

## Building a High School Philosophy Program

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*Abstract:* Building a high school philosophy program from scratch requires vision, creativity, determination, and patience. I recount the steps my colleagues and I took to implement philosophy courses at The Stony Brook School and discuss the challenges that arose along the way. I also offer general outlines of the three courses we have implemented (Critical Reading and Reasoning, History of Philosophy, and Ethics and Politics), discuss pedagogical approaches that we have found to work with high school students, and share feedback on the courses from my students.

Over the past three years, my school has successfully implemented what amounts to a philosophy program. Prior to the development of the program, students interested in philosophy gleaned what they could from short units on philosophy in our History, Bible, and English curricula. A few students set up a short-lived philosophy club, and some participated in independent studies of philosophy with interested teachers. None of these endeavors were satisfying to the students or the teachers, so we set about revamping our offerings. The three courses we have developed over the past three years are Critical Reading and Reasoning, History of Philosophy, which centers on metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of religion, and Ethics and Politics, which focuses on moral and political theory. The first course is primarily an introduction to logic and its applications across the disciplines. It is a semester-long course for all freshmen. The second two are historical survey courses using a “great books” seminar approach. These two courses meet every school day all year and are offered on an elective basis mainly to our juniors and seniors. Students continue to study philosophy during units of their core curriculum courses, but those units now have more impact because almost all of the students in those courses now have a foundation in logic, and in some of the courses, a few of the students will have taken the elective courses. In this essay, I state our goals for the courses, explain how the courses are designed

to meet those goals, and offer some anecdotal feedback on the success of the program. In addition, I discuss how we went about implementing the program and make suggestions for implementing similar programs in other secondary schools.

### *Our Goals*

Our school is a Christian boarding and day, college preparatory school. The school has strong ethnic, religious, and socio-economic diversity, a large international population, and an entirely Christian faculty. It also has a rich tradition of integrating faith and learning, dating back to our founding headmaster, Frank Gaebelein, whose seminal work on Christian schooling, *The Pattern of God's Truth*,<sup>1</sup> remains essential reading for Christian school leaders around the world. Gaebelein's approach to integrating faith and learning is best summarized by his phrase "All truth is God's truth," which echoes Augustine's "let every good and true Christian understand that wherever truth may be found, it belongs to his Master."<sup>2</sup> Our conviction that all truth is God's truth makes it possible for us to teach all the disciplines with intellectual honesty. Our commitment to the truth is religiously motivated, but one need not be a Christian student to pursue the truth with us. Our school, because it is a Christian school, differs greatly from public schools, nonsectarian private schools, and schools with other religious affiliations, but it is similar to all schools that aim at leading students towards truth. Our philosophy program reflects our commitment to truth while also incorporating content significant to our faith tradition. Schools and teachers that do not share our tradition will nonetheless, I hope, find much they can appropriate for their own purposes in the curriculum, pedagogy, and implementation of our program.

Some of our goals in creating our philosophy program relate to skills, some to virtues, and some to content. With regard to skill development, our goals include helping our students to engage in civil discourse, to think critically, and to write, speak, and listen well. These skill development goals are shared by other disciplines, but we have found that philosophical training, because it focuses so carefully on the reasoning process, does a better job of teaching students to argue well. Formal training in logic, in particular, helps students formulate clear and concise valid arguments that flow from the premises to the conclusion.

Insofar as is possible in a classroom context, we also hope to encourage our students to grow in moral and intellectual virtue. We aim to teach our students not only how to engage in civil discourse but also how to be charitable towards the texts they read and towards their interlocutors in class. We teach them, using a model similar to

the scholastic dialectical method, to consider objections to their viewpoints carefully and thoroughly before asserting their own positions. We require them to cite the texts they have read, not because appealing to authority exempts them from reasoning on their own but because doing so encourages them to be humble and to recognize that many very intelligent people have devoted their lives to thinking about the same questions. We want them to understand that they are part of a conversation that has been going on for generations, that the questions are not new questions, and that they are not likely to *solve* philosophical problems by themselves. Thus, when a student offers an argument in class or in a paper, the teacher requires that student to relate the argument to the text. In our classrooms, the conversation (between students and between all of the students and the text's author) takes precedence over self-expression.

