

PHIL 220W
HISTORY OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
Spring 2024

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Course Description:

This is an undergraduate course on the history of political philosophy. It includes a thematic survey of the history of political philosophy, with a focus on the idea of the “social contract” found in a number of thinkers. In the first part of the course, we will study various versions of the social contract theory and the cluster of concepts around this theory: freedom/liberty/slavery; justice; race, sex/gender, labor, land, property, rights, and revolution. In the second part of the course, we will study the immigration, border imperialism, and migrant labor, with a focus on its legacy in contemporary U.S. social justice movements and conception of citizenship.

The most important course objective is for each member of our learning community to be and to remain compassionate toward oneself and others throughout these difficult and heavy times. We will care for our own and one another’s safety, health, and overall wellbeing to the best of our abilities at any given time. Because compassion is the most important objective, the course materials are all online (no textbooks are required), the course is self-assessed, and **all assignment deadlines are flexible and each assignment includes an option to revise, rewrite, and resubmit. There are no late penalties for any assignment.**

Course Competencies:

After completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Understand the theories and concepts of justice, freedom, and revolution in political philosophy.
2. Connect the history of political thought to current social and political institutions, structures, and issues.
3. Analyze current events in their proper historical context
4. Create a public philosophy project to present your work in a non-academic way.
5. Acquire fundamental analytic writing, speaking, and comprehension skills.

Course Requirements, Activities, and Assignments:

Your grade is divided into 3 (three) categories, each weighing equally for your final grade for the course: **Presence**
Weekly Reflection Papers
Final Project.

1. **PRESENCE is 1/3rd of your overall grade and is defined as follows:**

- Your **weekly** cognitive presence in class (having read and be well-versed in the assigned materials for the day; demonstrating your familiarity with the texts by asking thoughtful questions; active listening; and respectful participation).
- Your **weekly** presence demonstrated by completion of online materials and assignments, i.e., reading/listening/watching activity and the Weekly Reflection Paper-- ideally to be **completed before 8pm on Sundays before we meet weekly.**

Being thoughtfully present means being prepared for class: it means that you have read and engaged with the materials, having not just skimmed them, but thought about what they mean, with questions that you have, especially regarding ideas that you do not understand. **Sometimes, you will have to read and re-read our excerpted readings and materials several times to be able to formulate specific questions or answer questions about them in your papers.**

2. **WEEKLY PAPERS are 1/3rd of your overall grade, and is defined as follows:**

Each week, you will be asked to write a Weekly reflection Paper as drawn from the assigned materials of that particular week. It will be a 250-300word explanation and reflection, citing at least two materials. These must be typed and posted on Canvas **by 8pm every Sunday.** Your reflection does not need to be exhaustive; however, it should exhibit a thoughtful engagement with the materials and show me that you have done the reading in a careful manner. They will be used to guide lecture and facilitate discussion in class.

These will be graded as follows: a \checkmark + (excellent understanding of reading), a \checkmark (adequate understanding), or a \checkmark - (insufficient understanding of the reading and an invitation to meet with the T.A. and/or the professor)

3. **FINAL PROJECT is 1/3rd of your overall grade for the course:**

It can be either an individual or a (2 or 3 person) group assignment. You will prepare a public philosophy project on at least two (at most four) of the authors, texts, concepts, or issues that we have studied in the course. This assignment will build on the previous work you have completed and incorporate explanation as well as analysis. More details

and guidelines will be given later in the Semester. You will be able to turn in a draft before the due date and receive detailed feedback before completion of your final project. The feedback will include the following evaluation rubric: a $\sqrt{+}$ (Strong); a $\sqrt{}$ (Satisfactory); or a $\sqrt{-}$ (Weak; an invitation to meet with one or both of the professors) There is no final exam for this course.

Assessment (or Grading) Structure and Policies: UNGRADING

This course will focus on **qualitative not quantitative assessment by instructors and self-assessment by students themselves**. While you will get a final grade at the end of the term, Dr. H will not be grading individual assignments (outside of the tripartite Strong-Satisfactory-Weak criteria), but rather asking questions and making comments that engage your work in addition to evaluating it. I promise to give you tailored, detailed feedback on all your written work and focus on your process and progress.

The intention here is to help you focus on working in a more organic way, as opposed to working as you think you are expected to. If you are unable to complete any assignment in this course on or by its posted due date, no problem; please continue working on it and turn it in at any time in the semester.

Midterm and Final Self-Assessments: You will be reflecting carefully on your own work and learning throughout the course: more formally once around Week 3, and then again at the end of the semester. In these self-assessment letters, you will reflect on your work in this class, include links to examples of your work, and explain what letter you would give yourself and why. I will assign you that grade for the course as long as your reasoning is clearly demonstrated by your performance throughout the course; except in very rare cases where objective evidence does not match up with your self-assessment.

