

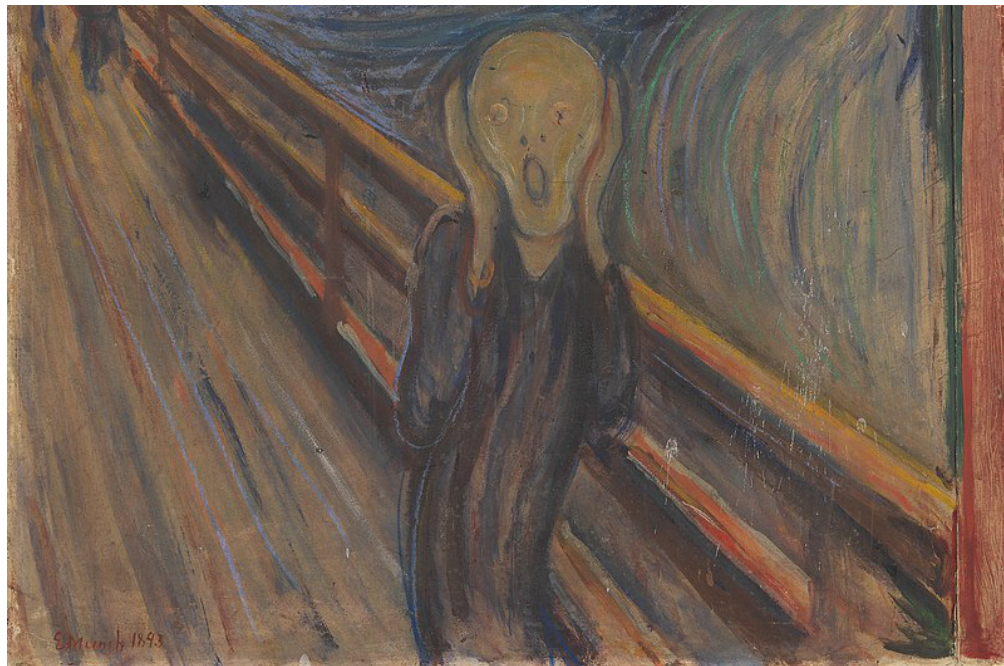
HUMN 410

Topics in Bioethics: Pain

Spring 2023
1:00-2:15pm, M/W
2920-137

email ahead advised,
but not required

Peter Katz, Ph.D.
peter.katz@cnsu.edu
Office Hours: 2:15-3:45pm, M/W
Office: 2920-149
Phone x: 9257



HUMN 410 invites critical engagement on significant contemporary topics through textual analysis of academic literature from the humanities and social sciences. Readings draw from current, and sometimes controversial, topics related to health sciences, bioethics, medicine, and culture. Students will refine their reading comprehension skills and further develop their abilities to reason within and beyond the texts themselves. Through journal responses, short essays, discussions and debates, and multi-media presentations, students will demonstrate their abilities to engage critically with contemporary issues in science, technology, and culture.
(Catalogue Description)

Together, we are going to go on a journey through history to confront a difficult problem: pain. What is it biologically? Psychologically? How have we historically conceptualized pain and our response to it? Whose pain matters? How much do we know others' pain? What does others' pain obligate us to do about it (if anything)?

This class will ask a lot of us academically and emotionally. We are going to read complicated, old, provocative texts. Sometimes, we will struggle, but that struggle will, I hope, help us grow as healthcare practitioners, scientists, and people.

We will explore pain through three broad categories:

Historical Epistemology

This is the study of how we know what we know, and the story of how we arrived there.

We will ask questions like: what kinds of questions have been possible to ask of pain? what kinds of knowledge have been designated sufficient to answer those questions? and who has made those determinations?

History of Science

This is the study of how ideas, people, cultures, and technologies have influenced one another as they grow and change.

We will ask questions like: how have cultural ideas influenced the kind of knowledge science generates, and the way it has been used? how has science influenced the way cultures understand pain?

Cultural Studies

This is the study of how cultural artefacts teach us about the people who made and used them. We will ask questions like: how has pain been represented? how have these representations of pain influenced one another? been influenced by science? influenced science?

What is an artefact? Any object made by a group of people that tells us something about how those people thought, felt, and lived. These can be text- or image-based: a movie, a book, a poem, an advertisement. They can be physical: a Tylenol bottle, a feminine hygiene product, a hospital. We will practice describing and reading these artefacts throughout this course.

