

# PHIL 110: Philosophy of Love and Sex

<b>Course Modality:</b> On Campus	<b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Annette Martín (she/her)
<b>Lecture Times:</b> MW 1:00-1:50pm	<b>Email:</b> am92@uic.edu
<b>Location:</b> Behavioral Sciences Building 140	<b>Drop-In Hours:</b> W 2-3:00 pm, or by appt
<b>Class Dates:</b> Aug 21-Dec 1, 2023	<b>Drop-In Location:</b> University Hall #1402
<b>CRN:</b> 29881	<b>TA:</b> Charlie Wiland (she/her), cwilan2@uic.edu
<b>Credit Hours:</b> 3	<b>TA:</b> Raymond Maung (he/him), rmaung2@uic.edu

## Course Welcome

Welcome to PHIL 110!

What does it mean to love someone? Are romantic relationships more valuable than friendships? What is the relationship between sex and romantic love? Do you objectify someone if you casually hook up with them, and if so, does that mean hooking up is morally wrong?

In this course we will grapple with these and related questions as part of a philosophical exploration of love and sex. These questions touch on deep, personal questions about how we relate to each other and structure our lives. We encounter many ideas about these topics in our society, and ultimately, the goal for this course is to give you the space and the tools to think critically about these questions and the social norms that surround them, so that you can come to your own conclusions.

I hope that you will find the material and assignments to be interesting, but you may also find them challenging. On one hand, you may find yourself sharply disagreeing with the viewpoints we discuss in class, and you may find some of these moments to be uncomfortable. Because so many of the issues we will be discussing can be deeply personal, it will be important to engage respectfully and open-mindedly, while remaining sensitive to the diverse experiences and perspectives that we all bring to the table.

At the same time, the materials we will be discussing can be complex, plus it can be difficult to balance coursework with work, family care, mental health, and other unexpected issues that may emerge. This means that you may need some extra help. The best way to set yourself up for success in the course is to attend class consistently, complete your assignments, thoughtfully engage with feedback, come to your instructors with any questions, and seek out on-campus resources like the tutoring center. *If unexpected challenges arise, or you are struggling to keep up with coursework, or you are having trouble accessing resources, please come talk to me.* Likewise, if there are aspects of the course that result in barriers to your achievement, please let me know as soon as possible. This way we can make a plan to get you what you need.

Below you will find an overview of the major components of the course, and you will find more detailed information about policies on the Blackboard site. Depending on how the semester progresses, I may decide that I need to make changes to the syllabus. When that happens, I will post the new syllabus on Blackboard. The Weekly Contents section of Blackboard will always reflect the latest updates to help you stay on top of everything you need to be successful in this course.

My hope is that, working together, we can make this a meaningful, enriching experience.

# Materials

**Pre-Requisites:** None

**Blackboard:** The Blackboard site will serve as your guide through this course. On the Blackboard site you will find what is expected from you outlined in a weekly format, as well as information about your grades, links to readings, and other resources. Be sure to familiarize yourself with the Blackboard site, which can be found at:

[https://uic.blackboard.com/ultra/courses/\\_251993\\_1/cl/outline](https://uic.blackboard.com/ultra/courses/_251993_1/cl/outline)

**Readings:** There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, readings that are not readily available online will be made accessible through the [Course Box](#) and posted in the Weekly Contents section of the Blackboard site.

**Technology:** Review the “Getting Started” section of our Blackboard course site for specific information about technological requirements for the course. Note that we will be using Acadly in this course.

**Recitation/Discussion Section:** You must be enrolled in a recitation/discussion section in addition to the lecture for this course. There are four recitation sections for this course:

Section	TA*	Day	Time	Location
AD1	Raymond Maung	Friday	9:00-9:50am	BSB 211
AD3	Raymond Maung	Friday	10:00-10:50am	BSB 211
AD5	Charlie Wiland	Friday	12:00-12:50pm	BSB 219
AD6	Charlie Wiland	Friday	1:00-1:50pm	BSB 315

\*Note that, because of some logistical complications, the TA for your discussion/recitation section may differ from what the registration website indicated.

## Course Goals

We are constantly exposed to ideas about what love and sex should and should not look like in our lives. The major goal for this course is to enable you to think more deeply about these ideas, and to help you determine for yourself which you want to embrace or reject.