Most importantly, we hope to inculcate a love of the truth, wherever it can be found. We encourage our students to view their peers as fellow pilgrims on a quest for the truth, not as competitors or obstacles. When Student A makes a point in class, the next speaker, Student B, must respond directly to Student A's question or comment. If Student B makes a point that does not relate back to what Student A said, our teachers ask Student B to restate Student A's point. Over the course of the year, students thus learn to listen to their peers and to engage in genuine conversation about the text and topic at hand. Because we aim to instill a love for the truth, we aim to challenge facile relativism, which we take to be a barrier to education. By facile relativism I mean an uncritical conviction that what is true is ultimately a matter of personal preference. Facile relativism entails the rejection of belief in objective truths. Most of our students who have not taken a philosophy course start out as facile relativists, at least when they consider fields of study outside of mathematics and the sciences. They typically hold to a strong fact/value distinction, relegating all moral, aesthetic, metaphysical, and religious propositions to the realm of subjective value. On our view, education is a quest for what is true, good, and beautiful. That ancient triad needs to be accepted to get the educational process off the ground. Students who reject objective truth, goodness, and beauty thus reject the quest. Our first goal in every course, given that we aim to educate, is therefore to convince our students not to be facile relativists.

In addition to challenging facile relativism, we aim to help our students understand the history of Western thought. We want our students to understand who they are and who they ought to become. To understand who they are and to recognize their need for growth, they need to understand and be able to scrutinize the roots of their inherited beliefs. As a Christian school, we are especially interested in teaching

our students the Christian tradition, but we do so in a way that puts the Christian tradition in conversation with other traditions. We thus teach moral and political theory, metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of religion historically so that our students can trace the development of Christian thought vis-à-vis other competing traditions of thought. Our hope is that our students will learn from the successes and missteps of those traditions so that they can engage their contemporaries in the great conversation without rehashing past mistakes. While pursuing our goals, we allow those who disagree with us (i.e., our students, the authors of the texts we read, and college professors whose lectures and debates we watch) to have a voice. Though we hope to persuade our students of philosophical positions that align with Christian doctrine, we do so in a way that is far from indoctrination, as my descriptions of curriculum and pedagogy will bear out.

### *The Courses*

#### Critical Reading and Reasoning

Given our stated goals, we have developed three courses and pedagogical approaches that have helped us meet those goals with our students. The freshman level Critical Reading and Reasoning course focuses first on developing the basics of logic. Students learn about arguments and their elements. They learn about truth-value, premises, conclusions, validity and soundness, logical connectives, and formal and informal fallacies. After that, the focus of the course shifts to extracting arguments from texts and formalizing them. To foster critical thinking across the disciplines, the teacher typically draws those passages from books the students are reading in their other courses. After that, students work on constructing their own arguments and then filling them out with prose. Again, those arguments typically relate to essays they are already writing for their other classes. Our students begin to see how logic can be a unifying discipline that applies to all fields of study.<sup>3</sup> We have our students submit their work digitally so that we can project it onto the whiteboard for group analysis. Our students are challenged thus to recognize that their writing has importance beyond their teacher's evaluation of it. They learn quickly that they are accountable to their peers for what they write and how they write it. They also develop listening and speaking skills as they present and defend their work. Through this process, students learn to think more clearly and coherently about what they are reading and writing. The vocabulary they learn in Critical Reading and Reasoning then carries over into their other classes throughout their course of study.

