

Randall Cream  
randall.cream@gmail.com  
office hours: T/R 8-9 am & immediately after class  
other times available; email for an appointment

Jeff Osborne  
jeffrey.osborne@gmail.com  
office hours: times times and days  
other times available; email for an appointment

## Essay I

Write an essay of between 1100 and 1600 words in response to one of the following prompts.

1. What is the connection between *philia* and dialogue? In a very real and obvious way, Plato's *Lysis* is about *philia*. At the same time (and obviously), the *Lysis* is given to us in the form of a dialogue. In what ways might we say that dialogue *itself* is intrinsic to (a) the functioning of *philia*, and (b) an investigation of *philia*?
2. Consider the relationship between knowledge/knowing and *philia* that emerges throughout Plato's *Lysis*. Plato establishes the centrality of knowledge/knowing in friendship early in the dialogue, then seems to abandon it. Argue that a careful interpretation of *philia* requires an integration of Platonic knowing.
3. Throughout the last third of the dialogue, Socrates deploys the notion of desire in connection to *philia*. How does desire function within and as a component of/predecessor to/facilitator of *philia*? You'll want to carefully elaborate the relationship between these two concepts, taking note of any revisions to the concepts that occur in the text, and taking care to provide an interpretation that reconciles seemingly disparate elements.
4. Plato's analysis of *philia* exposes our verbal laziness in using the term to apply to all sorts of behaviors and all sorts of motivating reasons. Along the way, though, there's a suggestion that any form of *philia* has at its core some basic act or relationship between the *philos* and the *philon*, between the one who befriends and the one who is befriended. What is that thing that is at the essence of any act of friendship?

Whichever of the four prompts you choose, we want you to write a careful, attentive, polished essay that responds directly to the prompt and the issues of the class. Any successful essay will be closely linked to the text of Plato's *Lysis*, establishing itself as an interpretation of *philia* grounded within the text(s) discussed. All successful essays will move beyond the action of the dialogue to an understanding of the philosophical and rhetorical moves accomplished by the dialogue. The best essays will move beyond the text to make an interpretation of *philia* as a significant human concept.

### Tentative Schedule & Due Dates

Thesis Discussion Session: Thursday 9/17

Thesis Proposals due Sunday at 12 midnight (1159 pm on 9/20)

Drafting and revision week: 9/21-9/25

Essay Due: Sunday at Midnight (1159 pm on 9/27)