

Teaching Portfolio

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Additional material and course web pages can be found online at the following address: <http://www.lehigh.edu/~grr3/classes>

I. STATEMENT ON TEACHING

I have always viewed teaching as a central feature of my academic existence. I have a natural passion for teaching that I have refined through practice in the classroom, conversation with peers and mentors, and careful self-reflection. By seeking out a variety of teaching opportunities at Lehigh, Stanford, and the University of Texas at Austin, I have honed my pedagogical abilities and have become skilled at inspiring students to explore difficult topics in philosophy and at providing them with the methodological tools they need to make such exploration productive.

I see the classroom not merely as a forum for transferring knowledge but also as an opportunity to model intellectual inquiry. When delivering lectures, I am careful to state my goals at the beginning and also to make it clear how I plan to reach them. I have found that when students can ‘peek behind the curtain’ in this way, they are much more likely to follow the argument and understand the points I make. I also strive always to balance the seriousness of my arguments with humor and personal anecdotes so that students realize that philosophy is about our humanity and not just about abstractions and arguments. Using this forthright, personable approach, I coax students out of their traditional role as passive recipients of information. I entice them to walk with me through a conceptual landscape and help them become familiar with the lay of the land. As a result, students leave class not just with a notebook packed with information but also with an improved grasp of the methods and rewards of philosophical investigation.

This approach also works well in small discussion-intensive seminars. I believe that the best way to teach such classes is to work side by side with my students, guiding them through complex ideas and difficult texts. I bring questions, topics and exercises to class, but I always strive to have the students be responsible for pushing the discussion forward. I have students sign up to be the ‘Questioner’ of the day; in this role they begin the discussion by posting questions and facilitating discussion in an on-line forum the day before the seminar meets. Then, in class, they are responsible for initiating and sustaining discussion for part of the seminar. Because students are well prepared and actively engaged, our discussions are deeper and more productive than they would be without these techniques. Also, as an amiable teacher, I create a respectful environment where students become comfortable asking questions and expressing ideas. Then, building on this foundation of trust, I challenge them to think through the implications of their thoughts so that they come to see the strengths and limitations of the things they believe and say. My students quickly pick up on the fact that I am genuinely interested in their education and so when I hold them to high standards and give them honest feedback for improvement they respond rapidly, consistently rising to the challenges I set for them.

I believe that to teach philosophy successfully, we must train students to think rigorously and argue effectively, but I am equally convinced that our discipline fails if we do not also make it clear why these ideas are worth arguing about. Thus, I never assume that the students automatically find the questions engaging. Instead, I set myself each day the challenge of seeing the topic from the students’ perspective and finding a way to make the questions matter to them. By doing so, I help students overcome obstacles that would otherwise impede their ability to benefit from the ideas at hand and only then do I proceed to explore more complex questions.

Whether in the lecture hall or in the seminar room, I combine an appreciation for the seriousness of my charge as a teacher with a strong sense of compassion for my students. The result is that my students learn how to engage in sustained, productive intellectual inquiry. More importantly, they come to recognize how such inquiry can make a difference in who they are and how they live their lives.

II. COURSES TAUGHT AS FACULTY (full teaching duties)

- “The Examined Life” (Lehigh University, Summer 2005, Summer 2006, online). By studying a number of canonical philosophers in this discussion-intensive online introduction to philosophy course, students gained foundational philosophical knowledge, learned to discuss ideas with their peers, and reflected extensively on the relevance of these ideas to their existing set of beliefs.
- “Comparative Philosophy: East and West” (Lehigh University, Spring 2005). Students compared select works of Eastern and Western philosophers (Plato/Confucius; Aristotle/Mengzi; Descartes/Zhuangzi; Leibniz/Zhu Xi), with special emphasis on avoiding common pitfalls of comparative thinking.
- “Dreams and Realities: Philosophical Constructions of the Real” (Lehigh University, Summer 2004, Fall 2005, Fall 2006). By encountering and critically examining a variety of texts that present 'reality claims' of one kind or another, students were taught to identify, understand, evaluate, and discuss how such arguments work. In addition, students articulated and defended their own views of what should count as real and why. Texts included *The Republic*, *Meditations on First Philosophy*, *Phantoms in the Brain*, *Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous*, *The Circular Ruins*, *The Chuang Tzu*, and selected articles on neurotheology.
- “The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant” (Stanford University Continuing Studies Program, Spring 2002). Students were led to an understanding of the central features of Kantian philosophy through a careful study of Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* and *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. Special emphasis was placed on helping students analyze individual arguments, connect these arguments to the larger work, and understand the philosophical problems Kant was working to solve.
- “Mind, Matter, and Mortality: Philosophy in Dialogue” (Stanford University Continuing Studies Program, Winter 2002). Students were guided through five philosophical dialogues (by Plato, Mencius, Berkeley, Hume and John Perry) with the aim of addressing questions about the nature and existence of the soul, material bodies, and God. Special attention was given to the question of how the literary features of these works relates to their philosophical content.
- “Confucian Philosophy” (Stanford University Continuing Studies Program Summer 2001). This course offered a philosophical consideration of Confucius’ views about human nature, ethics, politics, knowledge, and value. Students were given a grasp of the specific philosophical concepts at the heart of Confucianism, an understanding of the philosophical questions that surround these concepts, and a good general sense of what the *Analects* is all about.
- “Human Nature” (UT-Austin, Spring 1998). This course explicated and critically evaluated a variety of conceptions of what a human being is, how (and whether) this individual relates to society, God, and other individuals, what an ideal human being is, and what it takes to become one. By examining these conceptions and the philosophical complexities behind them, students were encouraged to consider the problems and limitations of the theories and to work toward developing their own thoughts on these topics. Texts included works by Plato, Confucius, Laozi, Augustine, Nietzsche, Freud, E.O. Wilson, and Kurt Vonnegut.
- “Contemporary Moral Problems” (UT-Austin, Fall 1997). In this course in applied ethics, students were taught ethical theory, current commentary on moral issues (including welfare policy, gender issues, and race relations), and the art of critical thinking.
- “Introduction to Philosophy” (Austin Community College, Spring 1997). An historical introduction to the Western philosophical tradition, this course offered students both a broad understanding of the development of major philosophical themes (through a survey of selections from classic works) and a

II. COURSES TAUGHT AS FACULTY (full teaching duties), cont.

precise insight into the intricacies of selected philosophical texts (through a close reading of Plato's *Euthyphro* and Descartes' *Meditations*).