We'll learn about these from our course text: *Pain and Emotion in Modern History*, edited by Rob Boddice. We'll also read excerpts from philosophers, scientists, and cultural scholars throughout history as we go. More on that later.

Grade Percentages

Letter grades are based on the following percentages:

If admitted Spring 2022
or earlier

If admitted Summer 2022
and later

97-100% = A+	97-100% = A+
90-96.99% = A	94-96.99% = A
	90-93.99% = A-
87-89.99% = B+	87-89.99% = B+
80-86.99% = B	84-86.99% = B
	80-83.99% = B-
77-79.99% = C+	75-79.99% = C+
70-76.99% = C	70-74.99% = C
60-69.99% = D	60-69.99% = D
Below 60% = F	Below 60% = F

Weighting

I use a method of grading called “grade weighting.” This means that all of your assignments contribute a relative “weight” up to the 100% total of the class. A point on one assignment is not equal to a point on another assignment; it’s all proportional!

There are two main categories of work that we will do in this class:

Formative assignments are process-oriented.

These help you gauge where you are in your learning trajectory (and help me to know as well!), and reward effort and development.

This accounts for 30% of the work in this class.

Summative assignments are goal-oriented.

These ensure for both of us that you have reached a particular level of understanding for the course learning objectives.

This accounts for 70% of the work in this class.

However, these grades are still growth-oriented. I encourage you to try new argumentative techniques, writing strategies, etc.

Here is a general breakdown of the assignments that we will work on throughout this course. At the end of the course plan, you can find rubrics and more detailed assignment prompts.

Engagement 10%
(Formative)

Regular, punctual attendance; consistent, thoughtful participation in discussions; preparedness; appropriate behavior in class and in all communication. On most days, you will be invited to turn in at least one thoughtful question about the reading in-class on our Nearpod. I will release overall participation grades every 5 weeks.

Discussion Leading 5%
(Formative)

At least once per semester, you will be tasked with being the expert in one of our discussions. While I will still organize the class, we will work as a team with discussion questions you would like to think about, or conversations you would like to have. This focuses on communication, not “success” of your arguments.

Reflection 5%
(Formative)

At the end of the case studies section, you will create a reflective piece on your own relationship to pain in conversation with our course readings. This assignment can take any form; all that is required is that you take approximately two hours to complete it.

Short Essays 25%
(Summative)

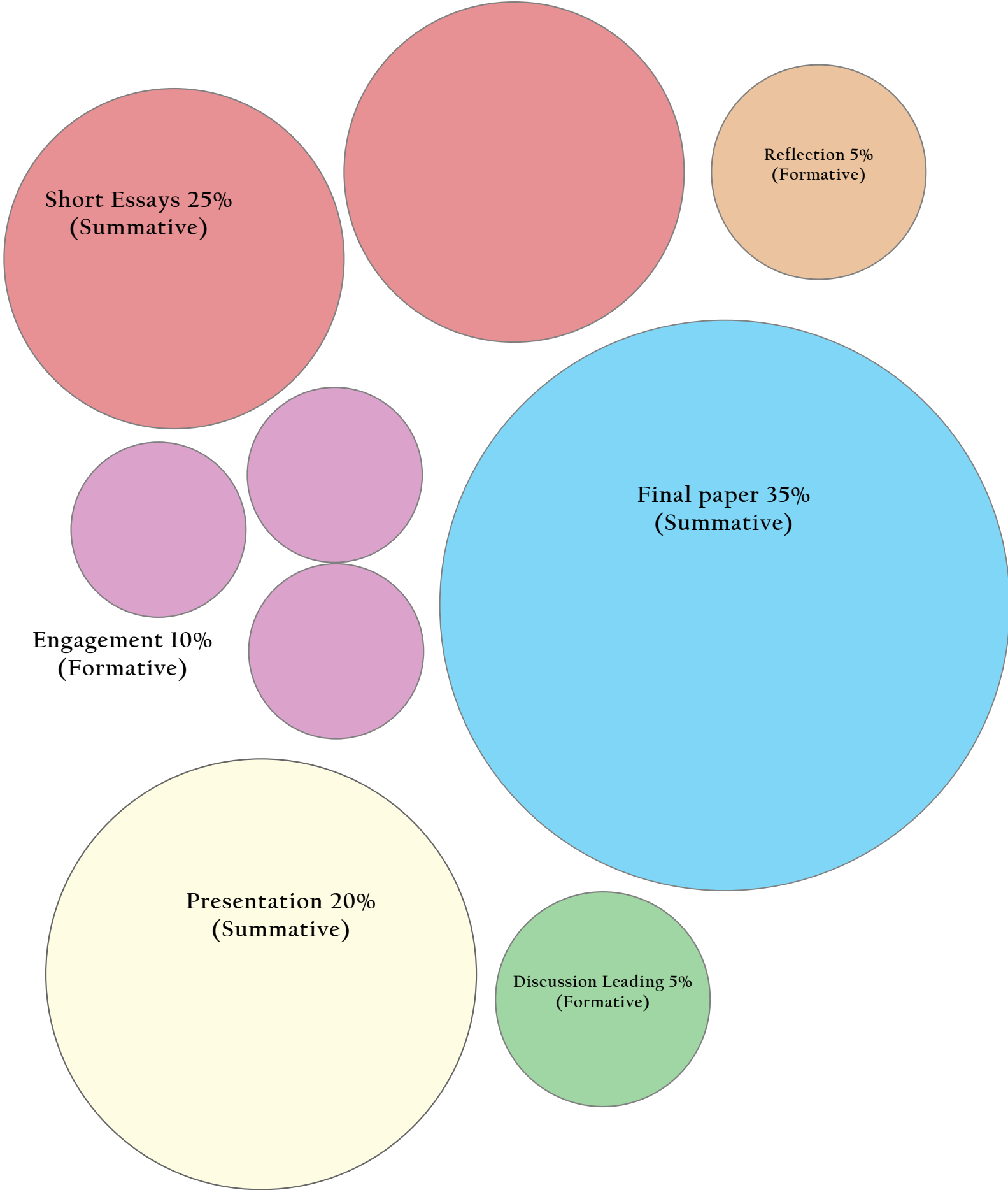
We will have two short essays throughout the semester that center around the readings from the last few weeks. These will have prompts to choose from, which will be outlined as we arrive at them.

