Basic Philosophical Questions
UCOR 132C-23
T/Th 10:50–12:05 PM
552 CH

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What Is This Course About?

This course aims to change our lives by reading, discussing, writing about, and even making
music and art about issues of politics, justice, freedom, desire, civil disobedience, aggression,
love, and crime and punishment. Great texts of western culture by Plato, Shakespeare,
Thoreau, Nietzsche, Kafka, Martin Luther King, Jr., Alexander Solzhenitsyn, Toni Morrison,
and others serve as our guides. Part of class will involve discussing these great philosophical and
literary texts with incarcerated men at the State Correctional Institution—Pittsburgh on the
North Shore.

Possible Books

Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (selections)
Kafka, *The Trial*
Martin Luther King, Jr, “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
Levitt and Dubner, “Where Have All the Criminals Gone?”
Ibid., “Why Do Drug Dealers Still Live With Their Moms?”
Lewis and Aydin, *March* vols. 1–2
Morrison, *Beloved*
Plato, *Crito*
St. Paul, *Epistle to the Philippians*
Shakespeare, *Merchant of Venice* and *Hamlet*
Solzhenitsyn, *A Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*
Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience”
Zehr, *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*