The purpose of this course is to introduce students to a philosophical understanding of human nature. By surveying texts from Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, Descartes, and Darwin, the student will come to a greater understanding of various approaches to studying human nature, but more importantly they will see whether or not these approaches are true. Since some of the authors hold contradictory positions, a contrast will be revealed between the various views of human nature. Each student will evaluate for his own rather than assuming, as many people do, that the latest approach is the greatest. When we look at examples of the consequences of holding some of these positions, the importance of a correct scientific method for studying human nature will also become apparent.

**Course Objectives:**
- By the end of the course the student should be able distinguish the general scientific character of philosophy from other special subject matters,
- Understand and articulate what Aristotle, Aquinas, and other philosophers hold about human nature,
- Identify the points of agreement and disagreement among these philosophers,
- See the serious implications these philosophical theories have in one’s own life and society,
- Develop one’s own position on the issues and be able to defend it,
- Identify and explain the premises and conclusion of an argument embedded within a text

**GRADE DETERMINANTS**
1. Participation 10%
2. Daily Quizzes 10%
3. 1st Short Paper 20%
4. 2nd Short Paper 25%
5. Midterm 15%
6. Final Exam 20%
1. ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Your comments, questions, and contributions to class discussion make your teacher a better teacher and your fellow classmates better students. Attendance is therefore required. Absences will be excused by the instructor for serious reasons only. Examples of serious reasons are those you would give to excuse yourself from work at any other job - illness or death of a family member. You may notify the instructor prior to class by email. If you do not notify the instructor, your grade will be negatively affected.

In order to receive a good grade in this area, students should show up to class, on time, and remain the whole class. Sleeping, packing up before the class has been brought to a close, and failing to be generally courteous to fellow students and the instructor will negatively affect your participation grade. Asking questions on the material, being prepared to answer questions from the instructor, and participating in the classroom discussions will ensure a good grade in this area. Serious misconduct may result in an “F” in the course at the instructor’s discretion.

2. THE DAILY QUIZ

To ensure that you have gleaned from the reading what was needed for class, a brief reading quiz will be given at the beginning of each class period. If you miss the class or are late, you will not be given a make up opportunity.

3. SHORT PAPERS

Papers of 4 to 5 pages make up a significant portion of the student’s grade because they demonstrate the students’ recollected understanding and analysis of the material discussed. In each, the student will analyse an argument that has already been read during, or for a class period. The paper will be ordered by first listing the premises and conclusion(s) of the argument being analysed, then state agreement or disagreement with any of the premises, followed by an argued explanation of why. Analysis papers are preferred in a physical form, but at the latest are due to my email by midnight of the due date.

GRADING SCALE

93 - 100 A
90 - 92 A-
88 - 89 B+
83 - 87 B
80 - 82 B-
78 - 79 C+
70 - 77 C
60 - 69 D
0 – 59 F
**MISSED/LATE PAPER AND EXAM POLICY**

Late papers receive a one letter grade deduction for each hour that passes past the due date. Since the paper due date is available to you now, there are no exceptions. The final exam University policy stipulates that there be no make-up final exams. The final exam in this course must be taken at the time it is scheduled by the university, the only exception being for students with special learning needs as stipulated in the *Handbook for Faculty and Administrators*, sec. 6.6.6.

You have two short analysis papers to do for the course. More details about these will be posted later on Blackboard.

**ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:

1. **Cheating** on an exam
2. **Plagiarism**, which presents as one’s own the work of another without acknowledging in the source
3. Knowingly participating in any of these activities

The penalty for violating any of these rules is an “F” in the course. The registrar will be notified of any instances of cheating on an exam or paper.

**POLICY ON LAPTOPS AND CELL PHONES**

The use of a laptops and cell phones in class is a distraction to the student, the professor, and other students. Additionally, since philosophy is less factual than other classes, and depends more on an understanding of facts, the writing your notes rather than typing or recording them pays significant dividends that may not be immediately apparent. Thus, no laptops, computers, iPads, cell phones, etc. unless there is a documented need. Anyone using one of these without documented need will receive a “0” for quiz grade for the day.

**DISABILITIES**

Any student with a documented disability requiring accommodation is encouraged to contact the instructor after the initial class or during office hours. Please contact the Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center for further information and assistance.

**TEXTS**

The following books will be the basis of discussion in the class and any additional readings will be handed out in class, or posted on Blackboard. Unless the instructor states otherwise,
each class period and exam assumes that student is familiar (read at least once) the assignment due on that day.

7. Other selections will be posted on Blackboard. Be sure to print these out and bring them to class.

*Please note:* Each reading assignment should be read before the class. It will help very much to read the assignment a second time.