

Dr. Karolin Mirzakhani

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Office Hours: T/TH 1:45-2:45PM, or by appointment.

Epigraph

Philosophy cannot bake bread – however it can provide us with God, freedom and immortality—now which is more practical – philosophy or economics?

Novalis, *Notes for a Romantic Encyclopedia* entry #401

One of the goals of teachers is to help you not need the teachers anymore and, in doing so, [become] your own teacher.

Gil Fronsdal, *Learning from Ease*

Course Description

The aim of this course is to provide you with tools and practice so that when you leave you can analyze any argument, whether it is found in a tweet, a commercial, a news story, or an article from a scholarly journal. Class discussions will be student-centered and will be guided by your questions and critiques.

In the first part of the class, we will acquire tools, which we will then use to analyze arguments. We will discuss the types of arguments and their components, logical fallacies and three widely influential ethical theories. We will use these tools to analyze texts on the following themes: higher education, the clothing industry, privatization of prisons and prison labor, sexual harassment, water privatization and other environmental issues.

As we read each article, we will ask what the author's thesis is, how she makes her argument, whether the argument has any fallacies, and whether it appeals to the good (as well as how the good is defined). We will also raise questions and criticisms.

Required Texts

All required texts will be posted on D2L.

Grading

Grading Scale:

Students are evaluated on the following scale: A - 90-100%

B - 80-89%

C - 70-79%

D - (60-69%)

F - (59% or lower)

I—Indicates an incomplete grade for the course, and will be awarded only when the student has done satisfactory work up to the last two weeks of the semester, but for

nonacademic reasons beyond his/her control is unable to meet the full requirements of the course. Incomplete grades are only valid after submission of the Incomplete Grade form (signed by both the instructor and student) to the Department Chair's office.

Grade Breakdown (as percentages of the final average):

Attendance and Participation: 20%

Argument Analyses: 30%

Short Writing Assignments (SWA) and quizzes = 30%

Final Exam: 20%

Description of Assignments

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance policy:

To be counted as present, you must: 1) be physically present in the classroom for the entire official class period and be awake; 2) bring a copy of the text we are covering that day with you; 3) be prepared to ask questions and take notes. You will NOT be counted present if you do not have the appropriate materials with you (paper and pen to take notes, readings), if you spend class time either on your phone or laptop doing anything unrelated to course content, or if you are working on materials for another course.

The expectation is that you are fully present and prepared to be engaged with the materials, myself and your classmates.

Failure to meet the above criteria will count as an absence.

More than two absences will result in a reduction of the final class grade by one-half letter grade (i.e., a "B" becomes a "B-"). Being late 3 times is equivalent to one absence. This means arriving to class anytime after the scheduled class time or leaving early without clearing this with me before the start of class.

Please note that nonattendance does not constitute a withdrawal; it is up to students to manage their enrollment in a course.

Rubric for attendance and participation:

A: Attends class consistently. Has prepared the readings well in advance of class and positively contributes to class discussion. Does not merely state opinions, but uses the texts to interrogate one's own opinions and struggles honestly with the texts. Is not disruptive during class.

B: Attends class regularly. Has completed the readings for each class day. Contributes to class discussion with regularity. Is on occasion unprepared or not participatory. Is never disruptive.

C: Exceeds the attendance policy and/or participates sporadically and/or does not consistently represent having done the readings in advance of class and/or is

sometimes disruptive.

D: Exceeds the attendance policy, and/or consistently demonstrates not having done the readings, and/or is often disruptive.

F: What's your name again?

Argument Analysis:

You will be provided a template with a series of questions, which you must respond to for each article or documentary. You must bring a hard copy of the completed template (typed or hand-written) with you to class on the day it is due. Failure to bring the completed template will result in an automatic zero for the assignment. You will then work together in small groups to discuss your responses and compile a master version of the argument analysis. Each group will turn in one copy of the argument analysis to the appropriate D2L assignment folder by the end of the class period. I will grade the master copy and all members of the group will receive the same grade. I will drop your lowest analysis grade for the semester.

Short Writing Assignments/Reading Quiz:

On days when an argument analysis is not due, you will be required to turn in a short written response to that day's reading. These assignments will be announced in class; therefore, if you miss class, you are responsible for contacting someone (preferably a classmate) to find out what is due for the next class day. These short assignments could include any of the following: responses to the "food for thought" sections in *Ultimate Questions*, your own examples of logical fallacies, discussion questions, or a short reading quiz. The purpose of these assignments is to prepare you to participate in class discussion. These assignments will be graded based on completion. I will drop your lowest SWA/quiz grade.

