

Fall 2026

PHIL 3319: Feminist Philosophy (Hybrid)

Thursdays 12:30-1:45pm | Classroom Hall 307

Instructor

Dr. Merritt Rehn-DeBaal, PhD (she/her)

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Office: CAB 313E

Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 11:00am-12:15pm, or by appointment



Catalog Description

Investigation of themes, questions, and arguments in feminist philosophy. May take a broad approach to the field or focus on a specific theme or area of feminist philosophy. TSI

Restriction(s): Reading, Writing, and Math

Course Theme: Feminist Philosophy of Emotion

What do feminist philosophers have to say about the role of emotion in philosophy, politics, ethics, human flourishing, and life in general? In this course, you will learn more about the fields of feminist philosophy and philosophy of emotion by digging into contemporary feminist work on themes like anger, grief, depression, and happiness.

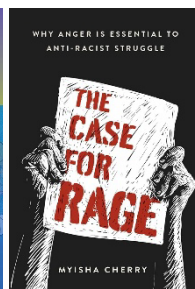
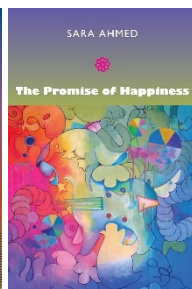
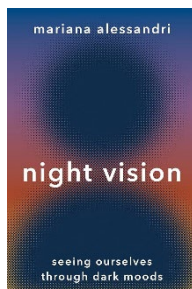
Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of central themes, questions, and arguments in contemporary feminist philosophy of emotion.
- Practice close reading and analysis of philosophical texts.
- Develop philosophical arguments in speaking and in writing.
- Connect and apply course material to contemporary media and social/political issues.

Required Texts

There are **three** required texts for this course. **You will need these texts to do well in this class.** You are welcome to use print or eBooks. You may rent or purchase the texts on your own or access electronic versions of them through the university library for free at the links.



[*Night Vision*](#). Mariana Alessandri. Princeton University Press, 2023

[*The Promise of Happiness*](#). Sara Ahmed. Duke University Press, 2010

[*The Case for Rage*](#). Myisha Cherry. Oxford University Press, 2021

Course Modality

This is a hybrid course that includes required weekly in-person meetings and asynchronous online instructional materials.

Course Requirements

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Reading Journal Entries (10) | 30% of final grade (3% each) |
| 2. Exams (3) | 60% of final grade (20% each) |
| 3. Participation | 10% of final grade |



1. Reading Journal Entries (30% of final grade, 3% each)

Each week that we have new material(s) assigned, you will complete a reading journal entry on Blackboard designed to help you work through course materials, prepare for class discussion, and strengthen your close reading skills. Eleven entries will be offered. At the end of the semester, I will drop your lowest journal entry grade.

2. Exams (60% of final grade, 20% each)

At the end of Units 1 and 2, we will have an in-class exam. These exams are designed to assess your understanding of course material and your ability to analyze, apply, evaluate, and think critically about it. The exam format will be made up of short-answer and/or essay questions.

3. Participation (10% of final grade)

Philosophy happens through dialogue. Active engagement in class is essential to achieving course outcomes and building an effective learning community. To receive full credit for participation, students are expected to: attend all classes on time; carefully read and reflect on assigned materials before class; bring print or electronic copies of texts to class; listen attentively to instructor and peers during class; engage constructively with classmates; participate in large or small group discussion; stay on task during class and refrain from being disruptive; and complete any in-class activities.

Grading Scale

A = 90–100%

B = 80–89%

C = 70–79%

D = 60–69%

F = <60%

Course Policies

Attendance



You are allowed **two free absences**. Any additional absences, regardless of reason, will result in a **20% deduction** to your participation grade unless you complete an attendance makeup assignment. Arriving late or leaving early will count as half an absence. You are responsible for all material covered in class regardless of attendance.

What Should You Do If You Need to Miss Class?

In most cases, you do not need to contact me or send an explanation for missing class. Instead, do the following:

1. **Check Blackboard** for in-class materials (See Week # > Instructional Materials)
2. **Contact a classmate** for notes, if possible
3. **Email** or drop by my office hours **if you have additional questions** or if you're missing multiple classes and we need to create a plan to keep you caught up
4. **Complete attendance makeup assignment(s)** during finals week to avoid participation penalties, if needed.

