutes per week on class activities. We will spend 150 minutes per week meeting together discussing course materials. Additionally, you'll commit to about 210 minutes each week actively reading course materials, taking notes, and posting reading responses. Finally you will spend on average around 90 minutes per week working on your assignments for the course. The 300 minutes of non-instructional time should be adequate in order to earn a C (Achievement that meets course requirements in every respect) in the course. To earn an A, you should expect to spend more than 300 minutes per week on your independent work.

