

PHI 2770 – Political Philosophy

Spring 2024, Monday and Wednesday, 8:30 to 10:00, AC04 LR 008

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Office: AC01 616 | **Office Hours:** As listed on Canvas

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About This Course: Topic and Goals

This course covers some of the main topics in political philosophy. We will start with an overview of some key topics and the rest of the content will be determined by class goal.

Below are the **goals** for this course:

- Gain some understanding of some of the key topics in contemporary political philosophy.
- Improve your skills at summarizing complicated ideas concisely and clearly, commenting on those ideas with questions, objections, or extensions, and revising your writing.

Course Content

We will start with some important topics in political philosophy. The further readings will be chosen via vote. All course material is available on the course website at <https://canvas.instructure.com/courses/8395384>. Do the assigned reading for each class before that class. **Please bring the readings to class meetings**, either printed out or in *easily accessible* electronic form.

Assignments

There are four kinds of assignments in this class: **reading quizzes**, **Perusall annotations**, **reading outlines**, and **500 word papers**. There is also an **attendance requirement**. Late quizzes will have a 10% lower score for every 24 hours they are late, with a maximum reduction of 50%. Late Perusall annotations and outlines won't be accepted. 500 word papers are never late, but they have strongly suggested due dates.

Reading Quizzes are to help you focus on the important parts of the reading and to get instant feedback on whether you have understood the reading. There is one quiz per reading. The quiz is due 8:00 AM the day we discuss the reading but you should complete it much earlier. The lowest five reading quiz scores will be dropped.

Perusall Annotation Assignments allow you to collaboratively read the readings by using the Perusall website. This allows you to share thoughts and questions with fellow students and to see their thoughts and questions. Canvas has a document detailing examples of annotations you can make on Perusall. Your Perusall annotations are due 8:00 AM the day we discuss the reading but you should write them far earlier. The lowest five Perusall annotation scores will be dropped.

Reading Outlines are to help you get a comprehensive understanding of the readings and to facilitate in-class discussions. Your outlines are due 8:00 AM the day we discuss the reading but you should write them far earlier.

500 Word Papers are to help you practice thinking about and writing about the complicated ideas that are present in the books we read. They also help you understand those ideas through the feedback you receive. Details about 500 word papers are available on Canvas and we will discuss them in class too.

Grading

Paper assignments will be given one of two grades: **satisfactory** or **not yet satisfactory**. The level of achievement required for a satisfactory grade is roughly equivalent to a B+. You can resubmit any not yet satisfactory assignment for a regrade. You can submit a maximum of two papers per week. So, if you want to resubmit papers, do not leave all your resubmissions until the end of the semester.

For an A grade: An average score of 75% or better on the reading quizzes. An average score of 75% or better on the Perusall assignments. Eleven or more satisfactory reading outlines. Five or more satisfactory 500 word papers. Miss six or fewer class meetings.

For a B grade: An average score of 70% or better on the reading quizzes. An average score of 70% or better on the Perusall assignments. Ten or more satisfactory reading outlines. Four or more satisfactory 500 word papers. Miss seven or fewer class meetings.

For a C grade: An average score of 65% or better on the reading quizzes. An average score of 65% or better on the Perusall assignments. Nine or more satisfactory reading outlines. Three or more satisfactory 500 word papers. Miss eight or fewer class meetings.

For a D grade: An average score of 60% or better on the reading quizzes. An average score of 60% or better on the Perusall assignments. Eight or more satisfactory reading outlines. Two or more satisfactory 500 word papers. Miss nine or fewer class meetings.

I currently do not anticipate assigning + or – grades, but if I do, it will likely be on the basis of participation, both in class and on Perusall.

Office Hours and Email

You can come meet me during office hours in my office AC01 616 without an appointment to talk about anything you would like to talk about, like feedback on your papers or questions about the readings. If you cannot meet during office hours you can email me to schedule an appointment. If you contact me via email, please include “PHI 2770” in the subject line so I know that the email is about this course.

Disabilities

If you have disabilities which require some form of accommodation, contact me ahead of time.

ChatGPT/AI

You should not use ChatGPT or other AI tools for this course. The reason I assign papers, Perusall comments, etc. is not because I need more of them. I have enough student papers to last me the rest of my life. I assign them because the process of thinking about and writing them helps **you** develop the sorts of skills you are attending university to develop. Using ChatGPT or similar AI tools prevents you from developing these skills and thus wastes your time. It also wastes my time, because I do not care what ChatGPT has to say, nor is it useful for me to give feedback on what ChatGPT has generated.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Any time you use **words, phrases, ideas, or anything else** in your writing that you did not think up on your own, you must **cite** your source the best of your ability. Words and phrases not written by you must be enclosed in quotation marks to show that you did not write them yourself. Failure to cite a source is **plagiarism** and it's not okay. You should not need to use (or cite) outside sources for this class, but if you do use them, you must

cite them. It is perfectly okay to use points made by your classmates in discussion (or anyone else), *as long as you cite them to the best of your ability*. The one exception is that you do not need to cite me on your writing assignments in this class, unless you want to. Plagiarism or other violations of academic integrity, like cheating on quizzes, may entail sanctions like an F in the course.

