Conflict of Ideas: How To Fight Fair

1 Course Information

- Course number: PHI 1001.

- Lecture:

    - Mondays and Wednesdays, Period 3 (11:00 AM - 12:15 PM).
    - Location: Little Hall, room 101

- Discussion:

    - Class 15759 (section 400A, TA):
        * Tuesdays and Thursdays, Period 3 (11:00 AM - 12:15 PM)
        * Anderson Hall 019
    - Class 15760 (section 400B, TA):
        * Tuesdays and Thursdays, Period 4 (12:30 PM - 1:45 PM)
        * Anderson Hall 019
    - Class 15761 (Section 400C, TA):
        * Tuesdays and Thursdays, Period 3 (9:30 AM - 10:45AM)
        * Anderson Hall 0032
    - Class 15762 (Section 400D, TA):
        * Tuesdays and Thursdays, Period 4 (12:30 PM - 1:45 PM)
        * Matherly Hall 0012
    - Class 15763 (Section 400E, TA):
        * Tuesdays and Thursdays, Period 3 (11:00 AM - 12:15 PM)
        * Matherly Hall 011
    - Class 15765 (Section 400F, TA):
        * Tuesdays and Thursdays, Period 4 (12:30 PM - 1:45 PM)
        * Matherly Hall 011

- Instructor:

    - Rodrigo Borges
    - Office: Griffin–Floyd Hall, room 314.

- – Office Hours: Mondays 1:00pm - 3:00pm (or by appointment).
  - – Contact Information: rodrigo.borges@ufl.edu.

- Teaching Assistants:
  - – Saranteas Panagiotis
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    - * Office hours: Mondays and Wednesdays (12:30PM - 2:00PM)
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  - – Micah Edvenson
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  - – Javier Garcia
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2 Course Description

It's been suggested that war is the continuation of politics by different means (Klaus von Clausewitz). Some took that suggestion to mean that politics was the continuation of war by other means (Lenin). But, if war and politics are simply different ways in which we handle disagreement between people, within nations, and between nations, the analogy seems reasonable. War and politics sit at different ends of the same spectrum - ways in which we disagree. But, if the choice between the conflict of ideas and real conflict is so obvious (politics harm ideas, while wars harm real people), why do real conflicts keep happening? How can we understand what happens when people disagree-especially when they disagree about important or emotionally powerful issues? How can we resolve our disagreements in a principled fashion? Since the issues are important, we cannot just agree to disagree: we must learn how to have a fair fight. But how do we fight fair on the battleground of ideas?

The focus of the course will be on the conflict of ideas, and on how students can make a positive and lasting impact on the conflicts they will encounter in their own lives. To that end, students will learn about multiple aspects of intellectual conflict: psychological aspects of conflict that stand in the way of conscientious dialogue, questions about rhetoric and its role in manipulation, facing and working with our own cognitive limitations, and structuring debate and dialogue in a way that should help us make progress without simply compromising for the sake of peace. They will also practice and witness intellectual disagreements as they debate their fellow students and observe others engage in intellectual disagreement. In virtue of the complexity of the social phenomenon that is intellectual disagreement, students will be exposed to readings in multiple disciplines. Those include the disciplines of economics, statistics, history, feminist ethics, psychology, linguistics, computer science, philosophy, biology, and theology (see schedule for details). Assignments include short argumentative essays, reports on observed conflicts, and practicing and evaluating in-class debates.

3   Course Delivery

This course is an online class focused on the written and spoken exchange of ideas. Students will be engaged through class discussion with the instructor and TAs with one another, as well as through comments from instructor and TAs on their written work. Weekly office hours offer additional opportunities for personal engagement with the class materials.

4   Quest 1 and Gen Ed Descriptions And Student Learning Outcomes

Quest 1 Description

Quest 1 courses are multidisciplinary explorations of essential questions about the human condition that are not easy to answer, but also not easy to ignore: What makes life worth living? What makes a society a fair one? How do we manage conflicts? Who are we in relation to other people or to the natural world? To grapple with the kinds of open-ended and complex intellectual challenges they will face as critical, creative, and self- reflective adults navigating a complex and interconnected world, Quest 1 students apply approaches from the humanities to mine works for evidence, create arguments, and articulate ideas.

