Here I would like to acknowledge the previous and current members of the BU Free Philosophy Project chapter. Without their dedication, this project would not have grown and matured as wonderfully.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
The Berry Fund from the American Philosophical Association has allowed the Free Philosophy Project [FPP] to run leisurely at its home base at Boston University. During the past year, the BU chapter has maintained workshops spanning approximately 11 shelters within the Boston area. The Berry Fund has allowed the BU chapter of FPP to maintain a comfortable environment for chapter members, purchase class workshop materials, and reimbursing members’ commuting costs pursuing shelters farther from the University’s campus. The project has maintained consistent group meetings and discussions, constructed lesson plans, and have continually experimented with different teaching styles in order to provide the most effective method of conveying philosophical thought to shelter patrons. Currently, a newer aims list is being compiled for the next cycle of APA grant applications in order to further expand the efforts of FPP.

GENERAL OVERVIEW
We would like to thank the American Philosophical Association for their distribution of the Berry Fund Award to our developing organization. In its first year, FPP struggled to retain members as insufficient funds limited the capability to travel to shelters spanning the Boston area. Additionally, students that remained on campus during the summer were restricted in their efforts to continue philosophy workshops, considering the limited resources at the University during this time (i.e. support from professors, borrowing library texts, etc.). Furthermore, in its infancy, FPP struggled to hold consistent discussions as only five members were able to teach during that time (2 students co-instructed at the same shelter).

After receiving the Berry Fund, the Free Philosophy project has developed well. The following list of objectives that have been met for the BU chapter include:

- Bimonthly meetings: within the past year, approximately 20 BU undergraduates/graduates have been involved in the current FPP chapter. Bimonthly meetings consist of avid conversations spanning each member’s past/current shelter experience, as well as improvements in any particular member’s teaching style. Graduate students provide their input to newly teaching undergraduate students. This promotes a more holistic approach towards a member’s teaching style development.

- Travel cost distribution: FPP first began in two shelters; St. Francis house and the Women’s Lunch place (both are approximately 15 minutes away from the university campus). With the receival of the Berry Fund, students are able to now able students travel to shelters in Cambridge, Roxbury, and Dorchester, MA (the farthest shelter is approximately 45 minutes away from the University campus).

- Texts/Lesson Plans/FPP-related class media: Currently, FPP has been using the Berry Fund in order to purchase philosophy texts that are not distributed by BU, to cover FedEx costs from copying select text chapters/printing large quantities of lesson plans for shelters and purchasing class-materials for shelter patrons.
Note that while FPP does not mandate a particular format for philosophy workshops, the following materials are now necessitated as per the recommendations of shelter patrons. In particular, these include:

- notebooks
- pens/pencils
- a bilingual teacher (if the shelter patrons’ majority include mandarin/Spanish speakers)
- copies of the outline of class discussion
- copies of the text being presented
- background on the origin of the philosophical topic
- dictionary/thesaurus

Notebooks are distributed to shelter patrons who are interested either in keeping track of the workshop discussions, or for jotting down inspiration for their own personal projects. For instance, at Rosie’s Place (a shelter 20 minutes away from the University campus), patrons often take notes during class workshops and follow-up on them later in other classes offered at the shelter (i.e., “How to write a constructive argument”). Members have often had the experience of shelter patrons commending their efforts, as many philosophical topics are extremely relevant to many of the patrons’ life experiences. (One shelter patron from Rosie’s Place even attends workshops to gain inspiration for her memoir.) It is these experiences that could not be achieved without the help from the APA.

We have attached at the end of this report a sample lesson plan that has been taught in workshops. Lesson plans are only taught after (1) first being presented during an FPP meeting (2) being cleared by the shelter to avoid any topics that may be ‘triggering’ to any patron. Lesson plans are shared between members of the BU FPP chapter to facilitate interest in different areas of philosophy that a member may not normally be well-versed in. We have also attached a sample syllabus that was used this past year at Rosie’s Place. Please note that this syllabus was used as a guideline; members were flexible in accommodating shelter patrons’ topics of interest.