“Introduction to Philosophy” (Austin Community College, Fall 1996). This course was a topical introduction to the Western philosophical tradition. Topics included epistemology, religion, and personal identity. Emphasis was placed on teaching students how to proceed through a series of philosophical questions in logical sequence.

“English for Master's and Doctoral Students” (Hunan College of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Changsha, People's Republic of China, Fall 1993, Spring 1994). This course taught all aspects of the English language, including grammar, usage, composition, and reading comprehension to students with widely varying proficiencies in English.

III. COURSES TAUGHT AS DISCUSSION LEADER

- “The Self, the Sacred and the Human Good” (Stanford University, Fall 2003). An interdisciplinary, cross-cultural approach to questions of how humans create value in the face of personal and social evil. Texts included Tolstoy’s *The Death of Ivan Ilych*, Melville’s *Bartleby the Scrivener*, Dante’s *Inferno* and *Purgatorio*, the *Chuang Tzu*, short stories by Isak Dinesen, and Camus’ *The Stranger*.
- “Visions of Mortality” (Stanford University, Fall 2002). An interdisciplinary course that led students to consider questions of mortality through the study of a variety of philosophical, anthropological, literary, and bioethical texts, including Tolstoy’s *The Death of Ivan Illych*, Lucretius’ *On the Nature of Things*, Schopenhauer’s *Essays and Aphorisms*, Montaigne’s *Essays*, the *Tibetan Book of the Dead*, Daniel Callahan’s *The Troubled Dream of Life*, and selected articles by Thomas Nagel, Beth Conklin, Gary Greenberg, and Sharon Kaufman.
- “Reason, Passion, and Reality-Part 2” (Stanford University, Spring 2002). This course introduced students to major figures and themes in modern philosophy through close study of Descartes’ *Meditations*, Hume’s *Enquiry*, Hutcheson’s *Illustrations*, Kant’s *Groundwork*, Dostoevsky’s *Notes from Underground*, and Sartre’s *Existentialism as a Humanism*.
- “Reason, Passion, and Reality-Part 1” (Stanford University, Winter 2002). This course introduced students to major figures and themes in ancient philosophy through careful study of Homer’s *Iliad*, Sophocles’ *Philoctetes*, Plato’s *Republic*, Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Confucius’ *Analects*, and the Bible.
- “The Art of Living” (Stanford University, Fall 2001). This course provided students with the methodological tools needed for humanistic inquiry by studying questions of value and identity as found in Plato’s *Symposium*, Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, Nietzsche’s *Gay Science*, and Ellison’s *Invisible Man*.
- “Reason, Passion, and Reality-Part 2” (Stanford University, Spring 2001). This course introduced students to major figures and themes in modern philosophy through careful study of Hume’s *Enquiry on Human Nature* and *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, Kant’s *Groundwork for a Metaphysics of Morals*, James’ *Essays on Pragmatism*, and DuBois’ *The Souls of Black Folk*.
- “The Good Life” (Stanford University, Fall 2000). A fall quarter IHUM course similar in design to the *Art of Living*, with a slightly varied set of texts: Plato’s *Symposium*, Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein*, Ellison’s *Invisible Man*, and Beckett’s *Endgame*.
- “Word and the World” (Stanford University, Fall 1999). By using a variety of methods to explore foundational works such as *Genesis*, the *Shang Shu*, *Blade Runner*, *Hamlet* and Descartes’ *Meditations*, students were taught how texts create meaning and how meaning shapes worlds.
- “Problems of Knowledge and Valuation” (UT-Austin, Fall 1995, Spring 1996, Fall 1996, Spring 1997, Spring 1998). A yearlong course in philosophy for University of Texas at Austin’s honors students. The first semester focused on ancient philosophy (*The Analects*, *The Dao De otesJing*, *The Bhagavad-Gita*, *The Buddhist Scriptures*, and Plato’s *Republic*); the second on modern philosophy, with special emphasis on political writers (including Hobbes, Locke, Mill, Rousseau, Rawls, Nozick).
- “Introduction to Philosophy” (UT-Austin, Spring 1995). An introduction to philosophy focused on epistemology, philosophy of religion, and philosophy of science, using selections drawn from Robert C. Solomon’s textbook *Twenty Questions*.
- “Contemporary Moral Problems” (UT-Austin, Fall 1994). A class in applied ethics, discussing the topics of abortion, world hunger, the death penalty, and sexuality, using selections drawn from Mappes and Zembaty, *Social Ethics: Morality and Social Policy*.

IV. SUMMARY OF TEACHING EVALUATIONS

(Values are for the 'overall rating' category from a variety of evaluation forms; all values have been converted to a 5 point scale for comparison.)

Courses Taught as Faculty

"Dreams and Realities" (Fall 2006)	4.95/5
"The Examined Life: Introduction to Philosophy" (Summer 2, 2006).....	4.8/5
"The Examined Life: Introduction to Philosophy" (Summer 1, 2006).....	5.0/5
"Comparative Philosophy: East and West" (Spring 2005)	5.0/5
"The Examined Life: Introduction to Philosophy" (Summer 2, 2005).....	n/a
"Dreams and Realities" (Fall 2005)	5.0/5
"The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant" (Spring 2002)	5.0/5
"Mind, Matter, and Mortality: Philosophy in Dialogue" (Winter 2002)	5.0/5
"Confucian Philosophy (Summer 2001)	4.9/5
"Human Nature" (Spring 1998)	4.4/5
"Contemporary Moral Problems" (Fall 1997)	4.6/5

Courses Taught as a Discussion Leader

"The Self, the Sacred, and the Human Good" (Fall 2003)	5.0/5
"Visions of Mortality" (Fall 2002).....	5.0/5
"Reason, Passion, and Reality-part 2" (Spring 2002)	4.8/5
"Reason, Passion, and Reality-part 1" (Winter 2002)	4.7/5
"The Art of Living" (Fall 2001)	4.6/5
"Reason, Passion, and Reality-part 2" (Spring 2001)	4.7/5
"The Good Life" (Fall 2000)	4.9/5
"Problems of Knowledge and Valuation" (Fall 1995 through Spring 1998)	4.8/5

V. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS: COURSES TAUGHT AS FACULTY

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

PHI 090: Dreams and Realities: Philosophical Constructions of the Real (Fall 2006)

18 responses

1. Overall, the instructor's teaching was effective	4.95/5
2. Overall, the quality of the course was good.....	4.8/5
14. I learned a great deal in this course.....	4.80/5
21. I would recommend this course to other students	4.65/5

Representative Comments:

"Although a lot of times the material itself was difficult, it was always presented clearly, even with visuals whenever necessary."