Quest 1 SLOs

– Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine essential questions about the human condition within and across the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Content).

– Analyze and evaluate essential questions about the human condition using established practices appropriate for the arts and humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Critical Thinking).

– Connect course content with critical reflection on their intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection).

– Develop and present clear and effective responses to essential questions in oral and written forms as appropriate to the relevant humanities disciplines incorporated into the course (Communication).

Humanities Description

Humanities courses provide instruction in the history, key themes, principles, terminology, and theory or methodologies used within a humanities discipline or the humanities in general. Students will learn to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

Humanities SLOs

– Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used in the course (Content).

- Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives (Critical Thinking).
- Communicate knowledge, thoughts and reasoning clearly and effectively (Communication).

A link to the General Education Subject Area Objectives can be found here:

https://undergrad.aa.ufl.edu/general-education/gen-ed-program/subject-area-objectives/

Writing Description

The Writing Requirement (WR) ensures students both maintain their fluency in writing and use writing as a tool to facilitate learning. The writing course grade assigned by the instructor has two components: the writing component and a course grade. **To receive writing credit a student must satisfactorily complete all the assigned written work and receive a minimum grade of C (2.0) for the course.** It is possible to not meet the writing requirement and still earn a minimum grade of C in a class, so students should review their degree audit after receiving their grade to verify receipt of credit for the writing component.

Writing Evaluation

- This course carries 2000 words that count towards the UF Writing Requirement. You must turn in all written work counting towards the 2000 words in order to receive credit for those words.
- The instructor will evaluate and provide feedback on the student's written work with respect to content, organization and coherence, argument and support (when appropriate), style, clarity, grammar, punctuation, and other mechanics, using a published writing rubric (see syllabus pages 12-14).
- More specific rubrics and guidelines for individual assignments may be provided during the course of the semester.

5   Course Objectives And Goals

Student Learning Outcomes

Reflecting the curricular structures of Quest 1 and these Gen Ed designations, after taking War and Peace students will be able to:

1. Identify, describe, and explain the history, theories, and methodologies used to examine disagreement and conflict of ideas within and across philosophy, history, science, politics, and religion (Content SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1).
2. Analyze and evaluate essential questions about intellectual disagreement using logic and its argument-evaluation techniques, conceptual analysis, and the historiography of ideas (Critical Thinking SLOs for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1).
3. Analyze, evaluate, and critically reflect on connections between the philosophical, historical and moral aspects of intellectual disagreement and the student's intellectual, personal, and professional development at UF and beyond (Connection SLO for Q1).

4. Develop and present clear and effective responses to disagreement and intellectual conflict in oral debates and in written format (Communication SLO for Gen Ed Humanities and Q1).

To see how assigned work advances each SLO, go to section 9 below.

6   Required Textbook And Materials

All the materials are available on Canvas.

Recommended Reading

1. A terrific guide to general writing rules is Strunk and White's 'The Elements of Style.' The first edition is available online for free: http://www.bartleby.com/141/.
2. A more recent style manual is Steven Pinker's 'Sense of Style: The Thinking Person's Guide to Writing in the 21st Century.' The book can be found anywhere books are sold.
3. The philosopher Jim Pryor (UNC) has his suggestions on how to read philosophy freely available here; he has also published suggestions on how to write philosophy here.

7   Grade Distribution And Grading Policies

Five different instruments will be used in order to measure student progress through the course. The name of each instrument, and the relative weight each of them carries in determining your final grade is the following; a brief description of each instrument follows.

A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit.

Assignment	Total Number	% of Course Grade
Attendance	12	10%
Midterm	1	20%
Final	1	20%
Group Projects	3-5	15%
Interview	1	15%
Paper	1	20%

7.1   Attendance

Starting Wednesday 7/3 (after the drop/add period) attendance will be taken and expected. During lectures, attendance will be taken using the iClicker system. For information on this system, please see: https://classrooms.at.ufl.edu/classroom-technology/iclicker-response-system/ .

You will use the iClicker Student application, either on a smartphone or a computer. You must register your clicker as soon as possible, but certainly before 7/3.

Everybody has one (1) free, no questions asked absence. After that, every unjustified absence will cost you 10% of your attendance grade. More than three unjustified absences (these include the free one) will earn you a zero for your attendance grade.

