

**Philosophy 106: Philosophy, Politics & Society**  
Spring 2012: T,TH 5:35- 6:50pm, Room - HW506.  
4282 (SEC 051):  
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Office hours: Tuesdays 4:30-5:30pm, and by appt.

We will have two primary objectives in this course. One task will be to provide an introduction to some of the most enduring and influential contributions to political philosophy, and thereby to get a feel for the sorts of problems and questions major political and social thinkers have engaged in. The other will be to sink our teeth into a variety of contemporary debates, including everything from what protections the State owes its citizens, to whether the State has a right to levy taxes; from how ‘rights’ are best understood, to what the best way to conceive of ‘justice’ is; from how much influence the government should have over our lives, to how far the concept of ‘equality’ can be pushed; from how much patriotism is rational to how cosmopolitan a citizen can really be—and to bring relevant political philosophy to bear on these issues. Our course will be broken up into six distinct but related sections, with each focused on a major topic.

The required text for the course is ***Political Philosophy: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, by Louis P. Pojman**. Available at Shakespeare Books. (ISBN: 0-07-2448111-3). Required supplementary readings will also be made available online.

Attendance, Requirements, Grades:

Your grade in this class will be the result of: individual presentations and your class participation (20%), one short paper (20%) two short exams (15% X 2), and a final exam (30%).

- The paper will be your opportunity to demonstrate your understanding of a given issue, a given philosopher’s position, what is at stake in the debate, and so on. You will also evaluate the arguments and articulate your own position. I will provide more specifics on the paper further along.
- The final will be **cumulative and comprehensive**, testing your familiarity with the authors and readings we study, as well as what we go over in class.
- In addition to individual presentations, brain-storming sessions, and discussions (which count toward your grade), lectures will provide information needed to pass this class’s tests and to write successful papers for it that can be had nowhere else. Make it to class!

Academic Honesty, etc. :

There are very strong ethical and practical reasons to maintain strict academic integrity. Plagiarism is strictly prohibited (and is easy to detect). If you have questions about citations, using the work of others, etc., I’m happy to help you with this.

**\*IF you are confused about material, need help with your writing, know that you are going to be absent, or have other course related difficulties: Come to my office hour or contact me via e-mail BEFORE the paper is due, the absent date arrives, etc., and we’ll figure something out.**

T, 1/31: Introduction; Syllabus; General background; Explanation of presentations; Suggestions for reading philosophy, and for writing philosophy papers...

TH, 2/2: Hobbes (pgs. 8-30). PRESENTATIONS:  
\*on Blackboard: The Tragedy of the Commons.

T, 2/7: Locke (pgs. 31-50).  
TH, 2/9: Rousseau, Hume (pgs. 51-63; 63-72).

\*T, 2/14: **SHORT EXAM 1.**

**--OBLIGATIONS TO THE STATE--**

TH, 2/16: Wolff, Rawls (pgs. 130-6; 143-150). \_\_\_\_\_

**--LIBERTY and PATERNALISM--**

T, 2/21: NO CLASS ( Classes meet according to a Monday schedule).  
TH, 2/23: Mill, *On Liberty*, part 1 (pgs. 95-112). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 2/28: Mill, *On Liberty*, part 2 (pgs. 112-129).  
TH, 3/1: Berlin, (pgs. 179-192). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 3/6: Feinberg, (pgs. 192-198).  
TH, 3/8: Dworkin (pgs. 198-208). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 3/13: Hayek (pgs. 208-216). \_\_\_\_\_

**--THEORIES of JUSTICE--**

\*TH, 3/15: **PAPER DUE.** Wollstonecroft, Marx & Engels. (pgs. 79-84; 84-92). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 3/20: Nozick (pgs. 256-269).  
TH, 3/22: Rawls (pgs. 270-285). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 3/27: MacIntyre, Hume (pgs. 252-6; 297-303). \_\_\_\_\_

**--STATE MORALITY?--**

TH, 3/29: Dworkin (pgs. 333-345). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 4/3: Galston (pgs. 345-353).  
\*TH, 4/5: **SHORT EXAM 2.** \_\_\_\_\_

**-SPRING RECESS-**

**--EQUALITY--**

T, 4/17: Mosley (pgs. 421-29).  
TH, 4/19: Pojman (pgs. 429-440). \_\_\_\_\_

**\*\*\*Last Day to Drop with a "W" Grade.**

**--RIGHTS--**

T, 4/24: Hart (pgs. 489-496).  
TH, 4/26: Feinberg (pgs. 460-468). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 5/1: Gerwith (pgs. 468-479).  
TH, 5/3: MacIntyre (pgs. 479-482). \_\_\_\_\_

**--SOVEREIGNTY, PATRIOTISM, COSMOPOLITANISM--**

T, 5/8: Tolstoy (pgs. 503-518).  
TH, 5/10: Barry (pgs. 546-556). \_\_\_\_\_

T, 5/15: MacIntyre (pgs. 518-526).  
**Final Exam ...To Be Announced.** Review.