LEADERS/CHAPTER BOARD
After the distribution of the Berry Fund, FPP members decided that it was necessary to form a chapter board in order to distribute the workload of maintaining a chapter evenly amongst the members. FPP chapter(s) contain a chapter leader, followed by an administrative representative. Additionally, it is highly recommended (but not required), to have a graduate student representative as well.

EXPANDING/FUTURE GOALS
This past year, FPP has maintained its BU chapter, as well as engaged students from Harvard University, Boston College, University of Texas Dallas, and Southern Connecticut University to take part in this project. Currently, I am compiling a list of objectives that have been considered necessary for any student interested in starting an FPP chapter at their institution. These objectives will likely be seen in the next grant cycle of the APA, as FPP is beginning to encompass more than just the shelters within Boston. (Currently, efforts are focused towards setting up FPP at Stanford University.) Please note however, the Berry Fund award was only used for the FPP chapter at BU. It is only after successfully engaging the students at Boston
University that I felt comfortable in reaching out to other institutions to promote awareness about FPP and its growth within the past year.

CONCLUSION
Considering this past year, we are pleased with the development of FPP. It was inspiring to witness the maturation of a student-led organization, especially after experiencing the early stages of this project. The Berry Fund has not only allowed the BU FPP chapter to continue without needlessly worrying over commuting expenses or purchasing workshop materials. On behalf of the members of FPP, I whole-heartedly thank the APA for distributing the Berry Fund to the BU FPP chapter. We could not have developed this project without your support and hope to engage the APA again for our future developments.
GANDHI—SATYAGRAHA [LESSON PLAN]

Over thirty years in South Africa and in his native India, Mohandas Gandhi developed, articulated, and employed a form of political resistance that he called “satyagraha,” meaning “truth-force” or “soul-force.” (A person who practices satyagraha is called a satyagrahi.) The satyagrahi willfully and openly violates a law that he or she considers unjust, without committing any violence against those who would enforce the law, and willingly suffers the legal consequences of that violation. Gandhi used satyagraha to lead India to independence from Britain in 1947 and was assassinated the following year by a man who thought he was too accommodating to the demands of Muslim Pakistan. Martin Luther King, Jr., who studied philosophy here in Boston, was deeply influenced by the satyagraha movement, as was another civil rights thinker (with Boston connections) Howard Thurman.

What is satyagraha? “Its root meaning is holding on to truth, hence truth-force. I have also called it Love-force or Soul-force… I discovered… that pursuit of truth did not admit of violence being inflicted on one’s opponent but that he must be weaned from error by patience and sympathy. For what appears to be truth to one may appear to be error to the other. And patience means self-suffering. So the doctrine came to mean vindication of truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on one’s self.”

**Question:** If your country has a law that you believe to be unjust, how should you, as a citizen, handle this?

e.g., a law forcing people of one race to give up the sidewalk to people of another race
(Let’s just assume this is unjust!)

{A} Should you—obey the law?

In this way, you can preserve your own safety, and perhaps that of the people you live with.

And perhaps this is what you must do; perhaps you owe it to the state, for some reason, to obey its laws, even if in your best judgment the law is an unjust one.

Think about people who did not believe in the Vietnam war, but who were drafted, and who went to war anyway, because they believed it would be wrong to refuse to comply with the government. Did they do the right thing?

(Probably you will have to address relativistic objections (it depends on the person, etc.) But the key thing here is the question what you should do; we’re not trying to judge other people, we’re trying to determine what we should do. And that is a question that such a claim as “it depends on the person” obviously cannot help us with. Let us grant it: so, what? I still do not know what I should do! And surely the idea is not that there isn’t any better or worse thing for me to do—that is obviously not acceptable.)

Perhaps, because you could only grow up as you did with the protection of the nation’s laws and military, you owe such a debt of gratitude to the nation that you must obey its laws, even when they seem to you unjust. Does that seem right?

It’s important to note here that the scenario under consideration is not one in which you simply do not want to obey a law, perhaps because it inconveniences you in some way, or because you want to impress a punk rocker. The scenario is one in which you judge that the law is an unjust one.

The problem with choosing to obey the law, even though you find it to be unjust, is that it seems you would be acting unjustly yourself, as far as you can tell.
It also seems unlikely, doesn’t it, that you have such a strong obligation to obey the laws of your country, that it is always wrong for you to disobey any such laws (even if they are in fact unjust laws)? Perhaps it is generally good to obey the laws of your country—it could still be good and right to violate those laws that are, in your best opinion, unjust, right?

