



**GOD'S GADFLY:
A SOCRATIC METHOD SEMINAR ON SOCRATES**

Led by Guest Instructor Adam Rose

– 1 CLASS SESSION – THE SEMINAR LASTS 60 MINUTES (1:00) AND DOES NOT INCLUDE A BREAK.	
SECTION §A: THURSDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2014*	SECTION §B: SATURDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2014*
12:00n–1:00pmAustralia Eastern [AEDT] 10:00am–11:00am Japan [JST] 9:00am–10:00am China [CST] 8:00pm–9:00pm.. USA Eastern [EST] 7:00pm–8:00pm ..USA Central [CST] 5:00pm–6:00pm ..USA Pacific [PST]	6:00pm–7:00pm ... Europe Eastern [EET] 5:00pm–6:00pm ... Europe Central [CET] 4:00pm–5:00pm ... Europe Western [WET] 11:00am–12:00n USA Eastern [EST] 10:00am–11:00am . USA Central [CST] 9:00am–10:00am.. USA Pacific [PST]
* SEE "SEMINAR TIMES & DATES AROUND THE WORLD" BELOW FOR IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.	

SEMINAR DESCRIPTION

Because Socrates called his practice “philosophy” (love of wisdom) and because philosophy is nowadays widely considered to be a “secular” enterprise, Socrates is often assumed to have been a secular figure. According to Plato’s famous *Socrates’ Defense (or Apology)*, however, nothing could be further from the truth. In this short Socratic Method seminar, participants will carefully read and discuss passages from Plato’s text in a collaborative effort to meet Socrates on, and in, his own terms: as an annoying gadfly on a divine mission to educate Athens; as a gift from God whose death would hurt the Athenians more than it would hurt him. *No prior knowledge or experience of any kind is required. All reading and discussion will be in English.*

SEMINAR READING LIST

- 1) Plato, *Socrates’ Defense (Apology)*.

THE RELEVANT TEXT EXTRACTS WILL BE AVAILABLE DURING THE SEMINAR FOR REGISTERED STUDENTS. NO ADVANCE PREPARATION IS REQUIRED.

SEMINAR INSTRUCTOR

Educated principally at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the University of Chicago, Adam Rose is a teacher and scholar with over 20 years’ experience leading exceptionally effective, award-winning Socratic Method seminars and lecturing on Western classics (“Great Books”) to adult and undergraduate students of diverse ages and backgrounds. Mr. Rose has a special interest in the secular study of the Abrahamic scriptures and in literary and dramatic approaches to the interpretation of Plato’s dialogues.



SOCRATIC METHOD SEMINAR PRINCIPLES

Socratic Method seminars are structured to facilitate students' critical, collaborative, first-hand engagement with one or more "Great Books", through which students develop a deeper understanding both of the focal text(s) and of themselves — as well as of the world of which the focal text(s) and they are a part. The role of the instructor in such seminars is primarily to facilitate discussion, pose questions, and offer occasional insights into the text(s) and/or idea(s) under discussion — not to lecture on "what the book means". The success or failure of such a seminar therefore depends primarily on the combined contributions of all participants and all students are encouraged to take an active role in the seminar.

SOCRATIC METHOD SEMINAR ETIQUETTE

A critical exploration of "Great Books" requires that participants ask honest, tough questions of the texts, of themselves and of other participants. A collaborative exploration of "Great Books" requires that participants treat the texts, themselves, and each other with respect. The policy of this seminar is that participants may argue for or against any interpretation of a focal text, so long as they ground their argument in evidence drawn from the text itself and they acknowledge that others may hold points of view different from their own. Also, please:

- 1) Arrive for the seminar on time and do not depart until the seminar is over;
- 2) Turn off telephones, pagers, email notifications and other potential disruptors;
- 3) Mute (turn off) your microphone when you are not speaking; and,
- 4) Do not multitask on non-seminar work during the seminar.

BEFORE THE SEMINAR BEGINS

In order to get the most out of this seminar, please remember to:

ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

- 1) Complete your LibertasU registration for the seminar before the applicable deadline(s);
- 2) Complete your LibertasU profile, so seminar participants can know a little about each other;

TECHNICAL TASKS

- 3) Set up your computer hardware, software and Internet connection according to the easy-to-follow instructions at the LibertasU website;
- 4) Familiarize yourself with the LibertasU learning environment by participating in one or more of the regularly-scheduled online orientation sessions (details at the LibertasU website);
- 5) Give some thought to the physical study space you will use during the seminar.

SEMINAR RECORDING

Please be advised that, per the LibertasU "Terms and Conditions" to which all students have assented in registering for this seminar, LibertasU will be recording this seminar for "in house" quality-control and instructor-training purposes by both LibertasU and Adam Rose and that selected, short anonymized extracts (of less than five minutes each and ten minutes total) may be used publically for promotional purposes by both LibertasU and Adam Rose. All other recording of this seminar, including by students, is strictly prohibited and is, of course, not anticipated. Nonetheless, students are reminded that online interactions are inherently "insecure" and that there is always a chance that "what you say online will stay online". Proper discretion online is advised. Please contact LibertasU if you have questions or concerns.