"Professor Reihman was an awesome teacher and really made this class enjoyable even though the work load was touch. I loved the class and will definitely miss it."

"I took this course to begin experimenting with a potential philosophy major. You really couldn't have done a better job...all aspects of the course were well done."

"[Next time] consider narrowing down the work load, but otherwise one of the best courses I've ever taken!"

"The entire class was great. The readings tied perfectly into the discussions, which Professor Reihman directed very well."

"The professor was very enthusiastic and supportive."

"I thought it was going to be an analyzing dreams course, however, it wasn't. I ended up loving it. The teacher made it interesting."

"[I took this course] expecting to be able to think more critically about concepts and I feel confident that I'm able to do just that having completed the course."

"Professor Reihman was not only a great philosophy teacher but also someone who was very understanding and helpful making Freshman transitions (Perfect Professor/mentor for a Freshman seminar.)"

"Group discussion is always the best way to learn and teach. The environment that you promoted encouraged both criticism and debate without being unpleasant."

V. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS: COURSES TAUGHT AS FACULTY (cont.)

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

PHI 090: Dreams and Realities: Philosophical Constructions of the Real (Fall 2005)

18 responses

3. Overall, the instructor's teaching was effective	5.0/5
4. Overall, the quality of the course was good.....	5.0/5
14. I learned a great deal in this course.....	4.89/5
21. I would recommend this course to other students	4.72/5

Representative Comments:

“Reihman is one of the best professors I've ever been taught by. He is effective in his teaching, shows true care that his students understand the material. Most importantly, he is patient with very difficult material”

“Our discussions were extremely valuable. They not only helped us to learn the course material, but to make stronger convictions and open up to new ideas and people.”

“This was the best class I could have ever hoped for—seriously, Professor Reihman is the most amazing teacher I have ever met.”

“I honestly feel like he is one of the best teachers I have ever come across. His expertise in the area and style of teaching were very inviting and helpful.”

“I loved the reading. The professor really made the difference. Professor Reihman was eager to meet with us and help us. He gave us great feedback on our papers and made me want to do well b/c I knew he would give my paper his time and concentration.”

“Everything was so very worthwhile. Professor Reihman chose interesting texts and gave thought-provoking assignments. Overall, it was his teaching and enthusiasm that made the course so wonderful.”

“I think Prof. Reihman's teaching method was the most worthwhile. How he structured the class made the learning experience so personal and rewarding.”

V. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS: COURSES TAUGHT AS FACULTY (cont.)

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

PHI 36: The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant (Spring 2002)

12 responses

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 5. How would you evaluate the instructor's teaching? | 5.0/5 |
| 6. How would you rate the course readings and other course materials? | 4.8/5 |
| 7. How would you rate the organization of this course (e.g. coherence and order of syllabus, lectures and presentations) | 5.0/5 |
| 4. Did you find this course:
very challenging(12); moderately challenging(0); not challenging (0) | |

Representative Comments:

"He delivered and exceeded my expectations, given that this is a really tough subject matter."

"Enjoyed every moment in class and doing the course work."

"Energy level every evening was unflagging"

"Exceeded my expectations. Handout materials, Professor's understanding of issues and communication ability as well as student quality were all superb."

"The first 3 classes were very clear and in detail, building a good foundation for me for the rest of the class. The rest of the classes went rapidly to cover the broad area of the course. This gives me a broad view of the whole and give[s] me a lot of reading and studying in the future."

"Actually, this course is the best of all the courses I have taken ... in the last 10 years."

"Prof. Reihman always did a good job of explaining the material and addressing student questions. His outlines were very helpful and his sense of humor helped make the difficult material more palatable."

"Lectures were always well-organized and succinct. Prof. Reihman has a good sense of humor, and he treats students generously. Readings, arguments and concepts were very challenging, but coming to a basic understanding (with Prof. Reihman's help) was rewarding. Course exceeded my expectations. I hope Prof. Reihman teaches again."

"Greg is great! Bring him back soon!"

"He has an attractive mixture of good will and intelligence."

"Exceptionally effective in presenting and clarifying complex subject material. Took great effort in both preparation and delivery."

"Professor Reihman was very patient with questions regarding this difficult subject matter, and provided useful handouts and diagrams in his explanations."

V. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS: COURSES TAUGHT AS FACULTY (cont.)

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

PHI 34: Mind, Matter, and Mortality: Philosophy in Dialogue (Winter 2002)

8 responses

1. How would you evaluate the instructor's teaching?..... 5.0/5
2. How would you rate the course readings and other course materials? 4.5/5
3. How would you rate the organization of this course (e.g. coherence and order of syllabus, lectures and presentations)? 4.6/5
4. Did you find this course:
very challenging(6) moderately challenging(1) not challenging(1)

Representative Comments:

- “Very inspiring and stimulating. I enjoyed the variety of course readings.”
- “Very enjoyable discussions stemmed from this course. I liked the way the Prof. facilitated the class.”
- “Great discussion.”
- “Very committed to bring the material to the students. Encouraged participation and modeling arguments.”
- “Greg was great. He was an excellent mentor and really was all and more than I had expected. The class evolved into more of a discussion class, but this was definitely a move in a good direction.”

