

ELON UNIVERSITY

Fall 2015

Ethical Practices

PHIL 212B

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MW: 3:35-5:15

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My motivation:

*“...it is quite simple: I would hope that in the eyes of some people it might be sufficient in itself. It was curiosity—the only kind of curiosity, in any case, that is worth acting upon with a degree of obstinacy: not the curiosity that seeks to assimilate what it is proper for one to know, but that which enables one to get free of oneself. After all, what would be the value of the passion for knowledge if it resulted only in a certain amount of knowledgeableness and not, in one way or another and to the extent possible, in the knower’s straying afield of himself? There are times in life when the question of knowing if one can think differently than one thinks, and perceive differently than one sees, is absolutely necessary if one is to go on looking and reflecting at all. People will say, perhaps, that these games with oneself would be better left backstage; or, at best, that they might properly form part of those preliminary exercises that are forgotten once they have served their purpose. But, then, what is philosophy today—philosophical activity, I mean—if it is not the critical work that thought brings to bear on itself? In what does it consist, if not in the endeavor to know how and to what extent it might be possible to think [and act] differently, instead of legitimating what is already known? There is always something ludicrous in philosophical discourse when it tries, from the outside, to dictate to others, to tell them where their truth is and how to find it, or when it works up a case against them in the language of naïve positivity. But it is entitled to explore what might be changed, in its own thought, through the practice of a knowledge that is foreign to it. The “essay”—which should be understood as the assay or test by which, in the game of truth, one undergoes changes, and not as the simplistic appropriation of others for the purpose of communication—is the living substance of philosophy, at least if we assume that philosophy is what it was in times past, i.e., an “ascesis,” askesis, an exercise of oneself in the activity of thought.” (Michel Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. II*, 8-9)*

The name of this class is *Ethical Practices*. To understand what this class will entail, let us take this name seriously. First, a question: What is a practice? A practice is a kind of activity, like an exercise; it is something we do regularly and repeatedly. Think about practicing piano or going to soccer practice. As an activity, it is not separable from the act of playing the piano or playing soccer. In order to engage in a practice, or to practice *at* something, one must perform a set of structurally oriented activities, e.g., practicing musical scales, practicing kicking a soccer ball. This is key: it is not possible to abstract the practice from a practitioner. Practices are meant to transform us, not produce something else separable from us. The more I practice piano, the more I am transformed into a piano player. The aim of our practices is to change us. This is why, rather than seeing ethics as a set of theories, we will attempt to view ethics from the perspective of practices. Ethics is something we do; it concerns how we act, speak, and think with others and with ourselves. Ethical practice entails a series of activities that seek to transform. Ethics is something we do regularly and repeatedly, and we can get better at it through practice. One of the major goals for this course is thus quite high: I want to help you become better, more ethical citizens of the world. This class seeks to transform you.

To do this, we engage three kinds of ethical practices: (1) *Listening*, (2) *Walking*, and (3) *Eating* (philosophy itself will be an overarching fourth practice). These practices are centered on our human senses. Listening engages our sense of hearing, walking engages our senses of touch and sight, and eating engages our sense of taste and smell. The last practice calls us into awareness of what we, as a philosophy class, are doing when we do philosophy. From beginning to end, these practices exude a commitment to empirical sensation. These forms of engagement each take three-four weeks. Each of these is not a singular practice, but is instead a gathering of

sub-practices. The practice of listening, for example, does not have only one form, for there is potentially an infinite amount of ways of listening. There is no one way to listen. So, we orient ourselves by three terms – listening, walking, and eating – with the understanding that these practices have myriad forms.

