

Fall Semester 2009

**Person and Social Responsibility I  
(PULSE)**

PL08806/TH08806

T, Th 1.30-2.45 (Cushing 208)  
Discussion Group: T 9-9.50 or Th 10-10.50

Instructor: Fr Nicholas Austin SJ (austinn@bc.edu)  
Office hours: T, Th 3-5 or by appointment  
Location: 21 Campanella Way, 340M

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In PULSE you use your *hands*, your *ears*, your *voice*. You use your hands to serve. You listen to the voices of those you serve, to the writers of past and present, to those you are learning with, and to yourself and your own experience. You use your voice as you strive to answer to the questions which arise from your serving and listening.

So in PULSE you *enter a conversation*. You know where the conversation begins. It begins with your commitment to serve and to learn. But where will the conversation lead: To a different way of serving? To a different way of seeing? To a different way of living?

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**Semester Theme**

Fall Semester:       The question of meaning: What, if any, is the point of human life?  
                          The question of virtue: What sort of people do we need to become  
                          for the journey?  
(Spring Semester:    The questions of community and social justice.)

**Academic Course Requirements**

1. Bi-weekly journal (10%).
2. Weekly quiz (Tuesday) (10%).<sup>1</sup>
3. Two seven-page papers (15% each).
4. Final exam (30%).
5. Class participation (20%).

Note: The “academic grade” based on the above requirements constitutes 60% of your final course grade. The remaining 40% comes from your field supervisor, based on your fulfillment of your learning work agreement. A failure in either class or field placement constitutes a failure in the course.

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<sup>1</sup> There will be no make-up quizzes. However, the grade based on weekly quizzes will be based on your best 11 (of 13) tests.

## **Class participation**

*Get ready:* complete all assigned reading *prior* to Tuesday's class and the discussion groups. Bring the relevant texts and handouts to class.

*Show up:* class starts on time. Consistent, prompt attendance is mandatory. Lateness and unexcused absences will detract from the participation grade. In general, an absence can only be excused *well in advance*, by the pre-agreement of the instructor, for a reasonable cause.

*Get involved:* your contribution in class and discussion group is required and contributes to your participation grade. A straight 'A' academic grade is impossible without significant contribution to class discussion. As well as vocal conversation, contributions to the class discussion thread and discussion group blogs also receive credit.

*Talk to the instructor:* each member of the class is required to visit the instructor twice in the semester during office hours or by appointment, to discuss their progress in the course, for ten minutes. It is up to each student to make sure this happens.

*Earn a CPB:* 'Class participation bonuses' can be earned by attending relevant out-of-class lectures and other events, especially those pre-approved by the instructor. To earn a CPB attend the event and post a response-paragraph to the class discussion thread (250 words).

## **Bi-weekly Journal**

The purpose of your journal is to integrate both aspects of PULSE: service and learning. You are required to:

- Make an entry twice a week

- Write 500 words per week

You gain credit for:

- Making connections between the academic course and your experience

- Bringing the wider world into reflection on your placement and the academic course (e.g. through reference to the news)

- Writing honestly about:
  - your experience in your placement
  - your personal engagement in the academic course
  - topics raised in the discussion group

- Completing specific journal assignments successfully

Journals begin Week 3 (Monday 9/21) and end Week 13 (Friday 12/4)

**Class rules:** no food or laptops in class. Cell phones etc turned off (not just to 'silent'.)

## **Academic Integrity**

<http://www.bc.edu/offices/stserv/academic/resources/policy.html#integrity>

Learn how to quote, paraphrase and reference your sources, including internet sources. Zotero (zotero.org) is a useful free bibliographical tool.

## **Required Texts**

\*\*\*Remember to bring the week's text to class.\*\*\*

Albert Camus, *The Plague* (Random House, 1991). ISBN: 0679720219

Viktor Emil Frankl, *Man's search for meaning* (Simon and Schuster, 1984).

ISBN: 0671023373

Aristotle, *Nicomachean ethics*, trans. Terence Irwin (2nd edition) (Indianapolis, Ind.: Hackett Pub. Co., 1999).

ISBN: 0872204642

Richard Kraut, ed., *The Blackwell Guide to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2006)

ISBN: 1405120215

*The Harper Collins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version, including the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books* (Student Edition)

ISBN: 9780060786847

Leo Tolstoy, *The Death of Ivan Ilych* (Whitefish, MT: Kessinger Publishing, 2004).

ISBN: 1419158740

Timothy Radcliffe, *What is the point of being a Christian?* (Continuum, 2005).

ISBN: 0860123693, 9780860123699

Joseph Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1966)

ISBN: 0268001030

### Course Assignments:

In addition to the class texts, there will generally also be a *shorter reading given each week*, either as a handout or as a reference to an internet resource. Additional handouts may be also provided to help the study of particular texts.

The substantial nature of these assignments reflect the six credits earned from each semester of PULSE – equivalent to two courses.

Wk	Date	TEXT DUE FOR CLASS	Notes
Wk 1	T 9/8		
	Th 9/10	Tolstoy: <i>Confession</i> <a href="http://www.ccel.org/ccel/tolstoy/confession.html">http://www.ccel.org/ccel/tolstoy/confession.html</a>	Please bring a copy to class.
Wk 2	T 9/15	Camus: <i>The Plague</i>	
	Th 9/17		
Wk 3	T 9/22	Frankl: <i>Man's Search for Meaning</i>	Discussion groups/ journals begin.
	Th 9/24		
Wk 4	T 9/29	Aristotle: <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Bks 1,2,10 Kraut: Introduction, Ch.s 2-4	
	Th 10/1		First paper due.

Wk 5	T 10/ 6	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> : Bks 3,4,5,6 Kraut: Ch.s 7 – 9	
	Th 10/ 8		
Wk 6	T 10/13	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> : Bks 7,8,9 Kraut: Ch.s 11 – 16	
	Th 10/15		
Wk 7	T 10/20	<i>Summa Theologiae</i> I.II.1,2,3,55,61,62; II.II.23,27,47 Pieper: <i>The Cardinal Virtues</i> : Prudence (pp.xi-40)	
	Th 10/22		
Wk 8	T 10/27	<i>Summa Theologiae</i> II.II.58,123,124,129,141,142,155,156 Pieper: <i>The Cardinal Virtues</i> : Justice, Fortitude, Temperance (pp.41-206)	
	Th 10/29		
Wk 9	T 11/ 3	Book of Exodus [A substantial supplementary reading may be given this wk.]	Second paper due.
	Th 11/ 5		
Wk 10	T 11/10	Luke: Ch.s 1-15 [A substantial supplementary reading may be given this wk.]	
	Th 11/12		
Wk 11	T 11/17	Luke: Ch.s 16-24 [A substantial supplementary reading may be given this wk.]	
	Th 11/19		
Wk 12	T 11/24	Tolstoy: <i>The Death of Ivan Illych</i>	
	Th 11/26	Thanksgiving Holiday	No class
Wk 13	T 12/ 1	Radcliffe: <i>What is the point of being a Christian?</i>	
	Th 12/ 3		Journals end.
Wk 14	T 12/8	-	Exam prep: Discussion groups optional.
	Th 12/10		

December 14-21: Term Examinations

The final examination will cover the whole course, but will be weighted towards Weeks 9-13.