PHI 32: Confucian Philosophy (Summer 2001)

14 responses

1. How would you evaluate the *instructor's teaching*? 4.9/5
2. How would you evaluation the *course content* (e.g., topics, materials, organization)4.7/5

Representative Comments:

- “Frank sharing of thoughts and reasons behind his thinking. Lots to read which was broad and insightful”
- “Good selection of material and grasp of topic.”
- “I would have preferred more lecture and less discussion.”
- “The reading assignments were too much; I didn't have enough time to think it over and review what I read.”
- “Earnest, well prepared, encouraged discussion, yet kept it on track. Wonderful selection of readings.”
- “Provocative, stimulated thinking about western presuppositions which stood in way of understanding Confucius. Open, good at involving class in discussion.”
- “Excellent knowledge of subject. Interesting course.”
- “Structured the class very well; was very well prepared; spelled out expectations very well; gave thorough feedback.; focus on key concepts very good (*ren, li*, etc); allowed appropriate discussion (differences of opinion).”
- “The instructor is very knowledgeable in the subject matter. I liked most when he gave his views and expressed his understanding.”
- “Insightful manner in which he related Confucius' teaching not only to his times but as a model for future Chinese dynasties.”
- “Deep insight into Confucianism and clear explanation. Just enlightening.”

**VI. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS:
COURSES TAUGHT AS DISCUSSION LEADER**

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

IHUM 19: The Self, the Sacred, and the Human Good (Fall 2003)

16 responses

1. Section leader was well prepared for section..... 4.9/5
2. Presented material clearly..... 4.9/5
3. Helped develop student's thinking skills in this discipline..... 5.0/5
4. Provided helpful comments on assignments, papers, exams..... 4.9/5
5. Gave explanations appropriate to the students' level of understanding... 4.9/5
6. Was an effective discussion, review or lab leader..... 5.0/5
7. Answered questions clearly and concisely..... 4.8/5
8. Was available for consultation outside of class..... 4.9/5
9. Overall teaching effectiveness..... 5.0/5

Representative Comments:

"He, at once, guided our thoughts and discussion with his own vast knowledge and humbly encouraged us to seek our own answers. Wonderful—so respectful and yet so challenging!....so creative and engaging."

"Dr. Reihman was extremely knowledgeable about all the works and the history of the authors—he can answer all questions very easily. Because of Dr. Reihman, the discussions flowed smoothly and progressed instead of being stagnant. He was very kind, the class was informal—a good learning environment."

"Incredible knowledge, not pretentious at all...always willing to help."

"Always in tune and prepared...very helpful and encouraging."

"This instructor was truly excellent. Sections enhanced the lectures tremendously, encouraged rigorous thinking. [He] steered conversation very well. Managed to keep things on track/push thinking while letting students define discussion. Very available. There was a great, respectful, rigorous but fun atmosphere."

"Strong knowledge of work, included extra relevant material Keeps discussion focused on important topics. Available to provide insight on matters unknown. Available when needed. Positive attitude."

"He knew exactly which questions to ask to spark discussion..[but] sometimes we'd focus on one subject for too long. He was always very approachable and accommodating."

"Discussions flowed well and were interesting. He treated us as intellectual equals even though we aren't, which was really cool."

"Even though most of the discussions were student-led, Greg helped propel the discussions into another application or join with past works we read."

"He knew everything. Section was very enjoyable and organized; never a dull moment in class; treated us as equals, which made it easy to open up and talk. "

"Was always very well prepared and had constructive, informative information and insight to add to the group; very effective, excellent leader always kept conversations moving and interesting; always extremely friendly and willing to help, always a warm, friendly environment, awesome, amazing—I will miss this section. Thank you!"

**VI. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS:
COURSES TAUGHT AS DISCUSSION LEADER (cont.)**

IHUM 17: Visions of Mortality (Fall 2002)

15 Responses

1. Section leader was well prepared for section..... 4.9/5
2. Presented material clearly..... 4.9/5
3. Helped develop student's thinking skills in this discipline..... 5.0/5
4. Provided helpful comments on assignments, papers, exams..... 4.9/5
5. Gave explanations appropriate to the students' level of understanding... 4.9/5
6. Was an effective discussion, review or lab leader..... 4.9/5
7. Answered questions clearly and concisely..... 4.7/5
8. Was available for consultation outside of class..... 4.5/5
9. Overall teaching effectiveness..... 5.0/5

Representative Comments:

"I know I put Excellent for all of the above, but I truly believe this. In the short time I have been in this class, Greg has been the most helpful teacher I have ever had. He always knew the material extremely well, and helped me a lot along the way. I am sad he's not teaching all my future sections. For the first time, I am sad that a class is ending."

"Very knowledgeable. Always helped my understanding of the material. Discussion was always great."

"Great knowledge and coordination"

"Many insightful comments and thought provoking questions to promote discussion...Magnificent."

"Very knowledgeable, helped stimulate insight and self-confidence. Related to us in a significant way."

"Gave effective responses to our questions but left room for us to consider them more. Respectful, understanding, wants us to learn. Excellent!! We should clone him."

"Very good explanation and clarification; makes comments when necessary to bring discussion to focus."

"Very much a scholar of philosophy—wow...Our conference discussions saved my papers every time. You are a knowledgeable and supportive TF. Thank you for your feedback. I feel so fortunate to have been in this section."

"Always brought discussion back; addressed logical fallacies; incredible respect for students; always available for paper conference ([but] focused too much on papers sometimes."

"Don't change anything. I really loved your teaching style. We were really lucky to have you. Thanks a lot."

"Great! Made me rethink my life."

"Very effective and fair in letting everyone speak, respectful."

**VI. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS:
COURSES TAUGHT AS DISCUSSION LEADER (cont.)**

IHUM 23: Reason, Passion and Reality-Part 1 (Winter 2002)

1. Section leader was well prepared for section..... 4.9/5
2. Presented material clearly..... 4.5/5
3. Helped develop student's thinking skills in this discipline..... 4.7/5
4. Provided helpful comments on assignments, papers, exams..... 4.8/5
5. Gave explanations appropriate to the students' level of understanding.... 4.5/5
6. Was an effective discussion, review or lab leader..... 4.6/5
7. Answered questions clearly and concisely..... 4.2/5
8. Was available for consultation outside of class..... 4.5/5
9. Overall teaching effectiveness..... 4.7/5

Representative Comments:

"Gave time to reflect/ask questions on lecture."

"Added to all discussions; very positive easy going; He definitely challenged me; perhaps more than I was ready to put out."

"Very knowledgeable; could relate knowledge on a bit lower level."

"Thorough knowledge of material; led discussions where the should have gone..maybe let us explore tangents a bit more. Excellent attitude toward students; clearly wants to help us learn."

"Knew everything; did it well; good attitude; excellent—I loved section."