## History of Philosophy

The History of Philosophy course, which covers metaphysics, epistemology, and philosophy of religion, is an elective course offered every other year to upper school students. We teach the course chronologically using primary source materials, supplementing the texts with contemporary essays on similar topics when appropriate. More than the Critical Reading and Reasoning course, this course addresses our goal of initiating our students into the great conversation. Since the class meets every day for an entire year, we can read at least selections from a wide range of philosophers, from Plato to Searle. Around Easter, we also delve into some contemporary philosophical theology, discussing the metaphysics of the incarnation and the possibility of miracles, including the virgin birth and the resurrection. Our units on philosophical theology and philosophy of religion clearly address our goal of integrating Christian faith with philosophy, and the other units on metaphysics and epistemology address our goal of trying to help our students think Christianly (or at least imagine what it would be like to think Christianly). Since there is no Christian consensus on topics like the mind-body problem or on free will and determinism, we often have our Christian students aligning with non-Christian students against other alliances of Christian students and non-Christian students when we engage in debate.

Pedagogically, again addressing our skill and virtue development goals, students drive most of the conversations, but the teacher occasionally offers lectures on the more abstract content. When I taught the course, I took the approach of adopting the position of the philosopher we were reading and engaging my students in debate from that position. I found that I had livelier debates with my students when taking on the personae of philosophers with whom I was initially least familiar, perhaps because I took more time during my preparation for the class making sense of the positions in my mind. My students were especially engaged during our classes on Leibniz and Berkeley, mostly because they were convinced that Leibniz and Berkeley had to be wrong, but they could not figure out why. Their frustration motivated them to keep trying and to look forward to reading other sources. Thus, when they read Reid and Kant, they did so looking for ways out of the arguments offered by Leibniz and Berkeley. In general, they enjoy reading Plato, Aristotle, and Descartes, as well as contemporary philosophers on philosophy of mind. We act out scenes from Plato occasionally, and we sometimes teach Aristotle peripatetically if the weather is favorable. Aquinas is more of an acquired taste, though many find his system appealing.

We have our students do a lot of writing, speaking, and debating, especially after we have read multiple philosophers who have responded

to a particular philosophical problem. We have a debate on the existence and nature of the forms after we have covered Plato and Aristotle. We debate realism and nominalism after we finish Aquinas, Ockham, and Scotus. We discuss the existence of God after we have read the major arguments on each side of the issue, as well as some contemporary essays on the problem of evil and the free will defense. The debate on free will and determinism follows our discussion of Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Leibniz, and Kant. The same pattern follows for the mind-body problem, the problem of personal identity, and issues in epistemology. We thus cover the main topics typically covered in introduction to philosophy courses that focus on questions or problems in philosophy while at the same time exposing students to the history of thought on those topics. Students not only learn arguments on a given topic, they also learn about intellectual movements. They can then integrate what they have learned about the intellectual movements with content from their history, literature, science, and math courses.

### Ethics and Politics

The goals of Ethics and Politics are largely the same as the goals of History of Philosophy, but Ethics and Politics focuses more directly and more forcefully on our goal of challenging facile relativism. We find that we also have to work harder with the students on civil discourse because they tend to be more passionate about questions of right and wrong than they are about metaphysical and epistemological questions. Addressing the first goal, we start out by, in effect, holding a mirror up for them to see that they are in fact relativists of some sort or another. We do this by beginning the class with a debate on abortion. In my experience, after a while, they become exasperated with each other, so the teachers has to step in and ask them to formulate their arguments more formally. This takes some time and guidance, but eventually the students arrive at something like logically valid arguments for each side of the issue. We then point out that while it is possible for competing sides to have logically *valid* arguments that lead to logically contradictory conclusions, it cannot be the case that both arguments are *sound*. This leads to puzzlement, and for some, more exasperation.

Usually a few students throw their hands up in the air and shout out some relativist cliché, like “It’s just a matter of personal opinion.” We then explore what they mean by such claims and help them introduce some rigor into their thinking by getting them to think about the meaning of moral terms. The facile relativists, once challenged to be more rigorous, usually adopt the emotivist theory of the meaning of moral terms. For them, “good” and “bad,” “right” and “wrong” are ultimately matters of personal preference. Others, not convinced by emotivism, argue that such terms refer to socially constructed values.

