

Opening Assessment Due First Class Period

We hear a lot these days about existential challenges or existential problems, in reference variously to societies, cultures, individuals, species, ways of life, etc. Typically, people mean by this some sort of grand life or death struggle. But few of us think about a further, more complex and loaded question, what kind of life or death, for what purpose, to what end, of what quality? Is it enough to just live for the sake of living? Or, should we also be asking *how* life is lived? These are some of the more difficult, unsettling, and disruptive question we must ask... we MUST ask.

Read the introductory material for the course (Solomon, Introduction) and submit your responses at the beginning of the first class period. Write a brief (100 word) response to each question below:

1. What is the most important existential question in your life?
2. Why is *this* the most important question?
3. What answer do you have for this question? If you do not yet have an answer, what would help you to sort it out?