Goals of the course

There are three main goals for this course. **(1) *To make practice explicit in theory and act.*** We do this by prioritizing practice, that is, we first try to actually do things, to enact practice, and then secondarily think about the conceptual structures and distinctions embedded in these practices. The course is thus organized so that we use philosophical texts in order to help us appreciate what it means for our lives to be oriented and structured as a series of interlocking practices. **(2) *To understand and appreciate what it means to be an Elon student.*** I want you to consider this period in your life as a practice, one that has a long history before you and will imply a long history after you. To do this, I want us to think about being an Elon student as itself a practice. To be a university student at a school like Elon, in this part of the U.S.A., at this time in history, is a spatio-temporally defined practice, like all practices. It has a beginning (convocation), and it will have an end (graduation). You will no longer be an Elon student when you stop engaging in the practice of doing the sorts of things that an Elon student does. Now comes the important point: the *practice of being an Elon student assumes and affects a wide network of other practices*. To be able to walk along campus paths, to eat at the cafeterias, to use the restroom, to stay warm in the winter and cool in the summer, to register for classes, to call someone for help when you are sick or in danger, etc. implies vast number of other practices that often go unnoticed or at least underappreciated. The practice of being an Elon student thus assumes many other practices, e.g., the practice of a custodian, a service worker, a groundskeeper, a secretary, a nurse, a dean, a president, an accounts, and so many more! Just think of all the practices that are assumed by your practice. This means that *no practice exists alone*. Your life is directly and indirectly connected to practices that you might not explicitly consider in thought but presuppose in action. Similarly, your practice influences other practices. The way you live your life affects the live of your peers, partners, professors, gardeners, administrators, campus police, the townspeople of Elon and Burlington, etc. How you live your life directly and indirectly affects how others live their lives. This is one of the *ethical* parts of this class: to explicitly connect your practice with the varying other practices that you either assume or affect. **(3) *To appreciate and comprehend subjectivity as a practice.*** This is more of a philosophical goal. While the definition of subjectivity is complicated, it is sufficient for now to equate subjectivity with selfhood. A subject is what we mean when we say “I” or “you.” It is the kernel of I-ness that gathers what we are into a selfsame thing. A subject, in short, is a self. It is what you refer to when you reflect on your-self, on who you are as a person. One of our goals is to provoke us into thinking about ourselves not as givens, which can be assumed, but as products composed of practices. To be a self, a subject, is thus to engage in a certain sort of practice, or a set of practices. What differentiates you from me, or you from anyone else, is a practice-difference. You and I are different because we practice differently, and yet we are both subjects insofar as we engage in subjective practices. This implies something bold: *We are composed of practices, from top to bottom*. There is nothing that we do that is not a practice. Everything we do has a history behind it and implies a future after it. This class is thus meant to bring out your relation to yourself as a practice. I want you to see and to appreciate that your life is oriented and structured by a set of practices. Once you do this, I then want you to evaluate these practices. For the practices in which you engage produces the kind of life you lead. This class is thus meant to be empowering. I want this class to empower you to be able to be aware of specific and concrete ways that you can shift your practices so that you can live the kind of life you seek to live.

Evaluation of students: The total possible points for this class is *1000 points*.

“As to those for whom to work hard, to begin and begin again, to attempt and be mistaken, to go back and rework everything from top to bottom, and still find reason to hesitate from one step to the next -- as to those, in short, for whom to work in the midst of uncertainty and apprehension is tantamount to failure, all I can say is that we are not from the same planet.” (Foucault, *History of Sexuality Vol. II*, 7)

Writing projects: You are asked to write two kinds of projects. (1) The first kind is a series of weekly writings. These writings will vary, and will be tailored to match the focus of the week. They will be graded as a $\checkmark+$, \checkmark , or $\checkmark-$. (150 points total for these or 15% of the grade.) (2) The second kind of writing will act as what other classes call “midterm exams.” This is a two-page philosophical essay about each of the three practices – one essay for listening, one for walking, one for eating. Each of these assignments will be different, and they are explained in more detail below. (These are worth 150 points or 15% of the grade, making the total for all three essays 450 points or 45% of the grade.)