### Course Learning Objectives

To that end, this course has the following learning objectives. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Identify major claims and arguments about the nature of love and sex discussed in the course as they emerge in real-world contexts (e.g. social media, lived experience, conversations with peers)
2. Critically evaluate and clearly communicate their analysis of major claims and arguments about the nature of love and sex discussed in the course
3. Apply critical evaluations of major claims and arguments about the nature of love and sex to their own lives by articulating what implications these analyses have for how students should engage with others in their personal lives

### **General Education Learning Objectives:**

In this way, we will also be pursuing the general education learning objectives for this course, which are to be able to:

- UIS 1. Recognize, describe, and explain social institutions, structures, and processes and the complexities of a global culture and diverse society;
- UIS 2. Think critically about how individuals influence and are influenced by political, geographic, economic, cultural, and family institutions in their own and other cultures and explain how one's knowledge and beliefs may differ from others;
- UIS 3. Explain the relationship between the individual and society as it influences (a) individual cognition, ethics, social interactions, communication practices and affect; and (b) the quality of life of the individual, the family, and the community; and
- UIS 4. Examine how literature, history, ethical systems, scientific inquiry, or communicative practice shape our knowledge and perception of individuals and social structures.

## **How We Will Achieve These Goals**

**Daily Reading:** Unless otherwise specified, there will be a reading, listening, or viewing assignment for every lecture session. You can find the assigned material in the course schedule at the end of this document, as well as in the Weekly Contents section on Blackboard. Each of these materials will come with a corresponding journal assignment that is *due by midnight the day before each class* (see below).

**Daily Journals:** Unless otherwise specified, *for every daily reading there will be a daily journal assignment that will be due by midnight the day before each class.* These journal assignments will be graded for effort, and are intended to offer an informal opportunity to practice analytical skills and engage with the ideas in the material.

Note that each student will have four journal sick passes that can be used at their discretion to receive full credit for a journal they did not complete, no questions asked. *To use a sick pass, simply submit the [Journal Pass Form](#) that can be found on Blackboard under "Course Links."*

**Extra Credit Assignments:** There will be regular opportunities for small amounts of extra credit throughout the course to encourage you to connect ideas from the class to everyday experiences.

**Participation in Lecture:** A key part of this course is regular engagement with philosophical ideas, both on your own and during class time. You are expected to attend lecture regularly, and during lecture you will be asked to actively engage with the ideas we are discussing through, e.g., participating in polls and quizzes, asking or submitting questions, and sharing ideas with peers. *I will primarily be using Acadly to track your engagement during lecture.*

**Participating in Recitation/Discussion Sections:** Learning philosophy requires doing philosophy, and recitation sections provide a key opportunity to practice doing philosophy. You are expected to regularly attend recitation sections and to be an active participant in those discussions. Note that contributing to discussion does not require having a perfect grasp of the material. On the contrary, these discussions should be an opportunity to seek clarification, solidify your understanding of the material, and begin refining your critical responses to the

ideas we are discussing. Your TA will determine how they choose to assess participation in recitation/discussion sections.

**Take-Home Assignments:** There will be four take-home assignments in this course, one for each major unit of the course (see the course schedule at the end of this document for deadlines). These assignments will require you to understand, apply, and critically engage with core ideas from the unit. You will have about two days to complete each assignment. During this time, you are allowed to consult readings, course materials, and discuss the assignment with your peers. *However, it is important is that you write up your answers on your own, and that you do so in your own words.* Further instructions will be included with each assignment.

**Course Reflections:** There will be three reflection assignments in this course (pre-course, mid-course, and post-course). These reflections will offer a way of documenting how your ideas and skills develop throughout the course, evaluating your own performance in the course, and providing feedback about the course.

## How Your Learning Will Be Evaluated

### Grade Breakdown

- *Take-Home Assignments* – 45% (15% each)
- *Participation* – 25%
  - *Lecture Participation* – 10%
  - *Recitation Participation* – 15%
- *Daily Journals* – 25% (1% each)
- *Week 15 Assignment* – 2%
- *Pre-, Mid-, and Post-Course Reflections* – 3% (1% each)

To make this easier to calculate, I will make the course worth a total of 1000 points, and assign points to each component of the course according to this breakdown. You must then earn at least 900 points to receive an A in the course, 800 to receive a B, 700 to receive a C, and 600 to receive a D.

To illustrate, each daily journal assignment will be worth 10 points. There will be 25 journal assignments, for a total of 250 points in this category (hence, 25% of the overall grade). Likewise, each of the take-home assignments will be worth 150 points, for a total of 450 points in that category (or 45% of the overall grade).

### Grading Policies

**Anonymous Grading:** In an effort to reduce the effects of implicit and explicit biases, assignments will, when possible, be graded anonymously.

**Attendance:** You are expected to regularly attend lecture and recitation/discussion sections, and to arrive on time for those sessions. Your participation in lecture and recitation will be tracked and you will be given a participation score accordingly. You are not required to email your instructor(s) to explain a necessary absence, but you are encouraged to review the slides and/or ask your peers for notes you missed, and to go to drop-in hours with any questions about material you might have missed.

