

**PHIL 2226: Love, Sex, and Friendship**  
MTWR 3:15-5:10pm, White Gravenor Hall 204

**Instructor:** Penney Miyan ([pm1154@georgetown.edu](mailto:pm1154@georgetown.edu))  
**Office Hours:** TBD

This course will expose students to discussions from traditional philosophy and contemporary feminist scholarship on love, desire, sex, and friendship. We will consider what ties together experiences of love, sex, and friendship, and how they are interrelated. We will also look at how love is socially shaped, what reason we have to love each other, and how love can be sustained. Students will read a range of styles and authors and will write two philosophy papers and an Aeon-style article. These writing exercises are meant to help students develop their skills and versatility as writers and philosophers.

There are some weeks where we will be covering some heavy topics. I will preface readings with a trigger warning, and students are allowed to leave the class at any time should they choose to, no questions asked. We must all treat our readings with seriousness for the subject matter and create a safe learning environment for all of those involved.

**Writing Assignments:**

- **10%:** Attendance and Participation
- **20%:** Short Paper (~750 – 1,000 words)
- **30%:** Aeon Style Article (~2,000 words)
- **40%:** Final Paper (~2,500 words)

**Week 1 (07/07- 07/10): Platonic Love**

- Monday (07/07): Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book 8)
- Tuesday (07/08): Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book 9)
- Wednesday (07/09): Plato, *Lysis, Or Friendship*
- Thursday (07/10): Plato excerpts from *Symposium*

**Week 2 (07/14 - 07/17): What is romantic love?**

- Monday (07/14): Mark Vernon, “What is Love?” (Aeon), and Batya Ungar-Sargon, “The Pleasure of their Pain” (Aeon)
- Tuesday (07/15): Anne Carson excerpts from *Eros the Bittersweet*
- Wednesday (07/16): Søren Kierkegaard excerpts from *Works of Love*
- Thursday (07/17): Hanne de Jaegher, “Loving and Knowing”

**Assignments:** 1<sup>st</sup> Short Paper Due Friday (07/18) at 11:59pm

**Week 3 (07/21- 07/24): Sex, Pleasure, and Agency**

- Monday (07/21): Quill Kukla, “That’s What She Said: The Language of Sexual Negotiation”
- Tuesday (07/22): Nancy Bauer excerpts from *How to Do Things with Pornography*
- Wednesday (07/23): Amia Srinivasan excerpts from *The Right to Sex*

- Thursday (07/24): Katherine Angel excerpts from *Tomorrow Sex will be Good Again*

**Assignments:** Aeon Article Due Sunday (07/27) at 11:59pm

**Week 4 (07/28 - 07/31): Do we need reasons to love?**

- Monday (07/28): Troy Jollimore excerpts from *Love's Vision*
- Tuesday (07/29): **TBD: Romance novels and what we can do with them?**
- Wednesday (07/30): bell hooks excerpts from *All About Love: New Visions*
- Thursday (07/31): Amia Srinivasan more excerpts from *The Right to Sex*
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**Week 5 (08/04- 08/07): Political Relevance of Romantic Love and Desire**

- Monday (08/04): Katherine Angel excerpts from *Daddy Issues*
- Tuesday (08/05): Robin Zheng, "Why Yellow Fever Isn't Flattering"
- Wednesday (08/06): Fisher and Garcia, "Slow Love: Courtship in the Digital Age"
- Thursday (08/07): **TBD: Watch and discuss a movie**

**Assignments:** Final Paper Due TBD at 11:59pm

## Course Policies

**Sharing of course materials:** All course materials, including this syllabus, are property of Georgetown University. You may not share them with anyone who is not a member of the course.

**Attendance and Participation:** Class attendance is mandatory. If you are unable to attend class, you must email me within 24 hours (before or after) the missed class session. If you miss more than 15% of class sessions, you may not be eligible to pass the course. Further, philosophy is a dialogic discipline, and you are expected to have done the readings so that you are prepared for class discussion. You will also be graded on class participation and contribution. While I understand that it can be difficult for some to speak up in class, you are welcome to come talk to me during office hours so that we can figure out how to make up for class participation if you are not as vocal in class.

**The Honor Code:** Academic honesty is imperative, and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Please familiarize yourself with the Standards of Conduct outlined in the Georgetown Honor System and on the Honor Council website. I will report all suspected cases of academic dishonesty to the Honor Council for investigation. Confirmed cases of academic dishonesty may result in an automatic Fail (F) for the entire course.

**Instructional continuity:** If we need to make alternative instructional arrangements, I will notify you of how to proceed.

**Extensions and Late Policy:** If you cannot submit an assignment on time because of illness, injury, or family emergency, please email me as soon as possible. You must nominate a new date and time up to one week of the original deadline. You cannot ask for an extension after the deadline has passed, and your paper will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade for each day it is late. Any assignment

not submitted one week after the original deadline will receive an automatic F regardless of any extensions, unless accommodations are requested by your dean.

**Calculation of grades:** Grades are not scaled. Individual grades may be rounded up for fairness.

**Grade Breakdown:**

- A:**  $\geq 94\%$
- A-:** 90–93.99 %
- B+:** 87–89.99 %
- B:** 83–86.99 %
- B-:** 80–82.99%
- C+:** 76–79.99 %
- C:** 70 – 75.99%
- D:** 60 – 69.99%
- F:**  $< 60\%$

**Appealing grades:** If you believe that your work deserves a grade different from that which it receives, you may ask for reconsideration. All grade appeals must be made in writing, must be submitted within two weeks of the return of the assignment, and must make a case for the reconsideration. If a change is made, it may be to either a lower or a higher grade.