Very rarely do we find a student who believes in objective moral truth and can articulate a philosophical foundation for that belief. After helping our students understand their own positions more clearly, we offer standard objections to relativism. We have them read Alasdair MacIntyre's arguments against emotivism in *After Virtue*, and we discuss standard objections to cultural relativism.<sup>4</sup> With some effort, most students eventually arrive at the conclusion that emotivism is an untenable moral theory, but they find themselves at a loss as to where to go from there.

We use the students' moment of *aporia* to motivate the kind of historical inquiry we will soon be doing by pointing out that the reason they originally arrived at contradictory conclusions when debating abortion is that their arguments started from different major premises and that those major premises have very different genealogies. Perhaps, we suggest, by examining the history of moral philosophy, we might discover some missteps that led us to such a state of disorder in our moral and political discourse. Just as one who hits a dead end in a labyrinth ought to retrace his or her steps back to an earlier turning point and try another path, so we too should retrace our steps through the history of moral and political philosophy.

Just as MacIntyre's *After Virtue* addresses the history of moral philosophy out of chronological order, so we too arrange the course out of order. We do so, in part, because we want to capitalize on their interest in how emotivism has arisen by going back to the point MacIntyre identifies as the misstep in the tradition of moral and political inquiry, the rejection of teleology. As our students read and critique Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau, Marx and Smith, Mill, Hume, Kant, and Rawls, they begin to see how the rejection of teleology led the conversation to Nietzsche and C.L. Stevenson. Another reason we teach the modern thinkers first and the ancient and medieval thinkers after them is that we find that ending the course with Nietzsche tends to reinforce the default emotivist convictions of our students. Ending with Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas on the other hand, tends to encourage our students to grapple with the nature of the good life and to reflect upon their own virtues and vices.<sup>5</sup>

We have found it particularly useful to pause after teaching the modern philosophers to consider some practical moral dilemmas once again. Having spent most of the first semester exploring the positions of the great philosophers, the students find they are better able to engage in moral reasoning than they were when they first considered the ethics of abortion. They still need a lot of help formulating logically valid arguments, but they at least have studied some exemplars and have had practice formulating arguments in their writing assignments and classroom discussions. The key is to help students understand the

difference between moral principles, which could apply to a wide range of cases, and the facts specific to a given case. Once they learn how to connect general principles to the facts of the case to draw a conclusion, they are ready to debate. Until then, the debates get very muddled. Any practical moral dilemmas can work. Teachers may draw from hotly debated issues like abortion or euthanasia, or they can choose complex moral dilemmas like the ones covered in the National High School Ethics Bowl. This year, our Ethics and Politics students participated, and the difficult cases assigned for the competition provided excellent opportunities for them to work on their moral reasoning skills. It also helped them understand some of the practical ramifications of the systems of thought they had studied.

After reading modern philosophers, critiquing their theories, and applying their ideas to moral and political dilemmas, we again ask the students MacIntyre's question: What if Western moral and political philosophers were wrong to reject teleology in the first place? What if the scientific rejection of teleological explanations led to a hasty denial of teleology in moral and political thought?<sup>6</sup> Thus we begin our deeper investigation of the virtue and Natural Law traditions. We start with Homer and work our way through Sophocles, Plato, and Aristotle. We focus on the relationship between the virtues and the conception of the good life proposed by each thinker. The students especially enjoy reading Plato's *Republic*. Most are astounded at how many of the supposedly modern ideas they read earlier in the course appear in Plato. They also enjoy reading Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, especially the sections on continence and incontinence in book 7 and on friendship in books 8 and 9. Our seminars on those topics typically generate a lot of self-reflection and lively discussion. After Aristotle, we discuss some New Testament ethics and the Patristics, and then turn to portions of Augustine's *Confessions* and *City of God*. This background reading prepares them for a long journey through sections of Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*. We close the year with time for the students to reflect personally on their own virtues and vices and on the virtues and vices of the various communities and institutions to which they belong. We discuss how they might grow morally and engage more productively and charitably in moral and political discourse and how they might become change-agents in society.