Final Exam: The final exam asks you to philosophically reflect on the practices in which you were engaged throughout the semester. Basically, you should try to determine what it is that we will have done for our 3.5 months together by answering this question: *What do we do when we practice philosophy?* From the perspective of the end of the semester, we will step back and try to situate our practices in as large a schema as possible. You will try to discern such things as the explicit articulation of the goals that have oriented and guided all the practices. Or you will try to figure out which assumptions, motivations, or social-political-cultural presuppositions lie at the base of all of these practices. In a sense, you will try to extract and consider the overall trajectory of our lives in practice with the hope of developing a more whole, complete, and sophisticated understanding of the ways we live. To do this, you should collect the three exam essays you wrote for each practice and rewrite them so as to construct a single, continuous exploration of the experience and meaning of ethical practice (which should be about 8-pages long). Let’s call this your *Manual of Practice* (or something along those lines). You will most likely have to adjust each essay so that the final paper will read smoothly, convincingly and coherently transitioning between sections of the Manual. To do this, *you must add a new introduction and conclusion to the beginning and end of the entire final paper*, which will serve as bookends, and should offer the ultimate rationality and continuity for the paper. The new introduction and conclusion is mostly where you will perform your philosophical reflection on the way which philosophy itself can be an ethical practice. That is, you will “do philosophy” insofar as you will reflect on the ways in which you engaged in our three ethical practices. To assist you in this, I ask that you acquire a small notebook, sized so as to fit in a pocket or purse and can inconspicuously be taken out or put away with ease. This is explained more below, this is where you will record observations, thoughts, reflections, and questions that will be based on the readings. You will *collect these questions and add them as an appendix to your manual*. (200 points or 20% of the grade.)

Midterm Meetings: We will have two midterm meetings this semester – a walking meeting and an eating meeting. (1) During October 1-7, I will take a walk with each student. During our walk we will reflect on each person’s performance in the class up to that point. Since part of the argument of this course is that everything we do can be viewed as a practice, we will take a moment to view the class itself as a practice while engaging in the practice of walking. This discussion can be very open-ended, and you may even partner up with one or several classmates, if you think that this will help you express the quality and value of your practice of philosophy in our course. The grade will be based on a few factors: a genuine attempt to philosophically engage the meaning of practice, the growth of your thinking about practice, evidence of the implementation of course discussions and lessons in your inter- and extra-classroom practices, and indication of your efforts to improve both your and others’ practice of living. The evidence for these factors should be grounded in your manual. You should thus bring your manual with you, along with a copy (for me) of your notes and questions thus far recorder therein, so that we can discuss the development of your manual. (2) During November 9-13, I will eat with each student, and again, you partner up with one or several classmates.. We can eat in various ways, e.g., we can go to an on-campus cafeteria, get coffee, try an off-campus restaurant, have a picnic, or something much more creative. While we eat, we will reflect on each person’s performance in the class up to that point, again with the aim to view the class itself as a practice while engaging in the practice of eating. The grade will be based on the same few factors listed above, and evidence for these should be grounded in your manual. So bring your manual with you, along with a copy (for me) of your notes and questions thus far

recorder therein. Both of these will also be an opportunity to brainstorm about your final exam. (100 points or 10% of the grade.)

“You see, that’s why I really work like a dog, and I worked like a dog all my life. I am not interested in the academic status of what I am doing because my problem is my own transformation... This transformation of one’s self by one’s own knowledge is, I think, something rather close to the aesthetic experience. Why should a painter work if he is not transformed by his own painting.” (Michel Foucault)

Practice: The remaining 100 points (or 10%) will be based on the performance of these practices, what other courses call “participation and attendance.” I want to make this as clear as possible: *in order to pass this class, you must practice regularly, enthusiastically, and respectfully.* To ensure this, for every new reading we do, you must generate at least one question based on the reading. The length of the question can vary – it can be a few words or a few sentences long – but it must demonstrate the kind of familiarity with a text that can only arise from reading it. You are thus not permitted to ask overly general questions, ones that could apply to any book. This is why each question must be dated and accompanied by a citation to a specific passage(s) on a specific page(s). You should write down your question in your manual and on a piece of paper (freehand or typed) and bring it to class. You are not required to submit your question everyday. Instead, we will use your questions in order to guide the class discussion. I want you to use this as an opportunity to help orient and structure the class. Come up with truly insightful, challenging, and paradigm-shifting questions. I know you can all do this, so show us your brilliance! While you will not be required to share and submit your question every day, you must be ready whenever the class needs you. If you are called on and do not have your question, then you will be deducted 25 points from (or 25% of) your participation grade, which is worth a possible 100 points total (although you will be allowed one pass, one opportunity to not have a question if called upon). The total list of your questions will become the appendix to your manual. Also, ***you must bring the correct book to every class. You must have the paper edition of the text. No computers or e-readers are permitted.*** There is something wonderful about holding a real book, made of paper, in the hand. Enjoy it! Also, all the books are cheap, so buy them early and bring them to class.