**Late and Missing Assignments:** *If you are experiencing challenges that will affect your ability to complete work on time, please contact me or your TA as soon as possible so that we can work out a plan.* Unless we work out an alternative arrangement, you will have *two weeks to submit late assignments (of any kind) for grading.* Late assignments submitted within one week of the deadline will receive an 8% point deduction, whereas late assignments submitted within the second week after the deadline will receive a 15% point deduction. After two weeks, the late assignment will automatically receive 60% of the possible points (or the equivalent of a D grade), unless it is determined that the submission violates standards of academic integrity. Again, if you need to work out an extension, please contact us as soon as possible so that we can do so.

Note that, in general, as long as *something* is handed in for an assignment, and you adhere to standards of academic integrity, the worst grade any assignment will receive is the equivalent of a D grade. The last chance to submit late assignments for partial credit is midnight on December 6. Missing assignments will receive zero points.

**Grade Changes:** If you think that an assignment has been graded unfairly, you have one week after it is graded and returned to request a re-evaluation of your work. Note that your work will be freshly evaluated, and your grade could increase, decrease, or stay the same. *To be fair to all students, changes will not be made to your overall grade unless there is an arithmetic error.* If you think there has been an arithmetic error in calculating your grade, you must notify me or your TA by midnight on December 6.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** In order for UIC to be a place where research and learning can thrive, we all share a responsibility to uphold the highest academic standards. Accordingly, you are expected to adhere to the [Community Standards](#) of integrity, accountability, and respect.

If you are struggling to keep up with course work, have doubts about how to properly cite sources, or are uncertain about how to meet academic standards, please come and talk to me or your TA for this course. If we do have evidence that you have plagiarized or otherwise violated Community Standards in this course, I will submit an incident report to the Office of the Dean of Students. They will investigate and determine an appropriate outcome. Please review the [UIC Student Disciplinary Policy](#) for additional information about the process by which instances of academic misconduct are handled.

## **Creating An Inclusive, Accessible Learning Environment**

My goal, and the goal of this institution, is to create learning environments that are equitable, inclusive and welcoming. This will require all of us to do our part to be thoughtful, listen to one another, and engage respectfully with each other.

If there are aspects of the instruction or design of the course that result in barriers to your inclusion or achievement, please notify me as soon as possible.

**Disability Accommodation Procedures:** UIC is committed to the full inclusion and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of university life. If you face or anticipate

disability-related barriers while at UIC, please connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at [drc.uic.edu](http://drc.uic.edu), via email at [drc@uic.edu](mailto:drc@uic.edu), or call (312) 413-2183 to create a plan for reasonable accommodations. In order to receive accommodations, you will need to disclose the disability to the DRC, complete an interactive registration process with the DRC, and provide me with a Letter of Accommodation (LOA). Upon receipt of a LOA, I will gladly work with you and the DRC to implement approved accommodations.

**Content Warnings:** One of the central subjects of this course is sex. This means that at times we will need to talk about sex rather explicitly, and sometimes the topics of rape and sexual violence will come up in the readings or in our discussions. We will need to be able to talk about these issues safely. To be clear, we will not entertain ideas that defend sexual assault or that blame victims. Please do your best to be sensitive to your peers, and also make sure to seek out any support you need to be able to safely engage with this material. If you have concerns about this, please email me so that we can make a plan that will support you.

I will do my best to flag especially graphic or intense content in the Weekly Contents section of Blackboard. If you suspect that specific material is likely to be emotionally challenging for you, again, please email me so that we can set up an appointment and make a plan that will work for you.

If you ever feel the need to step outside during a class discussion you may always do so – no hesitations, and no need to explain. If you do need to leave the room for a significant amount of time, I encourage you to make arrangements to get notes from another student if possible, or reach out to your instructors.

**Civility:** A major part of doing and learning philosophy is engaging in dialogue. It is important that we engage with each other in respectful and constructive ways, especially when dealing with subjects that are personally and politically significant. That doesn't mean that we can't disagree – disagreement is also essential to philosophy! – but that we must engage thoughtfully and respectfully. If you are uncivil or behave disrespectfully, you may be asked to leave the class for the remainder of the class period. (See the [UIC Student Disciplinary Policy](#).)

**Slurs:** Occasionally, our authors may use, mention, or refer to slurs. We will have a policy in class of not uttering slurs (even if only mentioning them, and not using them).

## Other Course Policies and Campus Resources

The course Blackboard site has additional information about course policies, technological requirements, philosophical resources, and campus resources. Please review the site for access to this information. If you have any questions or need help accessing other resources, please come talk to me.

## Course Schedule

Note that *there will be a daily reading journal due by midnight the day before each class* (unless otherwise specified; see above for guidelines). This schedule is subject to change as needed. Exams and assignments beyond the standard daily journal assignments are listed in bold.