Artefact Presentation 20%
(Summative)

You and a partner will present an oral analysis of a contemporary issue relevant to pain. The foundation of this presentation will be the analysis of a cultural artefact that you use to make your argument. This will be the launching point for your final paper.

Final paper 35%
(Summative)

For your final paper, you will expand on your artefact presentation to make a full-fledged seminar paper of approximately 10 pages. This paper will integrate historical epistemology, philosophy of science, and cultural analysis to take a stance on a contemporary issue relevant to the course.



Short Essays 25%
(Summative)

Reflection 5%
(Formative)

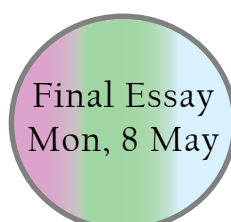
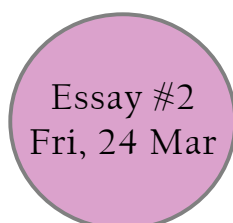
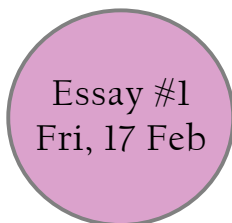
Final paper 35%
(Summative)

Engagement 10%
(Formative)

Presentation 20%
(Summative)

Discussion Leading 5%
(Formative)

Course Overview



The detailed guide below will let you know which readings are due, and when. These readings can be difficult, and may be different than other kinds of readings you've done before. To get the most from them, I recommend that you:

1. Read the assignment as closely as you can before the day listed below
2. Come to class ready to ask questions about definitions or ideas from the readings at the start of class check-in
3. Take notes and use your Key Concepts List during lectures/discussions
4. Use the check-in at the end of class to ask questions about any Key Concept or other term/idea you're still unpacking
5. Come to office hours if you still have questions

Canvas will always be our most up-to-date and accurate course schedule. If there is a conflict between the pdf syllabus and Canvas, Canvas is the correct source.