### *Impact and Feedback*

The impact of our philosophy program on students has been tangible. The feedback I can share is almost entirely anecdotal at this point, as the program has only been in existence for a little over two years. Our students have reported loving the courses and believing them to



be centrally important to their education. A student attending Harvard University next year wrote:

Taking this class was one of the smartest moves I have made academically. I write and speak much more clearly and logically, and I'm able to read difficult texts more easily and accurately. . . . Also, my friends and I have noticed that the school has turned very "philosophical" this year. Every day there is a conversation on philosophy around the campus. Teachers are talking about philosophy. Even younger students are inspired.<sup>7</sup>

Another student, now studying philosophy at Columbia University, wrote:

Learning leading philosophers' ideas also strengthened my own leadership abilities. I can now recognize my own presuppositions and analyze others' arguments with precision. Articulating my ideas more clearly and eloquently both in writing and in spoken communication has made debates more intellectually exciting. Besides shedding light on the truth, they also taught me how to disagree respectfully and how to persuade through reason; all of these traits, I believe, are inseparable from an enlightened citizenry and an effective leader.<sup>8</sup>

A former student now studying philosophy, politics, and economics (PPE) at the University of Pennsylvania emphasized the impact of the pedagogical approach we use:

Whether it was through a presentation, a group discussion, or a debate, we were not daunted by the possible faults in our arguments. Rather, we were driven by a common goal in the search for what might be right and true.<sup>9</sup>

Other students have acknowledged the personal importance of the Ethics and Politics course.<sup>10</sup> These reports are supported by the fact that on the second offering of Ethics and Politics, twice as many students signed up as signed up the first time around.

History of Philosophy has received similar positive feedback from recent graduates. A student, now at Cornell University, wrote "[The] class more than prepared me for college. Currently I am in modern philosophy, a 2000 level course, and I already know the material."<sup>11</sup> A freshman at the University of Notre Dame echoed that sentiment, saying "Your class prepared me for my philosophy class as well. I am already familiar with all the dialogues and arguments that we are currently covering."<sup>12</sup> Again, the pedagogical approach appears to be as important to the students as the content. As one former student wrote:

Your philosophy courses taught me skills that I continue to use in all of my college classes. The most important thing I learned in class was not to be afraid to speak up. In the beginning of the course I was quiet and reserved but I started to voice my opinions and discuss philosophy with my fellow students more and more. Now whenever we are discussing something in any class that I am in I say what I am thinking about that subject without fear and I am confident in what I say.<sup>13</sup>

Another student emphasized the impact the course had outside the classroom, writing “Most importantly, your class helped me to recognize and actively pursue the truth and what is right, which not only has helped me tremendously in my study of philosophy but, also in general everyday life.”<sup>14</sup>

### *Implementation, Challenges, and Possible Solutions*

#### Pitching the Program

Getting Ethics and Politics and History of Philosophy approved at my school was fairly easy. Our advanced placement political science teacher took a job elsewhere at the same time that I became the chair of the history department. Without a teacher on the faculty interested in teaching AP political science, there was an opportunity to replace it with Ethics and Politics. A large factor in getting the courses approved was that I had formal training in philosophy and was willing to develop the curricula.<sup>15</sup> After receiving approval for Ethics and Politics, I then argued that we could double our course offerings without increasing our teaching load by rotating Ethics and Politics with History of Philosophy every other year. That way students interested in philosophy could receive a solid foundation in all of the major sub-fields of philosophy.