In order to justify your absence, you must visit this webpage and fill out the online form: https://care.dso.ufl.edu/instructor-notifications/.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

7.2   Midterm

There will be a in class midterm covering the material in the first half of the course. Questions will be distributed beforehand, but the exam will be closed books.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4

7.3   Final

There will be a in class final exam covering the material in the second half of the course. Questions will be distributed beforehand, but the exam will be closed books.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4

7.4   Group Projects

This assignment will be lead by your TA during discussion sessions.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4.

7.5   Interview

Students will conduct 1 interview and write 1 report (1000-1200 words), which will count towards the 2000 word General Education requirement. *YOU MUST SUBMIT THE REPORT IN ORDER TO SATISFY THIS REQUIREMENT.*Individual project in which you interview someone outside of class and provide a report on the results. Here is a step-by-step description of the assignment:

1. Select someone you know to disagree with you on something you take seriously enough that each of you think the other is missing something important.

2. Get permission from that person to report on their views.

3. Conduct the interview with the goal of learning the reasons they have for their view. Take notes and/or record the interview.

4. Write a report concerning what you found out about the source of your disagreement. The report must specify (i) what it is you disagree about, (ii) what you think leads to that disagreement, (iii) how you think you might proceed if you were trying to resolve the disagreement, and (iv) your reflections on what you've learned about how you've formed your own views on that issue.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4

7.6 Paper

Students will write one (1) paper (1000-1200 words), which will count towards the 2000 word General Education requirement. *YOU MUST SUBMIT THIS ASSIGNMENT IN ORDER TO SATISFY THIS REQUIREMENT.* This paper is argumentative in nature and require students to make their own case. Grades will be assigned accordingly. Topics will be provided.

This paper will be accompanied by a video that explains the main ideas and arguments in the paper.

All writing assignments must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman. You must include a word-count at the top of your first page. Please also include your UF ID number. Do NOT include your name on the assignment.

Advances SLOs: 1, 2, 3, 4

Grading Scale

See UF grading policies for assigning grade points at:

– https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx.

	Grade Scale	Grade Value
A	100 - 93	4.00
A-	92 - 90	3.67
B+	89 - 86	3.33
B	85 - 82	3.00
B-	81 - 79	2.67
C+	78 - 75	2.33
C	74 - 72	2.00
C-	71 - 69	1.67
D+	68 - 66	1.33
D	65 - 62	1.00
D-	61 - 60	0.67
E	59 - 0	0.00

8 Course Policies And Student Resources

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, 'We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for c edit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: 'On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.' The Honor Code

– http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/

specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of 'E' for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: 'A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to):

a) Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution.

b) Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student.'

Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

Making Up Work

Work is due as specified on Canvas. Work that is turned in late will incur a penalty unless you have a valid excuse. See the university policies, here, for what counts as a valid excuse.

Students Requiring Accommodations

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations https://evaluations.ufl.edu. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/.

Use of Electronics In The Classroom

Electronic devices must be turned off and placed in closed bags for the duration of the class.

Writing Studio

The writing studio is committed to helping University of Florida students meet their academic and professional goals by becoming better writers. Visit the writing studio online here or in 302 Tigert Hall for one-on-one consultations and workshops.

Participation and Attendance

You must come to class on time and prepared. This means keeping current on the reading assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities, as presented in this syllabus, discussed in class, and announced on the course website. It also means bringing the day's reading to class with you. Consistent high-quality class participation—in large and small groups—is expected. 'High-quality' in this case means:

1. Informed (i.e., shows evidence of having done assigned work),
2. Thoughtful (i.e., shows evidence of having understood and considered issues raised in readings and other discussions), and
3. Considerate (e.g., takes the perspectives of others into account).

If you have personal issues that prohibit you from joining freely in class discussion, e.g., shyness, language barriers, etc., see the instructor as soon as possible to discuss alternative modes of participation.
Absences will affect any student's ability to perform well in this course. Attendance will taken (see required work below).
These expectations are consistent with university policies that can be found here.