Attendance: While I will not take attendance every day, excessive absences result in a lowering of a grade. You should also be on time to class. While unexpected things do happen, if you are regularly late to class, you will be deducted participation points. Also, *when you are in class, do not look at your phone, sleep, or any kind of distracting activity. NO TEXTING* during class. If you text in class, then you will be asked to leave immediately. We are only in class for a few minutes each week, and I think we should make the most out of our time together. Finally, if you miss a graded assignment due to a legitimate reason, you *must* have an official document (Dr.’s note, funeral program, AAA receipt, call from Obama, etc.) justifying this absence. Without such a document, you are *not* be permitted to make-up the missed assignment.

Grade distribution and calculation table:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Possible Points</i>	<i>Your earned points</i>
Weekly writings	150	
Writing Project I	150	
Writing Project II	150	
Writing Project III	150	
Midterm meetings	100	
Final exam	200	
Participation	100	
<i>Total</i>	1000	

Grade scale:

A = 92% to 100%

A- = 90% to 91%

B+ = 88% to 89%

C+ = 78% to 79%

D+ = 68% to 69%

B = 82% to 87%

C = 72% to 77%

D = 60% to 67%

B- = 80% to 81%

C- = 70% to 71%

Required Texts

At the bookstore:

Nancy, Jean-Luc, *Listening*, trans. Charlotte Mandell (NY: Fordham UP, 2007)

Epicurus, *The Epicurus Reader*, trans. Brad Inwood and L.P. Gerson (Hackett Publishing, 1994)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker* (Hackett Publishing, 1992)

Other texts are posted on Moodle

Not at the bookstore:

A small notebook, one that is easy to carry on the body. This will be conducive for collecting “everyday thoughts” or “daily reflections” that will inform your final *Manual of Practices*, and for writing down your reading questions. I ask that you keep this with you as much as possible so that you may *get in the practice of writing down* observations, thoughts, reflections, etc.

Old etiquette manuals show us that how we talk and listen, walk and eat, are not innate, but are instead practices that are the result of traditions and history. By developing your own manual of practices that are both the result of traditions and history and yet still *your own practices*, you are making explicit the oft-unnoticed structures of our respective ways of living, as well as the sedimentation of history built up in them. We are, in a sense, revealing to ourselves the *grammar of our lives*.

Your manual will be useful for at least four things. (1) For assignments related to the three practices. Your daily thoughts and reflections on, say, listening, will help you think through and develop your awareness of your practice of listening. (2) During our midterm walking meeting. You should bring your manual to our walk so as to talk with me about the development of your thoughts on the practices we have practiced by the middle of the semester. It is thus necessary that you *write in the date and place of all of your markings in the manual*. (3) For your final exam. Since this exam will ask you to reflect on, garner, and weave the development of all your thoughts from throughout the semester into a continuous narrative, this notebook will be essential for writing your final exam. (4) Recording your daily reading questions, with the date and page citation. You will collect all of these together at the end of the semester and attach it to the end of your manual so that it acts as a sort of appendix.

University Policies and Resources

Elon Honor Code

Elon’s honor pledge calls for a commitment to Elon’s shared values of Honesty, Integrity, Respect and Responsibility. To be clear about what constitutes violations of these values; students should be familiar with code of conduct policies in the student handbook, including violations outlined at <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/handbook/violations/default.xhtml>. Students with questions about the specific interpretation of these values and violations as they relate to this course should contact me immediately. Violations in academic-related areas will be documented in an incident report which will be maintained in the Office of Student Conduct, and may result in a lowering of the course grade and/or failure of the course with an Honor Code F. (In fact, my policy is that any violation of the honor code results in an immediate grade of “F” for the course, RJ.) Violations specifically covered by academic honor code policies include: plagiarism, cheating, lying, stealing and the facilitation of another’s dishonesty. Multiple violations will normally result in a student’s temporary suspension from the University.