A brief history of pain

Welcome

Wed, 18 Jan

Syllabus, Introduction to Course
PEMH, Intro (1)

- historiography
- cultural history
- epistemology
- historical epistemology
- philosophy of science
- cultural analysis
- artefact

Epistemology

Mon, 23 Jan

from Foucault,
The Order of Things (1966)
from Scarry, *The Body in Pain* (1987)

- discourse
- structure of knowledge
- the j-question
- foundationalism
- coherentism
- constructivism
- skepticism
- paradigm

Early Modern Science

Wed, 25 Jan

from Robert Burton,
Anatomy of Melancholy (1621)

- Galenic medicine
- humours
- affinity/antipathy
- copia
- moralization

Early Modern Science

Mon, 30 Jan

from Descartes,
Passions of the Soul (1649)
Treatise on Man (1662)

- monism
- dualism
- spirits
- passions
- volition

Early Modern Culture

Wed, 1 Feb

PEMH, "Exquisite and Linger-
ing Pains" (2)

- performativity

Early Modern Culture

Mon, 6 Feb

Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1601)
Screening

Wed, 8 Feb

Hamlet Discussion

A brief history of pain, continued

18c. Science

Mon, 13 Feb

Linnaeus, from
Systema Naturae (1735)

- empiricism
- structure
- taxonomy
- classification
- Natural Philosophy
- characteristics

Wed, 15 Feb

Brown, "From mechanism to
vitalism" (1974)
von Haller, from
Sensible and Irritable (1755)

- mechanism
- vitalism

Essay #1
Fri, 17 Feb

19c Science
and Culture

Mon, 20 Feb

No class

- population
- individual
- disease
- governmentality
- biopolitics
- political economy
- animality

Wed, 22 Feb

Dickens,
"The Hospital Patient" (1836)
from Katz, *Reading Bodies* (2022)

Mon, 27 Feb

from Darwin, *The Expression
of the Emotions* (1872)
& from Jaffe, *The Affective Life
of the Average Man* (2010)
or from Gilbert, *Citizen's Body* (2007)

20c Science
and Culture

Wed, 1 Mar

PEMH, "Phantom Suffering" (5)
Hemingway, "Soldier's Home" (1925)

- quantitative
- qualitative
- mathematicization
- epistemic iteration

20c Science

Mon, 6 Mar

PEMH, "Psychological Pain" (4)
PEMH, "A Quantity of Suffering" (7)

- domain
- discipline
- biopsychosocial
- emotion/affect

20/21c
Science

Wed, 8 Mar

Melzack and Wall, "Pain Mechanisms:
A New Theory" (1965)
Wiech et al, "Neurocognitive
Aspects of Pain" (2008)
PEMH, "Killing Pain" (8)

- specificity model of pain
- gate control model of pain

Case Studies

Spring
Break
11-19 Mar

Essay #2
Fri, 24 Mar

Mon, 20 Mar

from Dusenbery,
Doing Harm (2017)

Wed, 22 Mar

Loy, "Parturition" (1923)
& PEMH, "When I Think of What
is Before Me" (11)
or PEMH, "The Agony of Despair" (12)

Mon, 27 Mar

Calderone, "The influence of
gender on ... pain" (1990)
Nabel, "Coronary Heart Disease
in Women" (2000)

Wed, 29 Mar

PEMH, "The Emergence of
Chronic Pain" (6)

Mon, 3 Apr

from Washington,
Medical Apartheid (2006)

Wed, 5 Apr

from Washington,
Medical Apartheid (2006)

Mon, 10 Apr

from Skloot, *The Immortal Life
of Henrietta Lacks* (2010)
Beskow, "Lessons from HeLa Cells" (2016)

Wed, 12 Apr

Meghani et al, "Time to take stock" (2012)
Hoffman et al, "Racial bias
in pain assessment" (2016)

Mon, 17 Apr

Hurston, *Their Eyes
Were Watching God* (1937)

Wed, 19 Apr

Hurston, *Their Eyes
Were Watching God* (1937)

- female
- feminist
- knowledge gap
- trust gap
- "women's issues"

- structural racism
- power-knowledge

Sex and
Gender

Race &
Ethnicity

Race &
Gender

Moving forward

Mon, 24 Apr

Presentations

Contemporary
Issues

Wed, 26 Apr

Presentations

Reflection
Fri, 28 Apr

Mon, 1 May

Sontag, from *Illness as Metaphor* (1978)

Sympathy
Empathy

Wed, 3 May

PEMH, "Imagining Another's Pain" (13)
or
PEMH, "Observing Pain" (14)

Final Essay
8 May

Let's talk more about ...

**Engagement 5%
(Formative)**

Score	Description
Exemplary (5)	Consistent, active engagement and attendance
Proficient (4)	Consistent attendance with less engagement (or vice-versa)
Emerging (3)	Inconsistent attendance or engagement
Initial (2)	Many absences or days with no engagement

Active engagement means asking question during lectures, conversing during discussions, and consistent effort to be present and grow together.

