ASSIGNMENT

ATTENTION AND EMPATHY

Course: Hopeful Citizenship for the 21st Century
University: Saint Mary's College
Faculty: Megan Zwart

Details about the audience and course context

- How many students are in the class? *20–30*
- What is the teaching modality (in person, virtual, hybrid)? *In-person*
- What grade level/year are the majority of students? *Undergraduate*
- Where does this course fall in the curriculum? (Is it in the core or organized within a particular course of study?) *The class fulfills the requirement for critical thinking and philosophy; it is also a part of the Digital and Public Humanities Minor.*
- What virtues are integrated into the course? *Attention, empathy, curiosity, intellectual humility, courage, and intellectual responsibility*

Assignment: Learning Activities (LAs) and Reflective Journals (600 points)
If philosophy is training for living well, then we need to practice philosophical living! Throughout the semester, there will be six activities that students need to complete, which will ask them to undertake a specific practice and then reflect on that experience in a journal.

Journals should be about 500–600 words and should include specifics of what practice they adopted, how it went, and what they learned from it. Journal entries will be graded according to the journal rubric.

Learning activities 1 and 2 are focused on the habits of compassion.

LA 1: Attention
Evidence shows that multitasking isn't effective and reduces our ability to offer attention to the present moment or perform at our best. The presence of phones with us at all times is a huge driver of distraction and inattention. For 24 hours, avoid multitasking. Write a reflective journal on that experience: What did you learn about yourself? Was it difficult or easy?

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LA 2: Empathy

Using the skills we've been developing for listening and dialogue, either interview someone you know (asking curious questions) about an issue that matters to them or facilitate a conversation with a group of your choosing on a subject matter of your choice. Then write a reflection journal describing which virtues for the course you used.

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