

SATURDAY ENRICHMENT SPRING 2019
PHILOSOPHY AND IDENTITY:
“WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE ME?”

Instructor: Drue Miller
Instructor Email: druem@uw.edu
Location: Loew Hall 217

Course Description

What is an idea? Is my identity consistent, even if I change? How do we decide what's important? Open and non-judgmental discussions allow us to sincerely explore the realm of possible answers to such reflective questions. Whether new to or acquainted with philosophy, this course utilizes these and other challenging inquiries to enhance critical thinking, clarification, and reasoning abilities. Through engaging activities, children's books, and thought-provoking images, we will inquire on the nature of reality, dreams, knowledge, emotions, and what it means to be us.

Essential Questions

- What factors separate me from everyone else?
- How much does identity matter?
- What does agency, free will, and consciousness have to do with identity?
- Does free will exist?
- Can consciousness be shared?
- Can a person have multiple identities?

Learning Outcomes

Students will understand . . .

- How to respectfully interpret and genuinely analyze ideas that are different than their own to gain a better understanding of rationality and the world around them.

Students will know...

- How to reflect on important questions and answer with critical responses.
- How to strategically uncover better answers to complex issues, both individually and as a collective.

Students will be able to . . .

- Address complicated and reflective questions with clear and thoughtful responses.

Instructional Strategies

Each class will include a conversation inspired by an activity or story. Questions suggested by a student or the facilitator in response to an activity or story will begin an open discussion on philosophical topics. There are no firm objectives set by the instructor in these discussions, so a conversation about heroism could easily turn into a discussion about liberty. The direction of the conversation is up to the students! This is so the students may gain the most out of having an open discussion rather than limiting the discussion to a specific goal. The schedule of activities posted are subject to change, especially if a topic brought up in class makes for a different activity to be more worthwhile in the next class meeting. Otherwise, the themes will be rather consistent.

Student Assessment

Much of the student assessment will be based on in-class participation in discussions. Still, students will have opportunities to write down their thoughts about in-class topics and other philosophical material. Illustrations, notes, and random questions are permitted and encouraged! Our class time is short, so any additional questions or comments are happily accepted by the instructor via email.

Resources and Materials

Please bring the following each day:

- A pencil/pen
- Philosophy Journal: This could be a composition book, 3-ring binder, or folder with lined or blank paper, whatever you prefer.

Tentative Course Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	In-Class Activities
Week 1 - April 6	Introduction to Philosophy	What does “Philosophy” make you think of? Two Truths and a False Game
Week 2 - April 13	Logic and Identity	Why Game
Week 3 - April 27	Identity and Consciousness Collective Identity	Star Trek: I am Borg Collective and individual consciousness
Week 4 – May 4	Personal Identity Alternate Identities	Why do we wear costumes? Super heroes: Superman vs. Other Heroes
Week 5 – May 11	Artificial Intelligence	Hitchhiker’s Guide
Week 6 – May 18	Freedom and Identity	Recap of concepts, common issues, and themes The wolf and the dog
Week 7 – June 1	Personal Identities Revisited	I am Jazz What makes me “me”?
Week 8 – June 8	Identity Politics	Who makes the rules?