Resources

My website has resources on reading, writing, and researching at <http://dannyweltman.com/resources.html>.

Schedule

Jan 22: Course introduction (no reading)

Jan 24: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* Sections 1-4

Jan 29: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* Sections 10-13 (up until “chain connection”) (also, optionally, section 14)

Jan 31: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* Sections 17, 22, 24, 29

Feb 5: Sen, “What Do We Want from a Theory of Justice?”

Feb 7: Nozick, *Anarchy State and Utopia* pages 150-64

Feb 12: Estlund, “Utopophobia”

Feb 14: Williams, “Realism and Moralism in Political Theory”

Feb 19: Shklar, “The Liberalism of Fear”

Feb 21: Taylor, “Cross-Purposes: The Liberal-Communitarian Debate”

Feb 26: Arneson, “The Supposed Right to a Democratic Say”

Feb 28: Anderson, “Democracy: Instrumental vs. Non-Instrumental Value”

Readings for the rest of the class will be chosen by vote. If you have topic suggestions, please let me know sooner rather than later. Readings may vary depending on schedule, vote outcome, etc. Possible topics include:

Anarchism: Wolff, *In Defense of Anarchism*

Annihilation of Caste: Ambedkar, "Annihilation of Caste", Manoharan, "Anti-Casteist Casteism"; Dhanda, "Philosophical Foundations of Anti-Casteism"

Bad Monuments: Lai, “Political Vandalism as Counter-Speech: A Defense of Defacing and Destroying Tainted Monuments”; Burch-Brown, “Should Slavery’s Statues Be Preserved? On Transitional Justice and Contested Heritage”; Lim, “Transforming Problematic Commemorations through Vandalism”; Bell, “Against Simple Removal: A Defence of Defacement as a Response to Racist Monuments”; Demetriou, “Questioning the Assumptions of Moralism, Universalism, and Interpretive Dominance in Racist Monument Debates”; Kuznar, “I Detest Our Confederate Monuments. But They Should Remain”

Capitalism: Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society”; Nozick, *Anarchy State and Utopia* pages 246-65; Cohen, “Why Not Socialism?”; Arneson, “Why Not Capitalism?”

Censorship: Cohen and Cohen, “The Possibility and Defensibility of Nonstate ‘Censorship’”; McKinnon, “Should We Tolerate Climate Change Denial?”; Messina, “Freedom of Expression and the Liberalism of Fear”; Maitra and McGowan, “The Limits of Free Speech”

Civil Disobedience: King Jr., “Nonviolence and Social Change”; Thoreau, “Civil Disobedience”; Selections from Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*; Selections from Raz, *The Authority of Law*; Lefkowitz, “In Defense of Penalizing (but Not Punishing) Civil Disobedience”; Brownlee, “Penalizing Civil Disobedience” and “Two Tales of Civil Disobedience: A Reply to David Lefkowitz”

Colonialism: Nichols, “Indigenous Peoples, Settler Colonialism, and Global Justice in Anglo-America”; Kohn, “Colonialism and the State of Exception”; Selections from Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*; Ypi, “What’s Wrong with Colonialism,” Nine, “Colonialism, Territory, and Pre-Existing Obligations”

Communism and Socialism: Marx, “Theses on Feuerbach” and Critique of the Gotha Program; Engels, “The Principles of Communism”; King Jr., “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break the Silence”; Wills, “What Could It Mean to Say, ‘Capitalism Causes Sexism and Racism?’”; Ypi, “Democratic Dictatorship: Political Legitimacy in Marxist Perspective”

Conservatism: Scruton, “The Conservative Attitude”; Guha, “Where are the Conservative Intellectuals in India?”; Rao, “Introduction” from *The Indian Conservative*; Kirk, “What is Conservatism?”; Oakeshott, “On Being Conservative”

Cosmopolitanism: Brock, “Equality, Sufficiency, and Global Justice”; Rofel, “Between tianxia and postsocialism: contemporary Chinese Cosmopolitanism”; Arneson, “Extreme Cosmopolitanisms Defended”; Miller, “Cosmopolitan Respect and Patriotic Concern”

Defunding the Police: Wilson and Kelling, “Broken Windows”; Selections from Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*; Selections from Vitale, *The End of Policing*; Mitchell, Attoh, and Staeheli, “‘Broken Windows Is Not the Panacea’: Common Sense, Good Sense, and Police Accountability in American Cities”

Deliberative Democracy: Benhabib, “Liberal Dialogue Versus a Critical Theory of Discursive Legitimation”; Habermas, “Three Normative Models of Democracy: Liberal, Republican, Procedural”; Lafont, “Is the Ideal of a Deliberative Democracy Coherent?”

