

# *Syllabus: Liberation Philosophy*

PHIL 308, Spring 2003

MW 10:00-11:45

Office Hours: MW 1:00-3:00; and by appointment

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In this class, we will study four approaches to developing a Philosophy of Liberation, and then apply these approaches to a 20<sup>th</sup> century liberation movement. Topics will include: the agents of liberation; the intersections of sex, race, and class; the revolts of 1968; the nature of oppression; the Zapatista rebellion.

## **TEXTS**

- Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- bell hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*. Cambridge, MA: South End.
- Herbert Marcuse, *Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon.
- Subcommandante Marcos, *Our Word is Our Weapon*. New York: Seven Stories.

## **SUGGESTED READING CALENDAR**

### **Week One: January 27 & 29**

- Introduction

### **Week Two: February 3 & 5**

- Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

### **Week Three: February 10 & 12**

- Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*

### **Week Four: February 17 & 19**

- hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*

### **Week Five: February 24 & 26**

- hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*

### **Week Six: March 3 & 5**

- hooks, *Feminism is for Everybody*

### **Week Seven: March 10 & 12**

- Marcuse, *Essay on Liberation*

### **Week Eight: March 17 & 19**

- **Spring Recess: No Class**

### **Week Nine: March 24 & 26**

- Marcuse, *Essay on Liberation*

### **Week Ten: March 31 & April 2**

- Marcuse, *Essay on Liberation*

### **Week Eleven: April 7 & 9**

- Marcos, *Our Word is Our Weapon*

### **Week Twelve: April 14 & 16**

- Marcos, *Our Word is Our Weapon*

### **Week Thirteen: April 21 & 23**

- Marcos, *Our Word is Our Weapon*

- Presentations

### **Week Fourteen: April 28 & 30**

- Presentations

### **Week Fifteen: May 5 & 7**

- Presentations

### **Week Sixteen: May 12 & 14**

- Presentations

## **SUGGESTED ASSIGNMENTS**

- **Essays (2 at 25 points each).** Two (typed) essays of 2000 words will be due during the semester, on “Pedagogy and Feminism” and “Liberating Resistance.”
- **Project (25 points).** Over the course of the semester, each student (singly or in pairs) will research a 20<sup>th</sup> century liberation movement and develop a paper (minimum 3000 words) explaining the “Liberation Philosophy” of that movement. Students will choose their topic by the 3<sup>rd</sup> week of class and provide a rough draft (1500 words minimum) by the 12<sup>th</sup> week. Students will also present their findings in class during the last three weeks of the semester.
- **Reading Study Guides (20 points).** Each student will complete 10 Reading Study Guides over the course of the semester, handed out in advance by the Instructor.
- **Accompaniment Readings (5 points).** Once during the semester, each student will provide an additional reading for the class, chosen by the student in consultation with the Instructor. All students are responsible for reading these accompaniments.

## ***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION***

- ***Attendance... is voluntary.*** In the event that you miss class but do not wish it to count against you, you may provide a 500-word summary of the reading material for that day, due the following class without exception. If you miss class and do not write a summary, your final grade may be lowered ½ grade each time.
- ***Participation... is essential to a fun, invigorating, and intellectually challenging class.*** Furthermore, in-class participation will be evaluated at the end of the quarter by the Instructor and used to determine borderline grades.
- ***Reading assignments... will be presented one or two classes in advance.*** Generally, we will work our way through as much of each text as we are able in the time available, and thus with little or no difficulty you will be able to remain a chapter or so ahead of the class. It is recommended that you both take reading notes of your own and also review the material that will be discussed on any given day just prior to and after class for fullest comprehension.
- Gender-neutral writing in philosophy is the accepted practice recommended by the American Philosophical Association. The words “man” and “mankind” do not refer to humanity; phrases such as “everyone has a right to his own property” contain a faulty pronoun reference (substitute ‘abortion’ for ‘property’ to see why). Appropriate language use includes, for example: “humanity”, “humankind”, “her/his”, “his or her”, etc. When quoting writers who utilize non-inclusive language, leave their words in the original. Gender specific language is, of course, appropriate when referring to a gender class such as “men” or “women.” Contact the instructor if you have additional questions. I strongly encourage you to read *Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language* by Virginia L. Warren, originally published in the *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* in February 1986 (Vol. 59, Number 3, pp. 471-482; it can be found at the APA web site <<http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html>>.
- From the *Catalog*: “The University expects students to be honest in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is viewed as an ethical issue and a violation of the principles of justice and personal responsibility inherent in the University’s ideals as expressed in its Statement of Mission and Goals. In particular, students must refrain from plagiarism [the misuse of published or unpublished works of another by claiming them as one’s own], cheating and collusion in connection with examinations and must acknowledge fully all sources and all assistance received in work submitted to the faculty for evaluation. In the event of academic dishonesty in class assignments or examinations, the instructor will normally assign an “F” with no possibility of making up the grade by means of additional work. In serious cases the instructor will normally assign an “F” for the course and will notify the Academic Honesty Committee. Specific information on the policy and procedures regarding Academic Honesty are available in the Offices of the Deans and Vice President for Academic Affairs and in the Policies section of this catalog.”
- I encourage all students concerned about their writing ability to contact the Writing Center in Cowell Hall, Room 227 (422-6713). Additional inquiries and training regarding study habits may be directed to the Learning Center (422-6715).
- Students with demonstrated disabilities are encouraged to speak with me as soon as possible in order to identify any ways in which your disability may be accommodated, and to contact Disability Related Services, University Center, Room 310 (422-2613).
- Students experiencing any kinds of personal and/or academic difficulties are encouraged to utilize the free services of the Counseling Center, located on the ground floor of Gillson Hall (422-6352), which can assist you with interpersonal relationship problems, family difficulties, depression, stress, sexual concerns, substance abuse, time management, self-esteem, eating problems, anxiety, and acquaintance rape. Individual, couples, and group counseling are available, as well as referrals for longer-term counseling or a more specialized approach.
- After Census Day (February 14), students who withdraw from class will receive a “W” on their transcript. If you expect to withdraw from the class, I encourage you to decide prior to that date. February 14 is also the last day to change to or from the Pass/Fail option. The final date for all withdrawals is April 11.
- ***Learning Outcomes:*** By the end of the semester you will be able to: *Read, interpret and explain* some major figures in liberation philosophy; *identify* sources of oppression and resistance including racism, capitalism, colonialism, and neoliberalism; *explain* the significance of liberation philosophy to the current state of affairs in the world.