Elon Disabilities Services

If you are a student with a documented disability who will require accommodations in this course, please register with Disabilities Services in the Duke Building, Room 108 (278-6500), for assistance in

developing a plan to address your academic needs. For more information about Disabilities Services, please visit the website http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/support/disabilities_services.xhtml.

Elon Writing Center

Elon's Writing Center in the Center for Writing Excellence is staffed by trained peer-consultants who can help you with all of your writing projects (for any class or major and for any extracurricular, personal, or professional purposes), so take advantage of this excellent academic resource and include a visit to our Writing Center as part of your own writing process. In one-on-one, 45 minute sessions, our consultants will work with you on any kind of writing (such as research or analysis papers, PowerPoint or poster presentations, resumes, or job applications) at any stage of the writing process (such as understanding an assignment; brainstorming, drafting, revising, and editing; developing a research question or starting your research; or writing in-text citations and bibliographies/works cited). We have two multimedia production studios so you can create and work with a consultant on your multimedia and visual texts (such as PowerPoint or Prezi presentations, videos, or websites). Visit our presentation practice room where you can easily record and critique yourself giving a presentation and get feedback from a consultant on your accompanying visuals. The main Writing Center, located in Belk Library, is open extensive hours: M-Th:10am-10pm; Fri: 10am-4pm; Sun: 2pm-10pm. The Writing Center also staffs satellite Writing Centers in CREDE and in the Business School. If you have questions, please contact The Writing Center Director, Dr. Paula Rosinski at prosinski@elon.edu or X5842. (<http://www.elon.edu/writingcenter>)

Religious Holidays Policies

In supporting religious diversity, Elon has a policy and procedures for students who wish to observe religious holidays that are in conflict with the academic calendar, allowing students an excused absence. Students who wish to observe a holiday during the semester must complete the online Religious Observance Notification Form (RONF), available at the following website within the first two weeks of the semester. http://www.elon.edu/e-web/students/religious_life/ReligiousHolidays.xhtml. This policy does not apply during the final examination period. Students are required to make prior arrangements with the instructor for completion of any work missed during the absence. Once the completed RONF is received, the Truitt Center will confirm the excused absence with notification to the instructor and the appropriate academic dean, along with a copy to the student. Students may contact the Truitt Center staff with any questions (336-278-7729).

Student Options Related to Enrollment in Your Course

Enrollment: Students should confirm their enrollment in this course through their On-Track account. Students who do not appear on the course roll or do not show the correct course/section listed on On-Track should consult with their instructor immediately.

Policies on Dropping or Withdrawing from this Course

- Students may drop a course during the designated drop/add period through their On-Track account. A course that is dropped during the designated drop/add period will not appear on the student's transcript or grade report.
- After the designated drop/add period, students may withdraw from a course without penalty through the first half of the semester, following dates published in the academic calendar. Withdrawing from a course during this period will result in a mark of "W" that will appear on the student's academic transcript. Students may withdraw by using the online process located at <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/administration/registrar/DropAddClassesOnline.xhtml>

NOTE: Students should not assume that they will be officially withdrawn from a course based on their failing to attend class or their notifying a faculty member of their intent to withdraw. The student has the responsibility for following the official process of withdrawing from a class. Students who do not properly withdraw from a course will receive a grade of F.

- Students may not withdraw from a course after the published deadline. Any exception to this policy is the responsibility of the appropriate academic dean's office. When granted, withdrawal from a course after this time will result in a grade of "W" or "F" depending on the student's grade at the time. For additional information on university course policies, students should consult their Academic Catalog: <http://www.elon.edu/e-web/academics/catalog/>

Class Schedule

Practice

Aug. 26

Go over syllabus: Our course practice

Assignment for next class: Print off, read, and bring to next class "Marcus Aurelius and Emily Post." Formulate your first reading questions and be prepared to discuss.