To implement the Critical Reading and Reasoning course we had to identify need. As part of our accreditation process, our faculty and administration decided that we needed to work on helping our students think more critically in all areas of life. We also recognized the need to stimulate critical thinking across the disciplines. Once we identified those needs, we decided that the best way to address both of those needs would be to offer the Critical Reading and Reasoning course to our freshmen. Our last major wave of new students enroll in ninth grade, so by targeting the ninth grade year we were able to accomplish our goals while at the same time meeting several other criteria. As a ninth grade course, Critical Reading and Reasoning serves as an initiation to their entire course of study. Students take the course early enough for it to have an impact on their entire high school experience. They also take it before Advanced Placement and college-level courses demand the bulk of their time and attention. We have found that ninth graders, in general, are ready to handle the content.<sup>16</sup> After one year of offering the course, we found that students improved by ten points on average on a 100-point diagnostic reading and reasoning test as a result of the course. Time will tell if the course has an impact on our standardized test scores.

### Finding Philosophically Trained Teachers

The key to implementing a philosophy program is to have well-trained teachers. As an independent school, we have the advantage of being able to employ teachers without teaching certificates, which means we can hire philosophers right out of graduate school. On our staff, we have one Ph.D. and another who has nearly completed his coursework in preparation for a Ph.D. in philosophy, several teachers with undergraduate majors or minors in philosophy, and several theologically trained teachers. Every section of our philosophy classes, most of our Bible courses, and most of our European history sections are taught by teachers with some formal training in philosophy. Public schools will find this condition the hardest to satisfy. Private schools that want to institute a philosophy program can hire philosophers. Public schools will either have to hire philosophers and get them certified in another field or get their certified teachers trained in philosophy during summers, evenings, or a sabbatical.<sup>17</sup> Hiring trained philosophers and certifying them seems to me to be the best option as many talented graduate students in philosophy programs are seeking teaching jobs, though they are not necessarily aware of high school teaching options. Also, it takes longer and would be more expensive to train someone well in philosophy than it does to certify them to teach.

Another possible way to circumvent the problem of not having teachers trained in philosophy is to flip the classroom and use lectures generated by well-trained high school or college philosophy teachers.<sup>18</sup> Several college-level courses already exist online for free.<sup>19</sup> Others courses could be created by philosophers with experience teaching high school students. Flipping the classroom involves the students listening to lectures for homework and then doing typical homework exercises with the teacher during class time. I would suggest modifying the flipped classroom model by using class time not only for homework assignments like reading texts aloud together and writing but also for conducting seminars on the material from the online lectures and readings. Experienced teachers with limited training in philosophy could thus, in effect, *take* the courses with the students while *managing* the seminars.

### Integrating Philosophy Courses into Existing Departments

Pragmatically, *history* of philosophy courses are probably more likely to receive administrative approval than a course that is strictly philosophical in nature, given the current state of philosophy in American secondary schools. Many high school administrators are prudently hesitant to offer courses that do not fall under the oversight of an existing academic department. Stand-alone courses create ambiguity

in the hierarchy. Without a department chair assigned to the course, they wonder who will evaluate the course, the curriculum, and the teachers. I received approval from my school for Ethics and Politics in part because I could justifiably offer it as a history elective, since the course covers the history of moral and political thought. I used the same argument to get History of Philosophy approved. In exchange for the advanced placement benefits of college credit, we are in the process of applying for both courses to receive college credit from a nearby university. Both courses are also offered as honors courses, a designation that appropriately acknowledges the rigor of the courses. Critical Reading and Reasoning falls under the purview of the English department because of its emphasis on developing reading and writing skills. Each course thus falls under the supervision of existing departments. Some private schools that offer philosophy courses offer them through the religion department. Logic could fall under the mathematics department, and philosophy of science might find a home in a science department.

### *Conclusion*

Our philosophy program has had a major positive impact on our students. Several alumna of our courses are now majoring in philosophy or philosophy-related courses at top-tier universities. Others are taking philosophy courses to supplement their training in other fields of study. More importantly, students report that they love the courses and that they believe the courses helped them grow intellectually and morally. Other high schools considering implementing a philosophy program should think creatively about how to get the courses approved, how to design them to meet their educational goals, and how to teach the courses, either by training their teachers in philosophy, hiring and certifying trained philosophers, or employing alternative pedagogical models like the flipped classroom approach.