"He did a great job of letting the discussion take its own shape while still making sure we hit on key topics and didn't stray too far off topic. He was very respectful and treated us as equals capable of having substantive conversations. I really enjoyed this section! Also, his comments on my papers were incredibly useful!"

"Very good. Conversations move naturally and logically."

"You were very nice and really cleared things up. You were extremely well prepared and led discussion well. You were always available for us outside office hours and I really appreciate the time you spent to help me."

"Extensive knowledge of material; always well prepared for questions; overflow of knowledge, sometimes explains something further than needed? Very available, very friendly and approachable."

"Succinctly and concisely delves into important matters concerning different philosophers."

"Harder than any section I've ever been in."

"Very positive, yet challenging, motivated me to pursue questions/problems."

**VI. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS:
COURSES TAUGHT AS DISCUSSION LEADER (cont.)**

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

IHUM 48: The Art of Living (Fall 2001)

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Section leader was well prepared for section..... | 4.9/5 |
| 2. Presented material clearly..... | 4.4/5 |
| 3. Helped develop student's thinking skills in this discipline..... | 4.6/5 |
| 4. Provided helpful comments on assignments, papers, exams..... | 4.6/5 |
| 5. Gave explanations appropriate to the students' level of understanding.. | 4.3/5 |
| 6. Was an effective discussion, review or lab leader..... | 4.7/5 |
| 7. Answered questions clearly and concisely..... | 4.2/5 |
| 8. Was available for consultation outside of class..... | 4.9/5 |
| 9. Overall teaching effectiveness..... | 4.6/5 |

Representative Comments:

"We always discussed the lectures, tying them into our section. Greg knew his stuff and had obviously thought hard on the texts for discussion. He asked us interesting question to make us develop our ideas. Sometimes the discussion seemed to move away from particularities of the text to abstract ideas, which was effective sometimes, but boring or unproductive at other times. I really liked how he engaged us in discussion and made us really delve into thoughts."

"Excellent discussion leader! He knew the subject well and helped my understanding. Yay!"

"Knew so much about books; always brought interesting ideas to the table; very effective as leader; great attitude—very available outside of class. Best section leader!! I wish I could have him again."

"Very knowledgeable; Great! Thank you."

"He was a great section leader and demanded high-quality work."

"Overall he present ideas clearly; I especially like the diagrams he uses. He [is concerned] about all students inside/outside class. He's very down to earth to weaker students."

"Well prepared, presents material clearly (esp. through graphs and diagrams). Effective, guides the discussion and keeps it in focus. Very encouraging and helpful and understanding."

"Great all around. Wonderful comments on returned papers—very specific, helpful."

"Amazing depth of knowledge and ability to convey it and guide students toward a higher understanding. Great at summarizing rambling points made by students. Good balance of focus: specific to text and in context of life. Very available and generous with time. Awesome. Great example to aspire to."

**VI. SPECIFIC TEACHING EVALUATIONS:
COURSES TAUGHT AS DISCUSSION LEADER (cont.)**

(Photocopies of original student responses are available upon request.)

IHUM 46: The Good Life (Fall 2000)

1. Section leader was well prepared for section..... 4.9/5
2. Presented material clearly..... 5.0/5
3. Helped develop student's thinking skills in this discipline..... 4.9/5
4. Provided helpful comments on assignments, papers, exams..... 5.0/5
5. Gave explanations appropriate to the students' level of understanding.... 4.9/5
6. Was an effective discussion, review or lab leader..... 5.0/5
7. Answered questions clearly and concisely..... 4.9/5
8. Was available for consultation outside of class..... 4.9/5
9. Overall teaching effectiveness..... 4.9/5

Representative Comments:

"Discussion always on track; very friendly; open for help; excellent overall performance."

"Excellent personal, fascinating discussions that were also relevant to the books and lectures. Struck great balance between student- and teacher-led discussion. Helpful, nice, funny, interesting, great TF. He is clearly the best IHUM section leader."

"Greg definitely was always very familiar with the material. He could always answer q[uestion]s and only let the discussion get off track when he thought it was somehow relevant. Greg helped further our understanding of critical analysis and writing."

"Always helpful...developed good relationship with students and provided a comfortable environment."

"Very receptive to students' ideas, excellent at helping students expand and define their ideas. Excellent! Very helpful comments on papers."

"Greg was outstanding this quarter. He had a die-hard Techie enjoying a humanities course. He provided an excellent atmosphere for discussion. We were allowed to express all ideas freely and were not forced to refrain from applying the material to our personal lives and experiences. He was always available for consultation and was honest in his concern for us. Truth be told, he saved the first quarter IHUM experience."

"Greg is truly a great section leader who shows sincere interest in his students. Stellar performance."

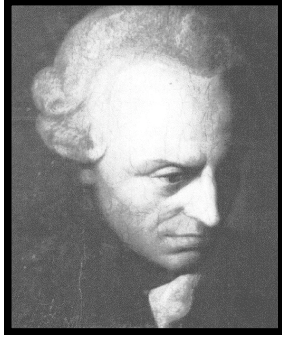
"Extensive knowledge of material, brought a philosophical light to readings. Great diversity of activities used in class. Insightful mini-lectures. Did an excellent job of keeping the section flowing by using questions and offering insight. Very friendly and helpful. Personable. Great section leader. Coherent sections—well put together."

"Good balance of listening and commenting. Always available for writing conferences. Absolutely outstanding."

"Very knowledgeable—really gave me a better understanding [of] many philosophical concepts—always had a structured plan for class. Wonderful—I really liked how he helped facilitate our discussions and always explained confusing concepts. Greg was always available, by email or in person at his office. He was genuinely interested in each of us. Greg is the best! I feel very fortunate that he was my section leader. He integrated interesting concepts to make this a valuable learning experience."

"Greg needs to be a professor. We need for him to share his knowledge with everyone. Great at every turn. Very effective at making a conversation and in-depth instruction out of anything. The very best in both personal and professional setting. The very best I have ever encountered."

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (other materials available upon request
or on the web at <http://www.lehigh.edu/~grr3>)



The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant

Continuing Studies PHI 36
Spring 2002

Instructor: Greg Reihman, Ph.D.