Aug. 31

Discuss manuals of Marcus Aurelius and Emily Post

Read for next class: Nancy, *Listening* (1-22)

Writing assignment for next class: Write a one-page reflection in which you answer this question: What is college for? Be prepared to choose a partner and share your thoughts with this person.

Your practice of listening: *What is college for?*

Sept. 2

Discuss Nancy (1-22)

Do "What is college for?" project

In class you should partner in order to listen to what the other person says they "what college is for."

You will then switch roles and the other person will listen to you answer the same question the same thing. Your first assignment is to complete your portrait of "what college is for" for your partner. At home, each student will create a prose portrait; once finished, compare "what you heard" to what was recorded. Be prepared to discuss these issues in class with another set of partners.

Read for next class: Nancy, (22-67, do not worry, several of these pages are blank or are images)

Writing assignment, due next class: Before class, write up your prose portrait of the other student and be prepared to discuss this portrait, along with the differences between what you heard and what was recorded, with your partner and with another set of partners.

Sept. 7

Discuss prose portraits of "What is college for?"

Continue to discuss Nancy

Read for next class: Barthes "The Grain of the Voice" and Derrida "The Voice that Keeps Silent"

Your practice of listening: *To what and to whom to you listen?*

Sept. 9

Discuss Barthes and Derrida

Sept 14

Writing assignment: Write a one-page essay in which you create a spectrum of listening. Ask yourself questions such as the following. What counts as listening? What does not? Write this down in your manual. How do you listen? Imagine various scenarios in which you *listen*. Do you listen in the same way in each of the scenarios? Why do you listen differently in each one? What is the difference about your practice of listening in them? Are any of them better or worse than the

others? What would happen if you started to listen differently in different situations? To what or whom do you *not* listen? To whom do you not listen but think you should? Why do you not listen to such voices? Where does your circle of listening end and why does it end there?
Read for next class: Krause, “Prelude” and “Chapter One” from *The Great Animal Orchestra*

Technology, Music, and Nature

Sept. 14

Discuss Krause

Listen to Radiolab’s “Behave so strangely”

What is the difference between listening to speech and listening to music? Can speech become music and can music become speech? How does technology shape your practice of listening? Do cellphones, video chat, email, etc. change the way you listen? How so? (Perhaps watch Evelyn Glennie TEDtalk)

Writing assignment for next class: Go to a location in Elon and listen to the sounds around you. Try to identify as many sounds as possible. Name them and group them into three categories: (1) natural sounds, (2) human sounds, and (3) technologically produced sounds. Write this down in your manual.

Sept. 16

Discuss and map sounds

Presentation and Writing Assignment for next class: Every student should present a sound to the class. It could be a recording of something, or you could play, sing, etc. The key is that this sound should embody your practice of listening. If listening has a lot to do with attention, focus, and concentration, then your sound should call you to intense attention. Use this sound in order to explain to the class *how* you listen. Write a corresponding one-page reflection on how this sound describes your practice of listening.

Read for next class: Schafer, “Introduction” to *The Soundscape* (3-12)

Sept. 21 NO CLASS

Your practice of listening

Sept. 23

Listen to and discuss your sound

Discuss Schafer

Read for next class:

Sept. 28

Discuss

Listen to and discuss your sound

Exam I due next class. Look at all of your writings and reflections and create a manual of your practice of listening. This manual can take many forms. (1) You could engage the practice of others. For example, go find someone whose practice is different than your own but whose practice is either assumed or affected by your practice. For example, engage an Elon custodian, service person, administrative assistant, cafeteria worker, groundskeeper, President Lambert, the university Chaplain, etc. Seek to discover how this person practices listening in his or her life. Ask this person about what they hear everyday. What sounds stand out? What is the makeup of this person’s soundscape of the practice of listening? This about this: although we all do or can engage the same sounds on campus, we all experience a different campus. What does a gardener listen to on campus? In what kind of soundscape does a cook or food preparation person experience? What is the makeup of the sound environment of a Dean? (2) Or you could do a sort of *Storycorps* style interview, wherein you go listen a person who has played a very important role in your life and imagine this is the last conversation you will have with this person. Write out specific questions and ask them. Be prepared to listen and listen

well (3) Or you could do something completely different, although this *must be approved by me*. (200 points or 20% of the grade)