Due Dates and Late Work Policy



You are allowed a **12-hour grace period** on all reading journal entries. This means these assignments are not considered late until 12 hours after the listed due date/time. Assignments submitted after that time will be accepted **up to five days late** with a penalty of **10% per day late** unless you have an approved extension. Assignments will not be accepted more than five days late without an approved extension. Assignments submitted after the original due date will not receive written feedback.

How to Request an Extension

To request an extension beyond the grace period, use this form: [Extension Request Form](#).

Extension requests will ONLY be accepted using this form. Within two business days of submitting your request, you should receive an email from me confirming whether your request has been approved. No explanation is required unless specifically requested. Extensions aren't guaranteed. I typically approve most requests if these criteria are met:

- Request is submitted correctly and all necessary information is included
- Request is submitted BEFORE due date (late requests considered on case-by-case basis)
- Requested due date will not put you too far behind
- You are making satisfactory progress in the course and turning in most work on time

Makeup Exams

For makeup exam requests, contact me directly right away. Exams 1 and 2 must be made up within **ten days** of the original exam using the testing center. For Exam 3 (due during finals week) there will be a shorter window for makeups. Students taking makeup exams will receive an alternative version of the exam.

Communication

The best way to contact me is by **email** (mdebraal@tamusa.edu) or Blackboard message. I do my best to respond to all emails/messages within two business days. If you don't hear back from me within that time frame, please check in with me again in case I missed your message. All correspondence must occur via university email accounts or Blackboard. Make sure to check your university email regularly.



Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-San Antonio are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, multiple submissions, misrepresentation of academic records, facilitating academic dishonesty, unfair advantage, violating known safety requirements, and ethical misconduct. You are responsible for being familiar with the Academic Misconduct Policy, which may be found in the Texas A&M University-San Antonio Student Handbook.



University policy prescribes serious consequences for acts of academic misconduct including, but not limited to, **a grade of F on the assignment or a failing grade in the course**. Also, a referral may be issued to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities where the sanctions can vary up to possible expulsion from the University. If you are struggling with an assignment or have questions about how to acknowledge sources in your work, get in touch with me. For additional resources, see [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#).

AI Policy for Our Course

Use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, Copilot, Gemini, etc.) is **NOT allowed on any assignments for our course**. This course assumes that all work you submit is generated by you. This means that your work should be based on your own reading, thinking, and understanding. Use of any AI-generated content in this course qualifies as academic dishonesty and violates Texas A&M-San Antonio's standards of academic integrity.

Background/Reasoning. In this course we are working on skills in critical thinking, close reading of texts, evaluating arguments, and understanding complex philosophical concepts. These skills are increasingly important as we navigate continued developments in AI. At the same time, misuse of AI can keep us from developing these skills. For the purposes of our course, we need to work on generating our own questions, arguments, and perspectives without reliance on generative AI. Doing so will ensure we are developing the skills needed to use AI effectively and responsibly.

Personal Technology

It is important that we all be present and engaged in the classroom to foster a productive learning environment and develop our philosophical thinking. **Use of personal electronics, such as phones and laptops, should be limited as much as possible during class.** If possible, please plan to **print** any readings, notes, and assignments that you need to refer to during class and bring paper and a pen or pencil to take notes. If you do need to use technology in class, make sure that it is for **class purposes only**. If you are using technology in a way that is off task, distracting to me or to your classmates, or otherwise disruptive to the learning environment, this may negatively impact your participation grade, and you may be asked to put your electronics away, leave the classroom, and/or refrain from using any personal technology in class.

Syllabus Note

In this and other philosophy courses, all texts are open to critique. You will not be required to adopt any particular beliefs, and you will be evaluated on your mastery of skills and concepts, not personal beliefs. The readings and topics covered in this course reflect disciplinary standards for the field of feminist philosophy. This includes discussion of race and gender as a necessary component of this subfield, as established by multiple sources, including the American Philosophical Association, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, and a wide range of peer-reviewed academic journals, texts, and anthologies. Should you have concerns about any of the materials in this course, please reach out to me for an explanation of why these materials are included and to discuss strategies for completing the work in a manner that meets course objectives.