Dirty Hands: Walzer, “Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands”; Coady and O’Neill, “Messy Morality and the Art of the Possible”; Nielson, “There is No Dilemma of Dirty Hands”

Egalitarianism: Sen, “Equality of What?”; Kagan, “Equality and Desert”; Dworkin, “Equality, Luck, and Hierarchy”; Arneson, “Luck Egalitarianism Interpreted and Defended”; Anderson, “What Is the Point of Equality?”

Feminist Political Philosophy: Jaggard, “L’Imagination au Pouvoir: Comparing John Rawls’s Method of Ideal Theory with Iris Marion Young’s Method of Critical Theory”; Nussbaum, “Women and Cultural Universals” and “The Feminist Critique of Liberalism”; Okin, “Gender, The Public and the Private”

Identity Politics: Young, “Social Difference as a Political Resource”; Fraser, “Rethinking Recognition”; Parekh, “Redistribution or Recognition? A Misguided Debate”

Immigration: Abizadeh, “Democratic Theory and Border Coercion: No Right to Unilaterally Control Your Own Borders” and “Democratic Legitimacy and State Coercion: A Reply to David Miller”; Miller, “Why Immigration Controls Are Not Coercive: A Reply to Arash Abizadeh”; Steinhoff, “Border Coercion and ‘Democratic Legitimacy’: On Abizadeh’s Argument Against Current Regimes of Border Control”; Mendoza,

“Enforcement Matters: Reframing The Philosophical Debate over Immigration”; Selections from Song, *Immigration and Democracy*

Indian Political Philosophy: Selections from Singh and Mohapatra, *Indian Political Thought*

Lying: Brennan, “Murderers at the Ballot Box”; Ramsay, “Democratic Dirty Hands”

Meritocracy: Varshney, “Merit in the Mirror of Democracy”; Sachs-Cobbe and Douglas, “Meritocracy in the Political and Economic Spheres”; Dobos, “The Duty to Hire on Merit”; von Platz, “The Principle of Merit and the capital-labour split”; Clavero García, “The Idea of Merit”; Sen, “Merit and Justice”

More on Democracy: Kolody, “Rule Over None” parts I and II

More on Liberalism: Hartley and Watson, “Is a Feminist Political Liberalism Possible?”; Mills, “Racial Liberalism”

Non-Human Animals: Pepper, “Beyond Anthropocentrism: Cosmopolitanism and Nonhuman Animals”; Hinchcliffe, “Animals and the Limits of Citizenship: Zoopolis and the Concept of Citizenship”; Ladwig, “Against Wild Animal Sovereignty: An Interest-based Critique of Zoopolis”; Donaldson and Kymlicka, “Interspecies Politics: Reply to Hinchcliffe and Ladwig”

Patriotism and Nationalism: Nathanson, “In Defense of Moderate Patriotism”; Gomberg, “Patriotism is Like Racism”; Hurka, “The Justification of National Partiality”; Lichtenberg, “Nationalism, For and (Mainly) Against”

Political Obligation: Parekh, “A Misconceived Discourse on Political Obligation”; Applbaum, “Legitimacy without the Duty to Obey”

Property Rights: De Jasay, “Property and its Enemies”; Narveson, “Original Acquisition and Lockean Provisos”; Wenar, “Original Acquisition of Private Property”; van der Vossen, “What Counts as Original Appropriation?”

Reparations: Butt, “Repairing Historical Wrongs and the End of Empire”; Wenar, “Reparations for the Future”; Lu, “Colonialism as Structural Injustice”; Vernon, “Against Restitution”

Secession: Buchanan, “Theories of Secession”; Selections from Altman and Wellman, *A Liberal Theory of International Justice*

Self-Determination: Margalit and Raz, “National Self-Determination”;

Surveillance: Venkatesh, “Surveillance Capitalism: a Marx-inspired Account”; Macnish, “Government Surveillance and Why Defining Privacy Matters in a Post-Snowden World” and “An Eye for an Eye: Proportionality and Surveillance”; Rønn and Lipper-Rasmussen, “Out of Proportion? On Surveillance and the Proportionality Requirement”; Macnish, “Just Surveillance?”; Palm, “Conditions under which Surveillance may be Ethically Justifiable”

Violence: Howard, “Nonviolence in the Dharma Traditions”; Held, “Legitimate Authority in Non-state Groups Using Violence”; Narveson, “Pacifism: Does it Make Moral Sense?”

Voting Ethics: Maskivker, “An Epistemic Justification for the Obligation to Vote”; Goldman, “Why Citizens Should Vote: A Causal Responsibility Approach”; Lim, “Voting in Bad Faith”; Brennan, “Polluting The Polls: When Citizens Should Not Vote”; Sheehy, “A Duty Not to Vote”

War: Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars* chapter 3; McMahan, “The Ethics of Killing in War”