

# PHILOSOPHY 100

*Fall 2024*

*2nd Essay Assignment*

Due: Monday, November 4

**General Instructions:** Upload either a Word or pdf file to Laulima. Use the following format to title your file: **lastname #2**

**Write a 3-4 page essay on one of the following topics.**

## *Yoga*

What is meant by *moksha*, the primary goal of Indian philosophy, and how is this teaching expressed in the *Upanishads*, in the story about the secret Naciketas learns from Yama, the god of Death? What is the primary problem to be solved in attaining enlightenment (*moksha*) and how does yoga lead to enlightenment? How might this teaching of yoga be relevant for us today?

## *The Teachings of the Buddha*

What is meant by *nirvana*, the primary goal of Buddhism, and how is this expressed in the Buddha's teaching about the Four Noble Truths? What is the point of the teaching known as *The Fire Sermon*? How might these teachings of the Buddha be relevant for us today?

## *The Philosophy of Confucius*

What is the main focus of Chinese Philosophy and how does Confucius try to answer this problem? What did Confucius mean by the *junzi*, the role model which he thinks all rulers should become? What are the most important of the virtue of a *junzi*? To what extent do you think that Confucian philosophy is relevant today?

## *The Philosophy of Daoism*

How did the Daoist philosophers challenge the Confucian view about aligning with the *Dao*? What are some of the key terms that illustrate the philosophy of Daoism? Discuss one of the verses in the *Daodejing* and one of the stories in the *Zhuangzi* explaining how each suggests the Daoist view about the *Dao*. Are some of the Daoist views relevant for us today?

## *Descartes and the Quest for Certainty*

Explain the reasons why Descartes sets out on a quest for certainty in his *Meditations on First Philosophy*. Explain the demolition phase of Descartes's project that is his *First Meditation*. What is the one thing that Descartes finds to be beyond doubt in the *Second Meditation*? Is he right about this? What is the epistemological problem that results from this starting point of modern philosophy? How important is it to have certainty in knowledge?

## *Descartes vs Hobbes on the Mind and Body*

What is meant by the metaphysical *dualism* that Descartes argues for in the *Sixth Meditation*? What are the three main motivations for dualism? What is the argument Descartes makes for dualism? What are some of the problems with this view? How does Hobbes's materialism challenge Descartes's view? What are some of the problems with Hobbes's view? Who would you agree with more? What is the relationship between the mind and the body? What are we anyway?

## **Grading Rubric**

### **Writing 20%**

Grammar and spelling, composition and style. Your essay should be well organized. There should be an introduction, development of a theme, and a conclusion.

### **Philosophical Content 50%**

The essay should reflect an adequate understanding of the texts. Your exposition of the text should include *at least two quotations* from the primary text material. All quotes should be properly marked within the text and must include a reference to the text cited.

### **Commentary 30%**

Your own thoughtful reflections on the topic.

