

## Phil 710 Topic Selection Questionnaire - 2020

During your last Fall term at Middlebury, you will pursue independent senior work in the context of the Phil 710 course. You will work with an individual advisor who will supervise the content of your project, and you will participate in a writing workshop with your peers run by a member of the Philosophy Department. The final product will be a 6500-8500-word paper on a philosophical topic.

The first step in this process is selecting a topic. To do so, you will propose three topics of interest, and complete the questionnaire below for each. This will be due the **Friday after Spring Break (April 3, 2020)**.

The Philosophy Department will discuss each proposal. We will consider the philosophical viability of the topic, the student's preparation to work on that topic, and we will work to find the best fit between students and advisors, keeping in mind the need to ensure equal distribution of advisees. The Chair of the Philosophy Department will assign topics and advisors by the end of April.

Here are some important guidelines:

- In completing this questionnaire, you are *committing* yourself to working on *any one* of these topics. Think carefully and make sure you have a good understanding of what would be involved in researching and writing on the topics you propose.
- All students will be assigned to work with a faculty advisor who has the relevant expertise on their topic. When you choose your topics, make sure that there is a faculty member within the department who is qualified to supervise your topic.

How do you do this? (1) Think about the courses you've taken and what topics you've covered within those courses that you might be interested in exploring in greater detail, so that you could work with the professor of that course. (2) Look at the profiles of members of the philosophy department (on our website) to see what they are working on, what courses they teach, and what they are interested in. Check out the bulletin board in the common room for recent publications by faculty members. (3) Talk to members of the department!! All students are strongly encouraged to discuss potential topics with members of the Philosophy department. This is a great use of office hours.

- Your three proposed topics should be diverse enough such that each topic pairs most naturally with a different faculty member in the philosophy department. This means you should suggest a different faculty member for each topic you propose, who is qualified to advise that topic, and who will not be on leave during the Fall semester. (Note: All members of the Phil department will be available to advise projects during Fall 2020)

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- You must be qualified to write on the topic. In most cases, this means you should have taken at least one course that provides background on your proposed topic.
- Turn in your questionnaires on time. Students who do not meet the deadline will be assigned to a topic and faculty advisor on the basis of advisor availability.

**Important: Following the above procedure is the best way to ensure that your preferences are taken into account. If students propose topics for which no suitable adviser exists, for which the student lacks the relevant background, or that is deficient in either philosophical content or viability, then students will be asked to revise their proposals in consultation with the department and will lose priority in the selection process. Students who have not followed procedure may be assigned to a topic and/or faculty member independently of preference.**

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### Proposal #1

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What topic would you like to work on? (This should be more specific than traditional subfields in philosophy. You should choose topics within subfields such as, for example: women in Plato's dialogues within ancient Greek philosophy; or ethics of immigration within political philosophy; or interactionism within philosophy of mind, and so forth.)
2. Do you have a sense of the main philosophical questions this project will explore?
3. Why is this topic of philosophical interest?
4. What type of background or knowledge do you have concerning this topic? Which course(s) have you taken that prepares you for advanced work on this topic?
5. Which faculty member of the philosophy department would best suited for advising this project? Why?

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### Proposal #2

1. What topic would you like to work on? (This should be more specific than traditional subfields in philosophy. You should choose topics within subfields such as, for example: women in Plato's dialogues within ancient Greek philosophy; or ethics of immigration within political philosophy; or interactionism within philosophy of mind, and so forth.)
2. Do you have a sense of the main philosophical questions this project will explore?
3. Why is this topic of philosophical interest?
4. What type of background or knowledge do you have concerning this topic? Which course(s) have you taken that prepares you for advanced work on this topic?
5. Which faculty member of the philosophy department would best suited for advising this project? Why?

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### Proposal #3

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What topic would you like to work on? (This should be more specific than traditional subfields in philosophy. You should choose topics within subfields such as, for example: women in Plato's dialogues within ancient Greek philosophy; or ethics of immigration within political philosophy; or interactionism within philosophy of mind, and so forth.)
2. Do you have a sense of the main philosophical questions this project will explore?
3. Why is this topic of philosophical interest?
4. What type of background or knowledge do you have concerning this topic? Which course(s) have you taken that prepares you for advanced work on this topic?
5. Which faculty member of the philosophy department would best suited for advising this project? Why?