**Question:** Is a person ever guilty for acting in accordance with their conscience?

{B} Should you – disobey the law, and resist the punishment for disobedience? e.g., consider again the law that requires people of one race to give up the sidewalk when they are passing a person of another race. Let’s say that the punishment for violating this law is a 30-day prison sentence. If the law is unjust, then presumably the punishment for violating the law is also unjust. And if the punishment is unjust, then why should I allow myself to be so punished—especially if I have already decided that I cannot in good conscience obey the law? Perhaps I should resist the punishment just as much as the law? But how will you resist the punishment?

This is not as easy as violating the law. It (usually) doesn’t do any good to just refuse the punishment. They will put you in jail anyway, won’t they? Unless you want to resist the punishment with violence—say, you and your friends hole up in a compound with guns and bombs and you refuse to submit to arrest. (Bundy case.)

This, however, presents a problem: for if everybody who believed that a law is unjust were entitled to violently resist that law and its enforcement, then—at least, it seems—nothing could result but violent chaos. Gandhi’s primary problem with violent resistance seems, however, to be different:

**Quote:** “Men have before now done many things which were subsequently found to have been wrong. No man can claim that he is absolutely in the right or that a particular thing is wrong because he thinks so, but it is wrong for him so long as that is his deliberate judgment.”

(509)

What is the significance of this? Gandhi says, basically, that we might be wrong in our judgments. How does this relate to the question of violent resistance to unjust laws?

Gandhi’s idea is that, since our judgments are liable to be wrong, it would be immoral for us to violently impose those judgments on others. For if we are wrong, then we would simply be committing violence in the name of an immoral, or of an unjust, cause.

**But:** Does not mean that it is never just to use violence on people? By this reasoning, is not all punishment violent? For judges and executioners are still human beings and are still liable to make mistakes. (Or are we to say that punishment is only appropriate when it is voluntarily submitted to? But that goes against the whole idea of punishment, doesn’t it?) If Gandhi is right, then who can punish—surely only God?
And if our uncertainty about our own moral judgments makes it wrong for us to harm others in our resistance to a law that we perceive to be unjust, then why does it not make it wrong for us to refuse to obey the law in the first place? Why does the uncertainty of our judgment have this effect only in this aspect of the process?

{C} Should you—disobey the law, and submit to the punishment for disobedience?

In this way, you can be sure not to wrong anybody other than yourself. And since it is better, when you are unsure whether you are right or wrong, to risk hurting yourself than it is to risk hurting others, it is better to take this route than to resist with violence.

**Question:** Is this true? Is it better to risk hurting yourself than hurting others, when you’re unsure of the justice of your cause? Why?

What if in disobeying the law (even though you accept punishment) you risk hurting others? Say, you are refusing to help immigration police enforce laws that you regard as unjust; perhaps, in so refusing, you may fail to prevent a crime committed by an immigrant who would otherwise have been detained and deported.

Beyond these concerns about the uncertainty of the justness of the satyagrahi’s cause, Gandhi has other reasons for refusing to commit violence, chief among them that violent means can only produce a violent end (“professional swimmers will find a watery grave”). We do not want to live in a society marked by violence and bitter resistance to one another (do we?); and since violent resistance to unjust laws can only tend to produce such a society, we should not resist violently.

**Question:** Do you think it is true that violent resistance to unjust laws can only produce a violent and bitter society?

Perhaps satyagraha is the most effective means to changing the minds of those who create and enforce unjust laws.

Gandhi believes that satyagraha expresses a kind of respect, and even love, for the enforcer of the law; and that, in seeing this respect and love, the enforcer of the law will be more inclined to come around to your point of view than they would be if you were to violently resist their enforcement.