Final Exam:

There will be a cumulative final exam for the course. The format of the exam will be similar to the types of assignments completed throughout the course (i.e., short writing assignments and argument analyses).

Course Communication

The best way to reach me is by emailing me at kmirzakh@kennesaw.edu. If you send me an email that includes "view.usg" as part of my email address, I will not receive it. Please double check the email address before sending.

Allow 24 hours for a response. You may also stop by my office to speak with me during regularly scheduled office hours, or by appointment.

When writing an email, you must include the following components: the name of the course in the subject line (i.e. PHIL 2000 M/W 2PM), a proper greeting ("Dear Dr. Mirzakh,"), some type of body paragraph or sentence that alerts me to the purpose of your email and the type of response you are seeking, and a proper closing (e.g. "Best, Steve"). Remember that your email ought to address the five basic questions: Who? What? Where? When? And Why?

You must send emails from your official KSU email address.

Devices and Classroom Etiquette

No electronics are permitted in the classroom during examinations. No recordings of the course lectures will be permitted.

You must bring a copy of the reading with you to class each day. You may only have an electronic device out during class (such as a kindle or other e-reader) if you are using it to access the reading for that day. No other use of electronics is permitted during class time. If you elect to read the assignments electronically, find a way to underline, highlight, or take notes within the text.

You may bring drinks and snacks so long as they are not a distraction to any other students or the instructor. Please be respectful to the instructor and your classmates during class lectures and discussions. Discussions will cover challenging topics, and therefore, I encourage you to look at the resources posted on D2L regarding mindful and nonviolent communication techniques. I reserve the right to ask a student to leave class who is being disrespectful or disruptive during class.

Late Work

No late assignments will be accepted. You will receive a ZERO for any assignment handed in late. This means that assignment was turned in after the beginning of the class date on which it was due.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section 5c of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the university's policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to university materials, misrepresentation/falsification of university records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the Department of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity (SCAI), which includes either an "informal" resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct's minimum one semester suspension requirement. See also [KSU Student Code of Conduct](#).

Academic dishonesty (cheating and plagiarism) may result in a failing grade for the class.

Electronic Communication

The University provides all KSU students with an "official" email account with the address "students.kennesaw.edu" or "kennesaw.view.usg.edu" (in D2L). As a result of federal laws protecting educational information and other data, this is the sole email account you should use to communicate with your instructor or other University officials.

Tentative Reading Schedule

Note: This reading schedule is only tentative and based upon a best-case scenario for the course and can be changed at any time by the instructor. The syllabus is designed to meet the educational objectives of the course, and is, therefore, also subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

Week	Tuesday	Thursday
One (May 30)		First Day of Class: Welcome and Syllabus Rauhut, <i>Ultimate Questions</i> : Basic Argument Types (read pp. 25-43) SWA: Complete: Food For Thought (pp. 36-37, #1-7)
Two (June 4-6)	Bowell & Kemp, <i>Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide</i> Chapter 7, Fallacies & Faulty Argument Techniques (D2L) SWA DUE	Bowell & Kemp, chapter 7, cont'd SWA DUE
Three (June 11-13)	Rauhut, <i>Ultimate Questions</i> , "Morality" (pp. 211-225 only) Aristotle in <i>Morality and Good Life</i> (pp. 54-93) SWA: Selected study questions pp. 135- 135	Aristotle, cont'd (pp. 93-136) SWA: Selected study questions pp. 135-135
Four (June 18-20)	Kant, in <i>Morality and Good Life</i> (pp. 238-267) SWA: selected Study Questions from pages 286-287	Kant, cont'd (pp. 267-286) SWA: selected Study Questions from pages 286- 287
Five (June 25-27)	Mill, in <i>Morality and Good Life</i> pp. 288-312 SWA: selected Study Questions from page 344	Mill, cont'd pp. 312-343 SWA: selected Study Questions from page 344
Six	Watch, "The True Cost"	Holiday, classes cancelled

(July 2-4)	Complete: First argument analysis (in class)	
Seven (July 9-11)	Topic: Corporatization of Higher Education Due: Argument Analysis of both articles	Topic: Angela Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i> SWA due: bring in 1-2 examples of corporations that utilize prison labor. Due: Argument Analysis
Eight (July 16-18)	Topic: TBD (possible topics include: water, disaster capitalism, immigration, MeToo/Sexual Harassment, abortion laws, gun control) Due: Argument Analysis	Topic: TBD Due: Argument Analysis
Final Exams (July 20-24)	Tuesday, July 23 11:30AM-1:30PM	