

# 1000-E26;The Good Life - Class A S

[Spring til i dag](#)

 Rediger



## The Good Life - A

University of Copenhagen / DIS

Fall Semester 2026

**Class meetings:** Fridays 10:15-12:45.

University of Copenhagen, South Campus, Room 6B.0.22.

**Course instructor:** Jakob Due Lorentzen, PhD

Email: [jdl@teol.ku.dk](mailto:jdl@teol.ku.dk) (<mailto:jdl@teol.ku.dk>)

**Live stream:** [https://ucph-ku.zoom.us/j/5260397601?](https://ucph-ku.zoom.us/j/5260397601?pwd=TytjeitHZ2FFYjVHUUY5WmhnYk9xdz09)

[pwd=TytjeitHZ2FFYjVHUUY5WmhnYk9xdz09](https://ucph-ku.zoom.us/j/5260397601?pwd=TytjeitHZ2FFYjVHUUY5WmhnYk9xdz09)  [. \(https://ucph-ku.zoom.us/j/5260397601?pwd=TytjeitHZ2FFYjVHUUY5WmhnYk9xdz09\)](https://ucph-ku.zoom.us/j/5260397601?pwd=TytjeitHZ2FFYjVHUUY5WmhnYk9xdz09)

**Course content:** Whether we look to our relationships, our sense of place and belonging, our faith, or our virtues and deeds, humans have always been preoccupied with the question of “the good life” as we try to understand how and why our lives matter.

In this course, we examine the question of the good life as it surfaces in key texts from the history of philosophy, with a particular focus on the human condition and the search for meaning in the modern world.

From Aristotle to Sarah Ahmed, the course examines philosophical concepts such as anxiety, authenticity, care, dwelling, freedom, boredom, and virtue in order to reflect on the good life: What is a life lived well for a human being and how do we take up our own place in the world?

Our search will take us into the works of thinkers, writers, and artists from different eras and genres – from the ancient art of stoic joy, to the existential advocacy of the individual self, to diverse philosophical reflections on contemporary modern art and the aesthetics of ecocriticism.

We may not discover the secret to happiness in this course, but we will join an age-old pilgrimage in search of the good life.

**Learning objectives:** Together, we will be aiming to: (1) enter into dialogue with European philosophical, literary, and artistic traditions that have grappled with existential questions; (2) acquire academic skills in navigating and interpreting philosophical works, novels, films, and artworks; (3) develop abilities in nuancing and articulating our own views and positions in dialogue with those of others; and (4) relate our particular lived experience of the search for the good life to universal philosophical concepts that elucidate the human condition.

**Language of instruction and discussion:** English. (Papers, however, may also be written in Danish, Swedish, Norwegian).

### **Requirements for DIS-students**

For undergraduate students (bachelor students)

Active attendance (at least attendance in 75% of the sessions documented by protocol). DIS must be notified, if you are absent two times or more. The syllabus volume and content are determined by the teacher. Weekly discussion posts are mandatory and two short papers are to be submitted to the teacher, as well as a final longer paper of 19,200-24,000 characters, i.e. 8-10 pages (1.5 line spacing), based on 400-500 pages of literature.

### **Requirements for KU-students (both Danish students and Exchange students)**

### For undergraduate students (bachelor students)

Active attendance (at least attendance in 75% of the sessions documented by protocol).

A final paper of 24,000-28,800 characters, i.e. 10-12 pages (1.5 line spacing), and based on 600-800 pages literature in agreement with the teacher. The teacher must approve the subject and literature. The assignment is assessed by the teacher and a grade is given in accordance with the 7-point grading scale.

### For graduate students (kandidat/master students)

Active attendance (at least attendance in 75% of the sessions documented by protocol).

A final paper of 36,000-48,000 characters, i.e. 15-20 pages (1.5 line spacing), and based on 800-1000 pages of literature in agreement with the teacher. The teacher must approve the subject and literature. The assignment is assessed by the teacher, and a grade is given in accordance with the 7-point grading scale.

### **Exam dates (final paper)**

DIS students: 10 December, 2026

KU and Exchange students: 17 December, 2026

**Discussion board posts:** In preparation for each class, you will be asked to contribute to a discussion thread on Absalon. After having engaged with the assigned material, but before we meet in class, you will post your reflections and questions about the readings. This is a great opportunity to read your peers' posts as well. The discussion posts will serve as preparation for your final paper and will hone your thinking on the course topics in general. Discussion posts count toward your participation grade, and late submissions will negatively affect your grade.

**Readings:** Completion of reading assignments as scheduled is required and is a prerequisite for participating in class discussions.

**Lectures and discussion:** In general, class will be a combination of lecture, group work and class discussion. Class participation includes attendance, student presentations, and contributions that students make in discussion posts and in class.

**Generative AI:** The use of generative AI tools is not allowed in this course.

**Plagiarism:** Any student who plagiarizes will fail the course.

### **Grading breakdown (DIS students):**

Attendance and posts: 15%

Short paper 1: 20%

Short paper 2: 20%

Final paper: 45%

### **Course texts:**

Readings will be made available in electronic form either as selections on Absalon or through links to the royal library (access through KU-net required).