Philosophy invites us to explain our positions, hold them up to scrutiny, and adjust our views in the face of criticisms. I encourage all of us—myself included—to change our minds or modify our position about at least one thing by the time this course is completed.

You may sometimes disagree not only with each other, but also with me. This is what I love about philosophy, so please feel safe and welcome to do so. Differences in our opinions and beliefs enhance our learning and create an atmosphere where we will practice thinking critically and deeply together. In these engagements, we will all adopt an attitude of good-will and compassion—in both our assertions and our responses.

In our disagreements, we are all adults and will act accordingly. Sometimes, someone might say something that makes us uncomfortable; discomfort is healthy. But sometimes, someone may say something that is hurtful, whether to ourselves or someone else. If you ever feel unsafe or unwelcome because of something that a student or myself has said, please tell me (or Student Affairs, if you would prefer to keep it anonymous).

We will regularly encounter difficult topics that may touch scars or unhealed wounds. To show the most respect for our classmates' and fellow humans' dignity, we will always treat these issues with the gravity and care they deserve. If you need support, please come talk to me and/or reach out to the university counselling services. If for whatever reason, a topic is too much for you right now, please care for yourself and reach out to me for an alternate topic. You never need to tell me why.

Even despite our best intentions, learning is messy and requires mistakes. While we should never be unkind, it is almost obligatory that we should be incorrect at times. Never be ashamed if you say something incorrect, or struggle with an assignment, or make a suboptimal choice. Just learn from the experience and try something else next time.

More pragmatically: come to class ready to engage in discussion. I advocate remaining present and receptive, unencumbered by distractions like phones or laptops. Otherwise, we're all adults. Eat if you need to eat, go to the bathroom, take care of emergencies, whatever life requires—just be discreet.

In the case of illness, please provide documentation (doctor's notes, etc.) to the office of student affairs (chs.studentaffairs@cnsu.edu). You never need to tell me why or what is going on.

Some of this grade includes in-class discussion notes from group conversations. These cannot be made up. If you have an excused absence, you may come meet with me to chat during office hours instead within one week of your return.

Life happens. O-Chem happens. Sometimes, even with the best of intentions and time-management, we just can't find the motive or inspiration to write. In any and all of these cases, please reach out for extensions; I am always happy to grant them for writing assignments, as long as it is before the due date.

When you need an extension, you **do not** need to tell me any personal details about what you're facing. While I'm happy to talk about the extension in person, please follow-up with an email that says "Assignment: Extension to (Date)" as the subject header. That's all you need.

In most cases, this will be sufficient (and I'll respond as such), though we may need to talk about the date you set. If you find yourself needing repeated extensions, I may ask to meet just to ensure your success in the course. We will stay in touch as you're finishing up any extended work to make sure that you stay on-track to succeed in the course.

All late work without an extension will receive a 20% penalty per day, as will any late work after your extension deadline. Written assignments are due on the date specified, 15 minutes after class ends. Extensions granted after a due date will incur late penalties up to the point that the extension was granted (eg., if due Monday and extension granted on Tuesday, still 20% penalty for Monday), so please ask sooner, rather than later. Quizzes and process work cannot be made up.

Integrity

If I cheat in my ethics class,
but I don't get caught,
do I still fail?
(Yes)

The nature of philosophy is discussion and conversation. I do not mind if you talk about your papers with your classmates; in fact, I'd encourage it! Writing, as well, is collaboration. You will even be required to read one another's papers and offer feedback. Everyone must, however, write their own version of their argument.

Plagiarism becomes complicated in these collaborative settings. If I really, really like a phrase that you use in a comment, can I use it? Do I have to cite you? This is often what acknowledgements are for, or even footnotes if someone influences you significantly and you want to thank them.

At the risk of being too reductive, let's follow W.D. Ross's intuitionism for plagiarism in this class. If you feel a little unsure or like you have to justify something as not-plagiarism, it's probably plagiarism. But also, let's practice the ethics of care: reach out to your peers, and please reach out to me! I will never penalize you for asking if something is plagiarism, even if it is. If you're panicking, come to me instead of cheating; we can figure out how to make the experience caring, ethical, and edifying rather than judgmental and punitive.

Actions that are definitely plagiarism include the obvious (copy-pasting a peer's work or an online source), the less obvious (patchworking, or copying a sentence from a source and just changing some of the words), and the not-obvious (reading a claim or evidence from another source and not citing them). Everything will be turned in on Canvas and run through Turnitin.