Topic	Wk	Lecture / Date	Assignment
Unit 1: Love (What is love? Why do we love? Are there different kinds of love?)	1	Aug 21	(First day of class)
		Aug 23	hooks, Ch. 1 of <i>All About Love</i> , "Clarity: Give Love Words" CW: abuse
		<b>Aug 25</b>	<b>Pre-course Reflection due by midnight</b>
	2	Aug 28	Singer, "Appraisal and Bestowal" (starts on p. 267)
		Aug 30	Part of Kolodny, "Love As Valuing a Relationship" - pp. 135-149 (see notes in margins about sections to skip within this range)
	3	<b>Sept 4</b>	<b>LABOR DAY - No Class</b>
		Sept 6	Part of Kolodny, "Love As Valuing a Relationship" - pp. 150-173 (see notes in margins about sections to skip within this range)
	4	Sept 11	Nozick, "Love's Bond"
		Sept 13	Parts of Jollimore, "Love, Romance, and Sex" - pp. 61- 67 <a href="#">"What is Asexuality?"</a> <a href="#">"What it means to be 'aromantic' to aromantic people"</a>
	5	Sept 18	Gardiner interview on the <i>Empowered Relationship Podcast</i> , Ep. 344 "How Language Can Steer and Shape Our Relationships" ( <a href="#">Listen from 5:00-48:00 or read transcript</a> ) CW: brief mention of research on sexual assault at the end of the episode
	<b>Sept 20</b>	<b>Take-Home Assignment #1 - No Class</b>	
UNIT 2: Relationship Structures (Should we put romance over other kinds of relationships? Is marriage ethical? Should we be monogamous?)	6	Sept 25	Jenkins, "Rewriting Romance" Tobin, "Why Young People Are Turning to Platonic Marriages"
		Sept 27	Overthink Podcast Ep. 15, "Marriage" ( <a href="#">Listen or read transcript</a> )
		<b>Sept 28</b>	<b>Mid-term Reflection due by midnight</b>
	7	Oct 2	Brake, "Is Divorce Promise-Breaking?"
		Oct 4	First part of Card, "Against Marriage and Motherhood" (up to p. 15)
	8	Oct 9	Chalmers, "Is Monogamy Morally Permissible?"
		Oct 11	York, "Why Monogamy is Morally Permissible: A Defense of Some Common Justifications for Monogamy"
	9	Oct 16	Moen and Sørlie, "The Ethics of Relationship Anarchy"
	<b>Oct 18</b>	<b>Take Home Assignment #2- No Class</b>	
UNIT 3: Sex (What is sex? When is it casual? Is hooking up ok? What does ethical sex require?)	10	Oct 23	Part of Currier, "Strategic Ambiguity" - pp. 709-717 Christina, "Are We Having Sex Now Or What?" CW: explicit language
		Oct 25	Sect 1.1 of Halwani, "Casual Sex, Promiscuity, and Objectification" (pp. 402-403) Findings section of Wade, "Doing Casual Sex" (pp. 190-197)
	11	Oct 30	Excerpts from Halwani, "Casual Sex, Promiscuity, and Objectification" (Starting on p. 405; the green marks in the margins indicate which parts you should read)
		Nov 1	Part of Cahill, "Troubling Objectification" – pp. 1, 21-35 CW: rape
	12	Nov 6	Overthink Podcast Ep. 35, "Hooking Up" ( <a href="#">Listen or read transcript</a> ) CW: mention of sexual assault
		Nov 8	Wireless Philosophy, <a href="#">"What is Consent?: Consent #1" (Youtube video)</a> Sects I. and II. of Dougherty, "Sex, Lies, and Consent" (pp. 717-727) CW: rape (Optional: Wireless Philosophy, <a href="#">"What is Consent?: Consent #2"</a> )

		<b>Nov 10</b>	<b>Vote on topics for Week 15 by midnight</b>
	13	Nov 13	Rest of Dougherty, "Sex, Lies, and Consent" <i>CW: rape</i>
		Nov 15	Up to Sect IV.B. ("Gifts") of Kukla, "That's What She Said: The Language of Sexual Negotiation" (pp. 70-84) <i>CW: rape, explicit language</i>
	14	Nov 20	Rest of Kukla, "That's What She Said: The Language of Sexual Negotiation" <i>CW: rape, explicit language</i>
		<b>Nov 22</b>	<b>Take-Home Assignment #3 - No Class</b>
TBD BY VOTE	15	Nov 27	TBD by vote
		Nov 29	TBD by vote (Last Day of Classes)
		<b>Dec 1</b>	<b>Week 15 Assignment + Post-Course Reflection due by midnight</b>
		<b>Dec 6</b>	<b>Late assignments must be submitted by midnight for partial credit</b>