Class Meeting Time:
Wednesdays 7:00-8:50 PM
April 3 to June 5
Location: 250-252A

Contact Information:
Office: Building 250 Room 252B
Email: reihman@stanford.edu
Phone: (650) 725-3984

Course website: <http://www.stanford.edu/~reihman/classes/Kant>

Course Description:

What can I know? What ought I to do? What may I hope? Immanuel Kant claimed that all the concerns of reason come down to these three questions. Kant himself offered original and influential answers, but his revolutionary contribution to philosophy was his observation that such questions can be answered only by first undertaking a systematic critique of the rational mind that poses them. In this course, we will work towards an understanding of Kantian philosophy through a careful study of two of his major works: the *Critique of Pure Reason* and the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*.

Texts (available at the Stanford Bookstore):

Please note: There are many translations of these works available but, for the sake of consistency within the classroom, I am asking that everyone use the particular versions listed here.

Required:

Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Pure Reason*, tr. Paul Guyer and Allen Wood (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, tr. Mary Gregor (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

Optional:

Sebastian Gardner, *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason* (Routledge, 1999).

Class Meetings:

My aim in this class is to help students understand the central features of Kantian philosophy. We will work towards this goal by carefully reading Kant's most important works, considering the historical context in which he wrote, becoming familiar with his technical vocabulary, and wrestling with the philosophical problems he was working to solve. Each meeting will begin with a lecture that will frame the issues of the class, followed by discussion in which we work through difficult passages, ask and answer questions, and discuss the ideas at hand. My hope is that each student will leave the course with a firm grasp of the specific philosophical concepts we encounter, a deepened understanding of philosophy in general, and a clearer sense of his or her own thoughts on these matters.

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (cont.)

Requirements:

You have three grading options: letter, CR/NC (credit/no-credit), and audit. Unless you tell the Continuing Studies office otherwise, you will be enrolled in this course for a grade. If you have any questions about these options, or would like to change your elected option, please see <http://continuingstudies.stanford.edu/ssandp/grades.htm>

It is my hope that everyone will complete the reading assignment for each class (at least the 'Reduced Reading' pages). If you are taking this class for a grade or for CR/NC, you will, in addition, need to (a) send me, on the Tuesday prior to each class (before 8pm), an email in which you pose a question or two either about the current reading or about the previous week's class (please put "Kant" in the subject heading), and (b) write one 6-8 page paper. The emailed questions will count for 25% of your final grade, the long paper will be worth 50%, and participation will count for 25%. Paper topics and a style sheet will be handed out in class and posted on the website. The paper may be turned in anytime up to one week after the end of the course. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with the paper if you would like me to return it to you.

Schedule:

WK	TOPIC	Reading	Reduced Reading	Optional Reading
1	The Problem of Knowledge. Background:Rationalism: (Plato, Descartes, Leibniz) Empiricism: (Locke, Berkeley, Hume) <i>Critique of Pure Reason</i> (CPR), Preface	99-125		Gardner, Ch.1 & 2 (37-46)
2	CPR, Introduction	125-152		GW,* pp1-7, 20-23 Gardner, ch 3
3	CPR, Transcendental Aesthetic	155-191		GW, pp. 7-8 Gardner, <i>ch 4</i> , 5
4	CPR, Transcendental Logic: Transcendental Analytic (esp. Transcendental Deduction)	193-266	193-206 210-212 219-234 245-266	GW, pp. 8-9 Gardner, ch 6 (esp 131-165)
5	CPR, Transcendental Logic: Transcendental Analytic (Analytic of Principles)	267-383	267-270 286(Axioms,1st ¶) 290(Anticip.,1st ¶) 295-296 299-316 326-329 (up to "***") 354-365	GW, pp. 9-13 Gardner, ch 6, (esp 165-183; 198-206)
6	CPR, Transcendental Logic: Transcendental Dialectic: The Paralogisms of Pure Reason and The Antinomies of Pure Reason	384-549	384-410 445-460 470-495(<i>theses&proofs</i>) 508-514 520-523 532-537 549-550	GW, pp. 13-17 Gardner, ch 7
7	CPR, Transc. Dialectic: The Ideal of Pure Reason; Transc. Doctrine of Method: The Canon of Pure Reason, The History of Pure Reason	551-623 672-690 702-704	551-569 583-589 672-684 702-704	GW, pp. 17-19 Gardner, ch 7
8	The Problem of Morality Background: Moral Philosophy before Kant, <i>Groundwork</i> Preface, Section I	1-18, vii-xv.	7-15 Intro. vii-xv.	
9	Groundwork, Section II	19-51, xv-xxv	24 -25; 30-41 Intro. xv-xxv.	
10	Groundwork. Section III Postscript on Hope	52-66, xxv-xxx		

*GW=Guyer and Wood's
Introduction to CPR

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (cont.)

PHI 36: The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant—Paper 1 Topics (on the first *Critique*) Instructor: Reihman

OPTION I: Argument analysis. Select one of the following claims and analyze the argument Kant gives in its defense. See the “Argument Analysis” handout for guidelines.

- 1) Space is the form of outer intuition.
- 2) Time is the form of inner intuition.
- 3) “All intuitions are intensive magnitudes” (286).
- 4) “In all appearances the real, which is an object of the sensation, has intensive magnitude, i.e., a degree” (290).
- 5) *First Analogy*: “All appearances contain that which persists (substance) as the object itself, and that which can change as its mere determination, i.e. a way in which the object exists” (299).
- 6) *Second Analogy*: “Everything that happens presupposes something which it follows in accordance with a rule” (304).
- 7) *Third Analogy*: “All substances insofar as they can be perceived in space as simultaneous, are in thoroughgoing interaction” (316).
- 8) “The mere, but empirically determined consciousness of my own existence proves the existence of objects in space outside me” (327).
- 9) “Now from this it follows irrefutably that the pure concepts of the understanding can never be of transcendental but always of empirical use” (345).
- 10) The rationalist’s argument that the soul is a substance is actually a paralogism.
- 11) The rationalist’s argument that the soul is a simple is actually a paralogism.
- 12) The argument that the soul is single (the same over time) is a paralogism.
- 13) Select a proof given for one of the theses or the antithesis in the Antinomies section. (Note: in your evaluation, you’ll need to talk about why Kant thinks this argument is unreliable.)
- 14) It is impossible to prove God’s existence. (Note: discuss only one of the proofs.)

OPTION II: Comparative analysis. Select some feature of Kant’s philosophy that is presented differently in different parts of the text. Discuss the changes you detect and propose a reason for these changes.