University Policies and Resources

For additional university policies and resources, see syllabus addendum on Blackboard.

COURSE SCHEDULE

NV = *Night Vision*, Mariana Alessandri
 PH = *The Promise of Happiness*, Sara Ahmed
 CFR = *The Case for Rage*, Myisha Cherry
 BB = on Blackboard (see weekly module)

*Page numbers based on print editions. See assigned chapters/sections if yours differ.
 Assignments are due by 11:59pm on the dates listed unless otherwise indicated.

Unit 1: Digging Into Dark Moods		
Week 1 8/27	Introduction	THURS 8/27 (in class) Read Syllabus

Week 2 9/3	The Light Metaphor & Dolor	By WEDS 9/2 View Instructional materials (BB) Read NV, p. 1-14, 48-74 (Introduction: Doubting the Light & Ch. 2: I Suffer, Therefore I am) Journal Entry due
Week 3 9/10	Grief	By WEDS 9/9 View Instructional materials (BB) Read NV, p. 75-101 (Ch. 3: Grieving Stubbornly) Journal Entry due
Week 4 9/17	Depression & Anxiety	By WEDS 9/16 View Instructional materials (BB) Read NV, p. 102-132, 133-146 (Ch. 4: Recoloring Depression & Ch. 5: Learning to Be Anxious: Beginning of chapter to "...that won't tolerate anxiety.") Journal Entry due
Week 5 9/24	Anxiety & Applying Night Vision	By WEDS 9/23 View Instructional materials (BB) Read NV, p. 133-170 (Ch 5. Learning to Be Anxious: "We're even responsible..." to end of chapter & Conclusion: Practicing Night Vision) Journal Entry due
Week 6 10/1	Unit 1 Assessment	THURS 10/1 (in class) Exam 1

Unit 2: Exploring Happiness

Week 7 10/8	Defining Happiness	By WEDS 10/7 View Instructional materials (BB) Read PH, p. 1-45 (Introduction: Why Happiness, Why Now? & Ch. 1: Happy Objects: Beginning of chapter to "...will bear the promise of happiness.") Journal Entry due
Week 8 10/15	Questioning Happiness	By WEDS 10/14 View Instructional materials (BB) Read PH, p. 45-87 (Ch. 1: Happy Objects, "I have suggested that..." to end of chapter & Ch. 2: Feminist Killjoys) Journal Entry due

Week 9 10/22	Rethinking Happiness	By WEDS 10/21 View Instructional materials (BB) Read PH, p. 199-223 (Conclusion: Happiness, Ethics, Possibility) Journal Entry due
Week 10 10/29	Unit 2 Assessment	THURS 10/29 (in class) Exam 2

Unit 3: Analyzing Anger		
Week 11 11/5	Defining Rage	By WEDS 11/4 View Instructional materials (BB) Read CFR, p. 1-32 (Introduction & Ch. 1: Painting in Broad Strokes) Journal Entry due
Week 12 11/12	Analyzing Rages	By WEDS 11/11 View Instructional materials (BB) Read CFR, p. 33-60 (Ch. 2: Fitting Fury, Rightful Rage) Journal Entry due
Week 13 11/19	Positive Uses of Rage	By WEDS 11/18 View Instructional materials (BB) Read CFR, p. 139-170 (Ch. 6: Anger Management & Ch. 7: The End of Rage?) Journal Entry due
Week 14: No Class Meeting 11/26—Thanksgiving Break		
Week 15 12/3	Synthesis & Reflection	WEDS 12/2 View Instructional materials (BB) Read Ahmed, "Killjoy Survival Kit" (BB) Journal Entry due
Finals Week 12/5–12/11	Unit 3 Assessment	By THURS 12/10 Exam 3 due (complete at testing center) Attendance Makeup Assignments due (for students with 3 or more absences only)

Note: Any changes to the schedule or syllabus will be communicated in class and through Blackboard.