### **Notes**

1. Frank E. Gaebelain, *The Pattern of God's Truth: Problems of Integration in Christian Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1954).
2. Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, book 2, chap. 18.
3. I tell parents who are inquisitive about the course that logic serves as a kind of fulcrum between the math-based subjects and the language-based subjects; thus students who think they are “math kids” can transfer their skills over to their liberal arts classes, and those who think they are “verbal kids” can learn about mathematical proofs and scientific reasoning in a comfortable context.
4. Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), chap. 2.

5. This is not to say that courses arranged chronologically could not have the impact we aim to have. Nor I am necessarily espousing an interpretation of Nietzsche that makes him into an emotivist or a progenitor of emotivism. Our experience has been that when teaching high school students, positioning Nietzsche towards the end of the course tends to reinforce rather than challenge their default relativist positions. Since one of our major goals is to challenge their default assumptions, we keep the moderns in the first semester and then cover the ancients in the second semester.

6. Recently, there have been signs of a revival of teleology in the sciences. See Denis Walsh, "Evolutionary Essentialism," *British Journal for the Philosophy of Science* 57 (2006): 425–48; André Ariew, Robert Cummins, and Mark Perlman, eds., *Functions: New Readings in the Philosophy of Psychology and Biology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); André Ariew, "Teleology," in *The Cambridge Companion to the Philosophy of Biology*, ed. David L. Hull and Michael Ruse (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007); and Ruth Millikan, *Language, Thought, and Other Biological Categories: New Foundations for Realism* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1987). Thomas Nagel's recent *Mind and Cosmos: Why the Materialist Neo-Darwinian Conception of Nature is Almost Certainly False* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012) also proposes a teleological solution to the problems he identifies with current materialist conceptions of nature.

7. Cem Hayırlı, e-mail correspondence, February 21, 2013.

8. Yi He, an economics-philosophy major at Columbia University, e-mail correspondence, February 24.

9. Paul Chung, e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013.

10. Sunny Shin wrote, "For a pretty long time, I've wanted to figure out what justice is. And this course helped me get started on answering this question"; e-mail correspondence, February 25, 2013. Bridgette Cho added, "This course will affect my life permanently in a positive way, and it will remain as a meaningful experience"; e-mail correspondence, February 24, 2013. Garrett Howard wrote, "I believe that the philosophy course is one of the most thought provoking classes that the school has. We have not only learned about honorable character, but we have also received the tools which lead us all to a more promising future"; e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013. Jenny Jin added, "The course has opened a window for me by teaching me to analyze the thoughts of famous philosophers and helping me check my own behavior and that of the society around me"; e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013.

11. Wyatt Piazza, e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013.

12. Tylah Gantt, e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013.

13. Gregory MacVicar, a freshman at Pace University, e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013.

14. Eric Hensel, a freshman at Regent University, e-mail correspondence, February 27, 2013.

15. Schools without a philosophically trained teacher on the faculty may find implementing such courses more difficult. I propose possible solutions to that problem below.

16. I have found that many teachers and parents are skeptical that ninth graders can handle logic. Having successfully taught seventh and eighth graders basic logic at another school and having witnessed our ninth graders excel in the course over the past two years, I am convinced that they are capable of the work.

17. The NEH Summer Institute offers a summer course for high school teachers entitled *Epic Questions: Mind, Meaning, and Morality*.

18. The flipped classroom model was developed by Jonathan Bergmann and Aaron Sams. For more information about the model, see <http://www.knewton.com/flipped-classroom/> and <http://www.flippedclassroom.com>.

19. Many of these courses are compiled at [http://www.openculture.com/philosophy\\_free\\_courses](http://www.openculture.com/philosophy_free_courses). Michael Sandel's Harvard course entitled *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* is very popular, as is Shelly Kagan's Yale course entitled *Death*.

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