First writing project due

Sept. 30

Submit **Exam I**

Listen to sounds from animals, nature, and space

Discuss exams

Walking

Midterm walking meeting: Schedule to take a walking meeting with me sometime between October 1-7

Blind Walking

Oct. 5

Discuss Rousseau, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*

On our first day of our study of the practice of walking, we will go outside and walk about. In order to keep up our practices of listening, we will begin walking without sight. We will take two blind walks. The first blind walk asks us to become one long chain (or maybe two), with all but one (or two) of us blindfolded. We will walk wherever this one sighted person takes us, although we must return to our original location at the end of class. In order to truly disorient us, we will spend the whole class doing this. Before the walk, I will collect all the reading questions. As we walk, we will use some of your questions in order to guide the conversation.

Oct. 7

Discuss Rousseau (cont.)

This walk will ask us to split into groups of two or three. One member of this group will act as the seeing party, but the others will be blindfolded. The blindfolded person will walk freely, guiding him or herself, and the sighted-person will follow his or her lead, only intervening in order to ensure safety.

Writing assignment for next class: write a one-page philosophical reflection on a technique of walking that can be used to call us into awareness of our practices of walking, perhaps even cause a shift in our normal practices of walking. Be prepared to make the class actually employ your technique. This technique could be a literal change in our gait, pace, etc., or it could be a re-imagining the act of walking through an inventive metaphor. For example, we can imagine the act of walking as akin to swimming. As we swim, we create ripples and waves that move away from us, eventually interfering with others swimming. This helps us think of walking as constantly creating waves that effect others. Both swimming and walking are movements through media, it is just that water is more viscous than air.

Oct. 12 *Fall Break – No Class*

Techniques of walking

Oct. 14

Read: Rousseau cont.

In class we will implement these walking techniques by forming some groups. One student will start off our walk by leading us on a walk that implements her or his walking technique. We will switch leaders every five minutes so that everyone will have a chance to lead. When you lead, you should explain your thinking behind that technique, how it calls us into awareness of the practice of walking, and what you hope to accomplish by having us walk that way.

Writing assignment for next class: create a list of five reasons why we walk, and find a corresponding example, from your personal life or from elsewhere, of a walk taken for that reason.

Read Thoreau, Walking

Walking and Thinking

Oct. 19

Discuss Thoreau, Walking

Oct. 21

Discuss Thoreau

Walk through a park and discuss the reasons why we walk and examples

Read for next class Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City" or Matthew Beaumont, Nightwalking

Oct. 26

Discuss Michel de Certeau, "Walking in the City" or Matthew Beaumont, Nightwalking

Exam II due next class. Using the concepts and questions we took up as you practiced your practice of walking, write a philosophical reflection essay. This can take many forms. (1) You could engage a person from the community in order to learn about his or her practice of walking. Go find someone who you never engage but whose practice you always assume. Seek out an Elon custodian, a Dean, the Provost, an administrative assistant, a cafeteria worker, a groundskeeper, President Lambert, the university Chaplain, etc. Ask this person to take a walk with you and then try to learn about his or her practice of walking. Does this person take the same walk, over and over? Does he or she continuously change the walk? Why does he or she take this walk? What does he or she encounter on this walk? Think about the walk President Lambert takes every day. Where does he go? Which path does he take? Why does he take this path? Ask him to consider what it means to take a walk on Elon campus as the President of the University with an Elon student. In short, find out what walking means for him or her. The hope is that the campus and the meaning of taking a walk on campus, as an Elon student, will change. We all walk on campus, yet we all have our own unique practice of walking. (2) Or you could do something completely different, although this *must be approved by me*. (200 points or 20% of the grade)

Second writing project due

Oct. 28

Submit Exam II

Discuss exams

Read for next class: Epicurus, The Epicurus Reader (3-31)