SEMINAR TIMES & DATES AROUND THE WORLD

The meeting time and date for this seminar are based on the time and date in the USA / Canada Eastern time zone (ET). East Asia / Australasia days and dates are one ahead of USA / Canada days and dates. Students must calculate for themselves the seminar meeting time and date in their local time zone. See www.TimeAndDate.com for additional information.

Please base your calculations on the following official meeting time and date for this seminar:

	USA / CANADA EASTERN TIME (ET)		UNIVERSAL COORDINATED TIME (UTC)*
SECTION §A	<u>THURSDAY</u> 20 FEBRUARY, 20:00–21:00 EST	=	<u>FRIDAY</u> 21 FEBRUARY, 01:00–02:00 UTC
SECTION §B	<u>SATURDAY</u> 22 FEBRUARY, 11:00–12:00 EST	=	<u>SATURDAY</u> 22 FEBRUARY, 16:00–17:00 UTC

* UNIVERSAL COORDINATED TIME (UTC), THE OFFICIAL WORLD STANDARD, IS EQUIVALENT TO GREENWICH MEAN TIME (GMT).

CONTACT INFORMATION

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 Information & Materials: www.LibertasU.com
 Campus Portal: Campus.LibertasU.com

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UPCOMING SOCRATIC METHOD SEMINAR COURSES BY ADAM ROSE

LibertasU guest instructor Adam Rose will be leading the following Socratic Method seminar courses at LibertasU. See the LibertasU website for details as well as for information about other LibertasU courses.

MARCH–APRIL 2014 (7 WEEK COURSES)**On Human Excellence: Plato's *Meno* as "Philosophical Drama"**

"Can you tell me, Socrates — is virtue something that can be taught? Or does it come by practice? Or is it neither teaching nor practice that gives it to a man but natural aptitude or something else?" With this provocative four-part question begins one of the most compact meditations on human excellence ever composed: Plato's *Meno*, a "dialogue" (mostly) between the great philosopher Socrates and his acquaintance Meno. This course will be devoted to a very close, in-class reading and analysis of Plato's short text in order to understand both the work's philosophical elements and its dramatic elements — as well as the interaction between the two — as we seek to comprehend Plato's ultimate response to Meno's initial question. *No prior knowledge or experience of any kind is required. All readings and discussions will be in English. (Please note that no homework will be required for this course as all reading will be done aloud in class.)*

THIS COURSE IS THE FIRST COURSE OF A TWO-COURSE SEQUENCE, "ON HUMAN EXCELLENCE".

EITHER COURSE IN THE SEQUENCE MAY BE TAKEN ON ITS OWN.

Apologies of Socrates & Gospels of Jesus

The lives and deaths of Socrates and Jesus had some remarkable parallels. Both were charismatic teachers claiming to be on divine missions. Both were executed by the ruling elites they challenged. And both were vindicated in the writings of their disciples. This course will explore these and other parallels through close reading and literary analysis of two Apologies (Defenses) of Socrates, one by Plato and one by Xenophon, and a number of gospels, some that made it into the New Testament and some that didn't. In addition to examining the teachings of each figure, we will consider how each figure's calling, significance and legacy is portrayed in the various accounts. The two Apologies of Socrates will be supplemented with selected other short dialogues by Plato and Xenophon related to the life and death of Socrates. *No prior knowledge or experience of any kind is required. All readings and discussions will be in English.*

MAY–JUNE 2014 (7 WEEK COURSES)**On Human Excellence: Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* as "Practical Wisdom"**

"We are not conducting this inquiry in order to know what virtue is, but in order to become good, else there would be no advantage in studying it." With this statement near the beginning of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle boldly declares his thesis that the study of philosophy can make one a better person and improve one's quality of life — a thesis that in the rest of his book Aristotle seeks to articulate and demonstrate. Through close reading and analysis of the text, participants in this course will seek to understand and assess one of the most famous and influential philosophical treatises ever produced. *No prior knowledge or experience of any kind is required, although the preceding course in the "On Human Excellence" series is a useful precursor. All readings and discussions will be in English.*

THIS COURSE IS THE SECOND COURSE OF A TWO-COURSE SEQUENCE, "ON HUMAN EXCELLENCE".

EITHER COURSE IN THE SEQUENCE MAY BE TAKEN ON ITS OWN.

"The Holy Trible": Coordinated Readings from the Hebrew Bible, New Testament and Qur'an

From a literary perspective, the Hebrew Bible, New Testament and Qur'an constitute an "Abrahamic scriptural trilogy" in which the later works build upon — and depend upon — the earlier works. Yet, although the paired "Old and New Testaments" are often read together (as "The Holy Bible"), the trilogy as a whole (which might be termed "The Holy Trible") rarely is. This course will be devoted to the close reading and literary analysis of coordinated selections from all three of the major Abrahamic scriptures in an effort to better understand each of the works in its own right and in its relationships to the other two as well as the "Abrahamic scriptural trilogy" as a whole. *No prior knowledge or experience of any kind is required. All readings and discussions will be in English.*