**Question:** do you think this is true?

**Final Question:** Even if this is true, does it mean that all those who violently resist what they take to be unjust laws do wrong? Think about Malcom X’s famous dictum, *by any means necessary*—i.e., black Americans should defend themselves and their rights *whatever the cost, whatever the means*—even by violent means. Malcom X fundamentally disagrees with Gandhi. What do you think?
Workshops Description:

Workshops are designed to provide a conversation with patrons of shelters. These conversations have a particular focus on various topics of philosophy; as philosophy questions fundamental principles regarding life (that often are assumed to be true), these workshops then question these that are taken for granted, in an effort to question these ideas. (e.g. what is happiness, what is truth)

The workshops attend to the schedule detailed below merely as a guideline; as the workshops are meant to be flexible (as determined by conversations had week to week). As such, the workshops will focus on multiple philosophers, broadly concerning both Western and Eastern philosophy. Patrons will review arguments derived from philosophers such as Plato, Aristotle, Descartes, Kant, Buddha, Confucius, and Lao Tzu. Additionally, contemporary philosophers such as Wittgenstein, Bertrand Russel, Hegel, Kripke, and Nietzsche will be discussed. Patrons reflect on the discussions brought forth by these philosophers through interactive discussions, effectively evaluating arguments and thinking critically.

Learning Outcomes

The following are expected to be gained throughout these workshops

- Identity
- Ethics
- Logic
- Epistemology
- Political Efficacy

Topics (Brief Overview):

Week 1: Introduction
1. What is philosophy
   a. Arguments/premises/conclusions
   b. Recognizing what an argument is
2. Why should we discuss philosophy?
   a. Validity/truth/soundness/strength/cogency
3. Why do we question things in the first place?
   a. fallacies

Week 2: Identity
1. How do we define ourselves? (this is a broad question that needs many concept maps to draw connections between things mentioned by patrons)

2. Personal identity (David Hume)
   a. Key questions:
      i. Who am I?
      ii. Personhood
      iii. Persistence
      iv. Evidence
      v. Population
      vi. What am I?
   b. Present Hume, and question how this relates to what we know as personal identity

3. Can you have more than one identity?
   a. Identity and identities (Bernard Williams)
      i. Is there one dominant identity and multiple others, or a few identities that surpass each other through time?
      ii. What (if anything) defines a change in identity?
         1. Can we stop an identity from changing?
         2. How will we know whether we have a different identity?

Week 3: Mind-Body Problem
1. Epistemology
2. Plato: allegory of the cave
   a. People in the cave vs. people who have been outside the cave/seen what is outside the cave
   b. What do we understand about different parts of Plato’s allegory?
   c. What is Plato trying to emphasize through his story?

Week 4: Epistemology through Descartes’ Lens
1. Meditations I/II (Descartes)
   a. Meditation I
   b. Meditation II
2. Relating what we know through Meditations I/II to Matrix (the movie)
3. Hypatia

Week 5: Origins of Thought
1. Empiricism/origin of ideas
   a. Locke
2. “to be is to be perceived”—Berkeley
3. Difference between a priori and a posteriori
   a. What do we know before/what is learned, and how do we distinguish these things?
   b. Can what we know about a priori/a posteriori be tied into what we know as identity/self?
4. Simone de Beauvoir

Week 6: Philosophy of Mind
1. How do we function?
   a. Mind/body separation—Descartes
   b. Aristotle “Soul and Body, Form and Matter”
   c. Concept of mind
      i. Material (brain), and immaterial (consciousness)
2. If there is a separation between the two, is there a hierarchy (mind over body or body over mind)

Week 7: Freedom
1. John Locke
   a. The role of freedom in action/moral psychology
      i. Will/to be willing
2. Ronald Dworkin: freedom should be in reference to particular liberties, not just a general term “liberty”

Week 8: Morality
1. Aristotle: Ethical Virtue
2. Kant: Duty/Reason as Ultimate Principle
3. John Stuart Mill: Happiness as Foundation of Morality
4. Friedrich Nietzsche: Against Conventional Morality

Week 9: Authority/State/Laws
1. Plato/the Republic
2. Thomas Hobbes: Sovereignty/Security

Week 10: Beauty
1. Plato: Art and Imitation

Week 11: Happiness
1. Aristotle
2. Confucius

Week 12: Kantian/Utilitarianism
1. Kant
2. John Stuart Mill

Week 13: Truth
1. Kant
2. Bertrand Russell
3. Coherence Theory
4. Theory of Pragmatists
5. Tarski’s theory of truth