Eating

Midterm eating meeting: Schedule to take an eating meeting with me sometime between November 9-13

Class Schedule

In the Garden

Nov. 2 Meet at Lloyd Farm

Discuss Epicurus, The Epicurus Reader (3-31)

Recommended: Michael Symons, "Epicurus, the Foodie's Philosopher"

Read for next class: continue with Epicurus, The Epicurus Reader (32-46)

Writing assignment: What counts as eating? What does not? Where does eating begin and end – at seed, taste, digestion, etc.? Can we list a variety of practices of eating? What counts as good? What does not? describe your practice of listening.

Nov. 4 Meet at Elon Community Garden

Discuss Epicurus, The Epicurus Reader (32-46)

Discuss your writing assignment on “what counts as eating?”

Look at: What do different countries eat in a week – <https://fstoppers.com/food/what-week-groceries-looks-around-world-3251>?

*Read: Luce Girard, “Doing-Cooking” & “The Nourishing Arts” from *The Practice of Everyday Life, Volume II: Living and Cooking*, (151-69)*

Preparing food

Nov. 9 Meet at cafeteria kitchen

Discuss Luce Girard

Writing assignment: Choose your favorite type of food, dish, style of cooking, etc. Research its history. Where did it come from? What journey did it take to get from its place of origin to your plate? How did it become popular in the US and in your part of the world? What are the political, social, religious, economic, natural, etc. factors that led to its status as a popular type of food, dish, etc.? (See: <http://www.followthethings.com/>). Write this in your manual.

Nov. 11 Meet at Moseley kitchen

*Read for next class: Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, “Meditation 14: On the Pleasures of the Table” from *The Physiology of Taste: Or Meditations on Transcendental Gastronomy* (188-202)*

Practices of eating

Nov. 16 Meet ?

Discuss Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin

Eat!

*Read for next class: Michel Onfray, “Kant, or Ethical Alcoholism” & “Nietzsche, or The Sausages of the Anti-Christ” from *Appetites for Thought: Philosophers and Food*” (37-48, 64-74)*

Nov. 18 Meet ?

Discuss Michel Onfray

Eat

*Read for next class: Michel Foucault, “Dietetics” from *The Use of Pleasure* (97-124)*

The End of Food

Nov. 30 Meet at ?

Discuss Michel Foucault

Exam II due next class. Now create a manual of your practice of eating. This manual can take many forms. (1) It could be a set of principles, along with an explanation of those principles and why they capture the essence of your practice. (2) It could be a set of exercises that you developed to transform your practice of eating, along with corresponding explanations of how these exercises work and what they are meant to do. (3) It could be an answer to the simple yet powerful question – What is eating? (4) You could perform a creative practice, e.g., prepare and eat the food with someone and ask this person what eating means for him or her. (5) Or you could do something completely different, although this *must be approved by me*. (200 points or 20% of the grade)

Dec. 2

Submit Exam II

Discuss: Philosophy as an ethical practice

Final Exam: *Philosophy as ethical practice*

Given our focus on the practices of listening, walking, and eating, I now ask you to take account of the various practices and practical principles distilled from or emerging out of the practices in which we were engaged over the course of the semester. In doing this, we will try to determine what it is that we have been doing all semester. Basically, we seek to answer this question: *What do we do when we practice philosophy?* To answer this question, you should collect all of your writings and rewrite them so as to construct a single, continuous exploration of the experience and meaning of an ethical practice. This should take the form of a manual. You must adjust each essay/writing so that the final version of the manual reads smoothly, without abrupt shifts, and with convincing and comprehensible transitions between sections of the paper. You must also create an introduction and conclusion to the beginning and end of the entire final paper. These will serve as bookends, and should provide coherency and continuity for the paper. This is where you will demonstrate your philosophical reflection on the way in which philosophy itself is an ethical practice. That is, you will “do philosophy” insofar as you will reflect on the ways you have examined the three types of ethical practices we have experienced this semester. To assist you in this, be sure to consult your notebook, which should track your changing thoughts on listening, walking, and eating as you practice them.