Class readings include selections from the following:

- Ahmed, Sara. *The Promise of Happiness*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010.
- Ahmed, Sara. *Living a Feminist Life*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.
- Arendt, Hannah. "Thinking and Moral Considerations," in *Social Research*, 38:3, (Autumn 1971), pp. 419-422.
- Arendt, Hannah. *The Life of the Mind*. San Diego: Harcourt, Inc., 1981.
- Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Trans. Terence Irwin. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2010.
- Böhme, Gernot. "Atmosphere as the Fundamental Concept of a New Aesthetics". Thesis Eleven. Number 36 (1993), pp.113-126.
- Brinkmann, Svend. "Living Well and Living Right". In Hill et al. *Critical Happiness Studies*. Oxon & New York: Routledge, 2020, pp. 131-143.
- Diogenes Laertius. *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Espedal, Thomas. *Bergeners*. London: Seagull Books, 2017.
- Gosetti-Ferencei, Jennifer Anna. *The Ecstatic Quotidian*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007.
- Gosetti-Ferencei, Jennifer Anna. *On Being and Becoming: An Existentialist Approach to Life*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2021.
- Hadot, Pierre. "Only the Present is Our Happiness." In *Philosophy as a Way of Life*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Being & Time*. Trans. Joan Stambaugh. Albany: SUNY Press, 2010.
- Heidegger, Martin. *Poetry, Language, Thought*. London: Harper Perennial, 2013.
- Hallberg, Gry Worre. *Sensuous Society*. PhD Thesis. Copenhagen: University of Copenhagen Press, 2021.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *Either/Or, I and II*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *The Concept of Anxiety*. London: W.W. Norton, 2015.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *A Literary Review*. London: Penguin Books, 2001.

- Kierkegaard, Søren. *The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2016.
- Lorentzen, Jakob Due. *The Art of Dwelling*. Aarhus: AU Press, 2021.
- Mbembe, Achille. *Brutalism*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2024.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Birth of Tragedy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *The Gay Science*. New York: Random House, 1974.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich. *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*. London: Penguin, 2003.
- Puig de la Bellacasa, María. *Matters of Care*. Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2017..
- Rosa, Hartmut. *The Uncontrollability of the World*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2020.
- Sloterdijk, Peter. *You Must Change Your Life*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013.
- Smith, Patti. *M-Train*. London: Bloomsbury, 2015.
- Spahr, Juliana. *This Connection of Everyone with Lungs*. Berkeley: U of California Press, 2005.
- Thibaud, Jean-Paul. "The Atmospherization of Everyday Experience." Loenhardt, Klaus Klaas. *Investigations into Our Atmospherically Entangled Future*, pp. 163-174. Basel: Birkhäuser, 2021.

### [Kierkegaard's writings online in English translation](#)

([https://teol.ku.dk/bibliotek/sk\\_princeton/](https://teol.ku.dk/bibliotek/sk_princeton/))(Princeton version) is available through the Søren Kierkegaard Research Centre KU webpage (KU-net access required). Danish readers should of course read Kierkegaard in the original Danish.

### For DIS students:

Please make sure to read the "Academic Regulations" on the DIS website. There you will find regulations on:

- Course Enrollment and Grading
- Attendance
- Coursework, Exams, and Final Grade Reports

## Oversigt over fag:

| Dato             | Nærmere oplysninger                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Forfaldet          |
|------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| fre 21. Aug 2026 |  <a href="#">The Greek Smile</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259205&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259205&amp;include_contexts=course_95196</a>            | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 28. Aug 2026 |  <a href="#">Happiness is a Smooth Flow</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259195&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259195&amp;include_contexts=course_95196</a> | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |

| Dato              | Nærmere oplysninger                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | Forfalder          |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| fre 4. Sep 2026   |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259206&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">The Challenge of Existence</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259206&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259206&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>     | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 11. Sep 2026  |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259196&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">No class, DIS academic break</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259196&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259196&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>   | 0:00               |
| fre 18. Sep 2026  |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259201&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">How to be Anxious</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259201&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259201&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>              | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| onsd 23. Sep 2026 |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269710">Short paper 1 (DIS only)</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269710">(https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269710)</a>                                                                                     | forfalder 23.59    |
| fre 25. Sep 2026  |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259202&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">The Eternal Return</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259202&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259202&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>             | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 2. Okt 2026   |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259204&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">The Age of Anxiety</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259204&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259204&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>           | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 9. Okt 2026   |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259198&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">No class, DIS academic tours</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259198&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259198&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a> | 0:00               |
| fre 16. Okt 2026  |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259197&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">The Art of Dwelling</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259197&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259197&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>          | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 23. Okt 2026  |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259194&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">Tuning into the World</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259194&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259194&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>        | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 30. Okt 2026  |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259203&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">Care and World</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259203&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259203&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a>               | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 6. Nov 2026   |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259199&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">No class, DIS academic tours</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259199&amp;include_contexts=course_95196">(https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event_id=259199&amp;include_contexts=course_95196)</a> | 0:00               |
| onsd 11. Nov 2026 |  <a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269711">Short paper 2 (DIS only)</a><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269711">(https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269711)</a>                                                                                   | forfalder 23.59    |

| Dato              | Nærmere oplysninger                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Forfalder          |
|-------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| fre 13. Nov 2026  |  <b><u>Resonance and Receptivity</u></b><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event id=259193&amp;include contexts=course 95196">. (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event id=259193&amp;include contexts=course 95196)</a> | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| fre 20. Nov 2026  |  <b><u>Living a Feminist Life</u></b><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event id=259200&amp;include contexts=course 95196">. (https://absalon.instructure.com/calendar?event id=259200&amp;include contexts=course 95196)</a>    | 10.15<br>til 12.45 |
| tors 10. Dec 2026 |  <b><u>Final paper (DIS)</u></b><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269708">. (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269708)</a>                                                             | forfalder 23.59    |
| tors 17. Dec 2026 |  <b><u>Final paper (KU)</u></b><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269709">. (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269709)</a>                                                              | forfalder 12:00    |
|                   |  <b><u>Attendance</u></b><br><a href="https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269707">. (https://absalon.instructure.com/courses/95196/assignments/269707)</a>                                                                    |                    |