9 Class Schedule (subject to change)

1. **Week 1: Logic and Argumentation**

   - **6/30 (Mon, Lecture)**   Course overview, Primer on Logic and Argumentation
     * Reading (required): Syllabus
     * Reading (required): Perry et al "Logical Toolkit", p. 8-16
     * Reading (suggested): Jim Pryor Reading Guidelines
     * Reading (suggested): Jim Pryor Writing Guidelines
   - **7/1 (Tue, Discussion)**   Open Q&A
   - **7/2 (Wed, Lecture)**   Primer on Logic and Argumentation
     * Reading (required): Perry et al "Logical Toolkit", p. 16-25
   - **7/3 (Thu, Discussion)**   Group work

2. **Week 2: Foundations of Human Mind**

   - **7/7 (Mon, Lecture)**   The architecture of the human mind: heuristics and biases
     * Reading (required): Kahneman "The Characters of the Story"
     * Reading (suggested): Kahneman "Attention and Effort"
   - **7/8 (Tue, Discussion)**   Discussion
   - **7/9 (Wed, Lecture)**   The evolution of argumentation
     * Reading (required): Kahneman "The Lazy Controller"
     * Reading (suggested): Sperber and Mercier "Why is Reasoning Biased?"
   - **7/10 (Thu, Discussion)**   MIDTERM REVIEW

3. **Week 3: Foundations of Artificial Mind**

   - **7/14 (Mon, Lecture)**   MIDTERM EXAM

- – **7/15 (Tue, Discussion)** Midterm debrief
- – **7/16 (Wed, Lecture)** The architecture of AI: attention and transformers
    - * Reading (required): [YouTube Video](https://youtu.be/eMlx5fFNoYc?si=MkitnYELUQ2Gfopc)
    - * Reading (required): Lindsay "Attention in Psychology, Neuroscience, and Machine Learning"
    - * Reading (suggested): [IBM Transformer Model](https://www.ibm.com/think/topics/transformer-model)
    - * Reading (suggested): Vaswani et al "Attention is All You Need"
- – **7/17 (Thu, Discussion)** Group work

4. **Week 4: The Ethics of AI and Argumentation**

- – 7/20 (Sunday): Interview Report is due 11:59PM
- – **7/21 (Mon, Lecture)** Some ethical principles of argumentation
    - * Reading (required): Aikin "A Defense of War and Sport Metaphors in Argument"
    - * Reading (suggested): [Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy: War](https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/v
    - * Reading (suggested): [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Just War Theory](https://iep.utm.edu/jus
- – **7/22 (Tue, Discussion)** discussion
- – **7/23 (Wed, Lecture)** AI, trust, and Alignment
    - * Reading (required): Sahebi and Formosa "The AI-mediated communication dilemma: epistemic trust, social media, and the challenge of generative artificial intelligence"
    - * Reading (suggested): Kasirzadeh and Gabriel "In Conversation with Artificial Intelligence"
    - * Reading (suggested): Bostrom "Information Hazard"
    - * Reading (suggested): Ballantyne "Epistemic Trespassing"
    - * Reading (suggested): Nguyen "Ecco Chamber"
- – **7/24 (Thu, Discussion)** Group work

5. **Week 5: The Ethics of AI and Warfare**

- – **7/28 (Mon, Lecture)** Some ethical principles of war
    - * Reading (required): [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Just War Theory](https://iep.utm.edu/just
    - * Reading (suggested): Deontologism vs Utilitarianism
    - * Reading (suggested): Anscombe "Mr. Truman's Degree"
- – **7/29 (Tue, Discussion)** Discussion
- – **7/30 (Wed, Lecture)** algorithms, policing, and weapons
    - * Reading (required): Sparrow "Killer Robots"
    - * Reading (suggested): reply to Sparrow
    - * Reading (suggested): reply to Sparrow
    - * Reading (suggested): [YouTube Video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ooMXEwl7N8Y)
- – **7/31 (Thu, Discussion)** Group work

6. **Week 6: Conclusion**

- – 8/3 (Sunday): Paper is due 11:59PM
- – **8/4 (Mon, Lecture)** The human mind, the artificial mind, and conflict
- – **8/5 (Tue, Discussion)** Final review

- **8/6 (Wed, Lecture)**   FINAL EXAM
- **8/7 (Thu, Discussion)**   Final debrief
- 8/11 (Monday) Grades are due