Suggestion 1 : Select some feature that is different in the A and B edition of the text. For example...

- The argument that space (or time) is the form of outer sense
- The explanations of the Axioms of Intuition, Anticipations of Perception, or Analogies of Experience. (For each, Kant rephrases the principle and adds additional material to the ‘Proof.’)
- The versions of the Phenomena/Noumena distinction.
- The paralogisms of pure reason (select one).

Suggestion 2 : Select some feature that plays a role in both the Analytic and the Dialectic and discuss how it functions differently in each part. Is Kant consistent across these sections? Some possibilities...

- The Refutation(s) of Idealism
- The requirements for objecthood (as discussed in the Analytic of Concepts and as employed in the Paralogisms of pure reason)
- The categories as deduced in the Analytic and the categories as they guide the structure of the Paralogisms and Antinomies section.

OPTION III: Historical analysis. Much of the *Critique* can best be understood by situating its arguments in historical context. By drawing on various parts of the *Critique*, build up a coherent picture of Kant’s criticism of one of his predecessors (probably one of the following: Plato, Descartes, Leibniz, Hume, or Berkeley). NB: You should probably only select this option if are already relatively familiar with one of these figures.)

The paper is due in my office one week after the last class meeting (6/12/02). It paper should be between than 1500–2000 words .If you would like me to return your long paper to you, be sure to include a self-addressed stamped envelope when you turn it in, and I will mail it to you with my comments and your grade. Papers should be typed (double-spaced) with one-inch margins all around (top and bottom, left and right). Please use a readable font of ordinary size (e.g. Times,12 point). Also, please number your pages and include a word count.

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (cont.)

PHI 36: The Philosophy of Immanuel Kant—Paper 2 Topics (on the *Groundwork*) Instructor: Reihman

OPTION 1: Theoretical analysis. Ethical theories typically aim to deliver an account of moral motivation (what motivates moral actions) and an account of moral judgment (how we are to judge the morality of an action). For example, in the moral philosophy of Francis Hutcheson (briefly discussed in class), moral acts are those motivated by a feeling of disinterested benevolence toward another person, while moral judgment is grounded in the feeling of approval a spectator experiences when witnessing a moral act (i.e., witnessing an act that flows from disinterested benevolence). What is Kant's account of moral motivation? What is his account of moral judgment? How are these related to one another in his moral philosophy? Do you find either of these accounts (Kant's or Hutcheson's) stronger than the other?

OPTION 2: Historical analysis. Hegel criticized Kantian moral philosophy by pointing out that it fails to deliver moral guidance because it is merely formal: "With regard to property, for instance, the law of my actions is this: Property ought to be respected for the opposite of this cannot be universal law. That is correct, but it is quite a formal determination: If property is, then it is. Property is here presupposed, but this determination may also in the same way be omitted, and then there is no contradiction involved in theft: If there is no such thing as property, then it is not respected" (G.W.F. Hegel, *Lectures on the History of Philosophy*, Translated by E.S. Haldane (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), vol. III, p.461). In your essay, explain what you think Hegel's point is and then consider the force of his objection by either (a) mounting a criticism of Kant by building on Hegel's observations or (b) defending Kant against Hegel's objection.

OPTION 3: Argument analysis. Select a particular claim that Kant makes in the *Groundwork* and evaluate his argument in defense of that claim. See the "Argument Analysis" and "Arguments: A Rough Guide" handouts for guidelines.

OPTION 4: Comparative analysis. In the *Groundwork*, Kant gives a number of different formulations of the categorical imperative; for example, the Formula of the Universal Law and the Formula of Humanity as an End. In your essay, discuss the relationship between these two different formulations. Approach this task by (a) appealing to what Kant himself says about the relationship between these two different formulations and (b) by providing your own analysis of the difference between them. (Some things to consider: Are they equivalent? Do they give the same answers to moral problems? Are they derived from the same argument? Is the truth of one dependent on the truth of the other?)

DETAILS: The paper is due in my office one week after the last class meeting (i.e., on 6/12/02). It should be between than 1500-2000 words. If you would like me to return your paper to you, be sure to include a self-addressed stamped envelope when you turn it in, and I will mail it to you with my comments and your grade. Papers should be typed (double-spaced) with one-inch margins all around (top and bottom, left and right). Please use a readable font of ordinary size (e.g. Times, 12 point). Also, please number your pages and include a word count.

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (cont.)

HANDOUT: ARGUMENT ANALYSIS GUIDELINES

Reihman

Your paper should have two parts: I) The Argument II) The Essay

I) The Argument

- Print the argument on a single page, separate from the essay.
- Give a step-by-step presentation of argument in your own words (use plain English, but preserve any technical terms the author uses). Include only the main premises, i.e. those that play a logical role in getting to the conclusion.
- Number each premise P1, P2, etc...
- Orient your reader by giving the line numbers (or a range of line numbers) at the end of each step.
- If a premise is derived from earlier premises, you may wish to indicate which premise(s) it follows from. (This feature is not required.)
- You may need to break the argument down into parts if it is a multi-stage argument. However, you do not need to present all the grounds for each premise.
- If a premise is missing from the argument as you found it, you may include it as a numbered premise, but note at the end of the line, something like "not in the text."
- You need not include the Argument Presentation in your word count.

II) The Essay

The essay should have two distinct parts: a discussion of the argument and an evaluation of the argument.

Discussion of the Argument

The discussion of the argument should walk the reader through the steps of the argument, providing the grounds (support) that are given for each premise. Note that your job here is to present the argument in the best possible light, without fundamentally distorting it. If you had to rephrase a premise in your Argument Presentation, you should explain what you had to change and why.

Evaluation of the Argument

- The evaluation of the argument should comment directly on the argument's validity and soundness.
- If you wish to endorse the argument, you should consider several of the most damaging criticisms of the argument, and then defend the argument against these criticisms, i.e. explain why the argument still works.
- If you wish to criticize the argument, you should point out several problems with it and discuss what damage these problems do to the argument. Be selective: you do not have to include every flaw you discover. If you have space, you may wish to consider how the author would respond to your criticism. You may also respond to the author's imagined response.

