

# Proseminar

*Saba Bazargan-Forward*

*Fall, 2019*

## *Description*

The proseminar is a course for all and only first year philosophy graduate students. The course will not focus on a single topic; instead, it covers a wide range of issues by focusing on the work done by the faculty in the philosophy department. Each week, a different faculty member will present on a selection from his or her own work. (In some cases, there will be background reading assigned). In addition to acquainting you with the faculty, the course is designed to assist in honing your reading, writing, presentational, and thinking skills to a level sufficient for future graduate course work.

## *Grading and the Structure of the Class*

70% of your grade will be based on five short papers. Each paper will focus on one of the assigned readings. (There are more than five articles assigned; you can choose which among them to write on. This includes background readings, where relevant). The purpose of each short paper is to a) adumbrate the main thesis and central argument(s) of the assigned article, and b) suggest an issue or problem the assigned reading poses but does not itself address. Each paper should be between 900 and 1250 words. (You are permitted to write a paper on an article that you are responsible for presenting in class). Papers are due by midnight the day before the article is discussed in class. You should email them to me as a Word-compatible attachment.

30% of your grade will be based on two 15-minute presentations. The purpose of the presentation is much the same as the purpose of the short paper: to summarize, clarify, and suggest further thoughts on an assigned reading. In doing so, you should provide a handout. Although time spent presenting will be no longer than 15 minutes, the presentation will last longer since it will be followed by a Q&A period in which you will guide the discussion. Your presentation grade will be based on either the second presentation alone or on the average of the two, whichever grade is higher. Each class will begin with a presentation from one or two students on the assigned readings. After one hour, we will invite the Faculty speaker to guide the remainder of the seminar.

## *Tentative Schedule of Readings*

(articles are hyperlinked)

Oct 1 – Introduction

- [no readings]
- Presentation by Giulia Hoffman on career resources for doctoral students

Oct 8 – Sam Rickless

- [Samuel Rickless: 'The Moral Status of Enabling Harms'](#)
- [Jeff McMahan: 'Killing, Letting Die, and Withdrawing Aid'](#)
- [Kadri Vihvelin & Terrance A. Tomkow: 'The Dif'](#)

Oct 15 – Jennifer Carr

- [Jennifer Carr: 'Subjective Probability and the Content/Attitude Distinction'](#)

Oct 22 – Andy Lamey

- [Andy Lamey: 'Duty and the Beast' Ch. 7](#)

Oct 29 – Reuven Brandt

- Seana Shiffrin: 'Wrongful Life, Procreative Responsibility, and the Significance of Harm'
- Derek Parfit: 'The Non-Identity Problem'

Nov 5 – Manuel Vargas

- Sor Juana: 'La Respuesta'
- Manuel Vargas: 'If Aristotle Had Cooked'

Nov 12 – Michael Hardimon

- Michael Hardimon: 'Should We Narrow the Scope of 'Racism' to Accommodate White Sensitivities?'

Nov 19 – Saba Bazargan-Forward

- Christian Barry & David Wiens: 'Benefiting from Wrongdoing and Sustaining Wrongful Harm'
- Saba Bazargan-Forward: 'Grounding the Beneficiary Pays Principle'

Nov 26 – Mat Fulkerson

- Matt Fulkerson: 'Perception, Emotion, and the Entangled Mind'

Dec 3 – Monique Wonderly

- Monique Wonderly – 'Committing, Forgiving, and Un-Forgiving'