Miscellaneous Notes

- Your paper should have all the features of an academic essay, introduction, thesis, conclusion, etc.
- Your introduction should situate the argument in the larger context of the text, i.e. say what the author is doing with the argument and what role that argument plays in the work as a whole.
- Your thesis statement should make it clear whether you are criticizing or endorsing or the argument. If you are criticizing it, the thesis should give a clear indication of what type of problem you have found with the argument. If you are endorsing it, the thesis should give an indication of what sort of problems you have found and why it still works. As with any introduction, you need not spell out all the details, but the reader should leave the first paragraph with a clear idea of where the paper is headed.
- Your conclusion should comment briefly on the implications of your evaluation. If you have pointed out serious problems with the argument, you could say what damage your criticism does to the author's larger project. If you have supported the argument, you could comment on how your support lends support to the larger project.

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (cont.)

HANDOUT: ARGUMENTS—A ROUGH GUIDE

Reihman

General Definitions:

- argument: Any form of reasoning in which statements (premises) are used in some way to support another statement (conclusion).
- assumption: An unstated premise (i.e., a statement that plays a crucial role in the argument, but is not explicitly stated in the argument).
- valid/invalid: An argument is valid if the conclusion necessarily follows from the premises (i.e., it cannot be the case that all of the premises are true and the conclusion is false). Validity is determined by the logical relationship between the premises and the conclusions, *not* the truth or falsity of the premises.
- sound/unsound: An argument is sound if it is valid *and* all of its premises are true. If one or more of its premises is false, then the argument is unsound.
- true/false: The truth or falsity of a premise can be determined either by logic (if a premise is analytically true; i.e. true by definition), by empirical observation (if the claim is verifiable by checking the facts of the world), or by a previous argument. Note that premises can be true or false, and conclusions can be true or false, but arguments themselves cannot be true or false (they are said to be valid or invalid; sound or unsound).

Reconstructing, Analyzing and Critiquing Arguments:

When we find arguments in the wild (i.e. in books, newspapers, conversation, lectures, etc), they are rarely in a complete or rigorous form. As a result, if we wish to understand, analyze or critique an argument, it helps if we first reconstruct it and put it into a clear form. Doing so requires us to identify the premises and conclusions and to arrange them in a way that reveals the logic of the argument. At times, we may have to restate the premises that are found in the text; at times, we may have to fill in the missing steps (i.e. assumptions) of the argument; at times, we may have to separate several premises that are mixed together. Note that just because an argument has missing steps or jumbled premises does not mean that it is fundamentally flawed. Often, the missing step is uncontroversial and we just fill it in automatically. Other times, however, we might take issue with an assumption or a premise and thereby take issue with the argument.

If you conclude that an argument is flawed, you have to decide what to do next. Some options:

- Give an account of why Kant may have failed in giving this particular argument, or of what he is able to show (even if he failed to prove what he set out to prove).
- Step in to defend the argument by filling in the omitted steps, or by showing that he fills in necessary steps at some other point in his text.
- Imagine what Kant would say in response to your evaluation. How would he defend his argument?
- Propose a reason why Kant may have presented or accepted a poor argument (e.g., perhaps he needed the conclusion to follow in order to support some other key feature of his philosophy, but didn't have much invested in this particular feature of his philosophy).

VII. SAMPLE SYLLABUS AND COURSE MATERIALS (cont.)

HANDOUT: KANT'S FORMULA OF UNIVERSAL LAW

Reihman

Two key features of the reading for next week are the two formulations of the Categorical Imperative: the Formula of Universal Law and the Formula of Humanity as an End. The following information pertains to the Formula of Universal Law.

Definition: A maxim is the subjective principle of our action. It is a statement of what we plan to do and why we plan to do it. Maxims take the form "I will do action A in order to achieve purpose P."

Kant initially expresses the categorical imperative as follows: "Act only in accordance with that maxim through which you can at the same time will that it become a universal law" (Kant, *Groundwork*, p. 31). He later re-formulates it to read: "Act as if the maxim of your action were to become by your will a universal law of nature" (Kant, p. 31). These formulations can be seen as tests we use to judge the morality of our actions.

A maxim fails the universal law test if (A) a contradiction arises in the universalization of the maxim or (B) a contradiction arises in *willing* the universalization of the maxim. In some cases, Kant claims that the maxim *cannot* be universalized (it fails A); in other cases he claims the maxim *could* be universalized (it passes A) but we cannot *will* it to be a universalized law (it fails B).

It follows that any time you wish to claim that the maxim you are considering fails A, you need to explain exactly what is contradictory about the universalization of the maxim (i.e., explain why the maxim couldn't be a universal law of nature). Similarly, if you wish to claim that the maxim passes A but fails B, you need to explain why there is nothing contradictory about the universalization of the maxim (i.e., why the maxim could be a universal law of nature) and then explain exactly what is contradictory about *willing* the universalization of the maxim

Note that the following are *not* among the reasons why Kant says that maxims fail:

- We wouldn't *like* living in a world where it is a universal law.
- The maxim *wouldn't* be adopted by everyone.
- It is *unlikely* that everyone would agree to such a maxim.
- If the maxim were universalized, we would lose more than we would gain.
- It is not reasonable to adopt such a maxim.
- We don't have the ability to will universal laws into existence.

If a maxim passes the test, it is permissible; if it fails, it is forbidden and the opposite action is morally required. Note that we also learn something about the maxim from observing how it fails. A maxim that fails A is in some way a violation of a perfect duty (a perfect duty is one we are obligated to do with no exceptions whatsoever). A maxim that fails B in some way involves a violation of an imperfect duty (an imperfect duty is one that is meritorious to do, one we should do when we can, but which we don't have an exceptionless obligation to do). Thus, when a maxim fails A, we learn that the opposite action is morally required with no exceptions whatsoever and when a maxim fails B, we learn that the opposite action is something that we ought to do when we can.

As you read the four examples Kant gives (pp. 31-33), focus on the second and fourth examples (they are more clear than the others). In addition, you can sharpen your understanding of the Formula of Universal Law by walking through the following steps:

- Put the maxim in its correct form ("I will do action A in order to achieve purpose P").
- Give a precise statement of the maxim as it would be if it were a universal law.
- Reconstruct Kant's argument for why this maxim violates the formula of universal law.
- Think of ways to improve on Kant's argument (any of steps 1-3), if necessary.
- Anticipate responses to criticisms of Kant's argument.