You will have a chance to see your progress on all the assignments throughout the semester on Canvas. We also recommend that you keep a record of all the work/labor/effort/time/energy you put into the class, for your own self-accountability. In the case of group collaboration, you will reflect on your own as well as your team members' work in the same way.

If this process causes more anxiety than it alleviates, see me at any point to confer about your progress in the course to date. You may also want to read Alfie Kohn's, "The Case Against Grades":

www.alfiekohn.org/article/case-grades/

If you are worried about your grade, your best strategy should be to do the readings, join the asynchronous and synchronous discussions, and complete all the assignments. You should consider this course a "busy-work-free zone." If an assignment does not feel

productive, we can find ways to modify, remix, or repurpose the instructions, so please reach out to your professor.

Academic Integrity: This course has a zero-tolerance plagiarism policy. If you are found to have plagiarized or cheated on any assignment, a letter will be sent to the appropriate university officials.

Please note that it is very difficult to plagiarize on accident: it consists in copying papers or parts of papers from other people or services, regardless of whether money changes hands or it is a good will agreement. Plagiarism includes using Internet sites, including encyclopedia sites like Wikipedia, book reviews and journal articles, or “study aid” sites like SparkNotes, Cliffnotes, if you do not cite them properly. All work turned in must be solely your own. I can only award you a grade for the course given that you have done the work—in the event that you fail to do so, you shall have to try again in another semester.

By signing up for and staying in this course, you understand what plagiarism and the consequences of plagiarizing in PHIL 220 Fall 2023 are. For more details, you can read the Emory University’s student initiated and regulated Honor code at:
<http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>

Different Abilities are welcome and will be accommodated in this class. I recognize that there are multiple ways to learn and that this multiplicity should be acknowledged in the design and structure of university courses and the evaluation of their participants. I also encourage students in this course to discuss their learning styles and comprehension requirements with me during my office hours or, if necessary, at another arranged time.

For additional information about accessibility and accommodations, please contact the Department of Accessibility Services at (404) 727-9877 or accessibility@emory.edu.

Logging onto Zoom for the synchronous sessions: For our synchronous sessions, please go to the Zoom link in Canvas.

Software and Technical Requirements: Information on the software we will be using and the technical requirements for the online class are located at the end of the syllabus. Please note that there are video tutorials on Canvas for each of the software packages (Zoom; Canvas).

Basic Resources and Needs: Any student who faces challenges securing their food, housing, or school supplies, and believes that this may affect their performance in the course is urged to contact the Office of the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify Dr. H if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable me to provide any resources that the Department of

Philosophy may possess.

Writing Center Support for Undergraduate Students

The full **Emory Writing Center** staff of undergraduate tutors and graduate fellows is available remotely this fall to support Emory College students as they work on any type of writing assignment in any field: sciences, social sciences, or humanities. Tutors can assist with a range of projects, from traditional papers and presentations to websites and other multimedia projects. They work with students on concerns including idea development, structure, use of sources, grammar, and word choice. They do not proofread for students. Instead, they discuss strategies and resources students can use as they write, revise, and edit their own work. Tutors also support the literacy needs of English Language Learners; several tutors are ELL Specialists, who have received additional training.

Learn more and make an appointment at writingcenter.emory.edu.

Quick Tips:

If you miss a class session or assignment deadline, relax. It happens. All deadlines are flexible.

Note that you are responsible for checking Canvas site and your email regularly for announcements, updates, and reminders about our class.

One more important piece of information....

Canvas may be down occasionally for maintenance. Please plan ahead!

Modules –Assignment Schedule, Course Materials

This schedule is subject to change; please check your emails and Canvas (Modules) to be updated on what is due each week.

Jan. 17	Introductions & Syllabus. Before class: Read the Syllabus on Canvas and come with questions
Jan. 22	Due before class: Listen to BBC podcast episode on “The Social Contract” and Watch “Lord of the Flies”
Jan. 24	Come prepared to discuss “Lord of the Flies”
Jan. 29	Due before class: read Thomas Hobbes’s <i>The Leviathan</i> selections
Jan. 31	Hobbes, cont.

Feb. 5	Due before class: read John Locke, selections from <i>The Second Treatise on Civil Government</i> , and read Selections from the <i>New York Times 1619 Project</i>
Feb. 7	Lock, cont.
Feb. 12	Due before class: read Jean-Jacques Rousseau selections from <i>The Origin of Inequality</i>
Feb. 14	Due before class: listen to BBC Podcast episode on “Karl Marx” and read Marx& Engels, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i>
Feb. 19	Due before class: Due before class: Listen to BBC podcast episode on “Valladolid Debate” and read Sylvia Federici, selections from <i>The Caliban and the Witch</i>
Feb. 21	Due before class: read Charles Mills’s <i>The Racial Contract</i> and Watch: <i>Race: The Power of an Illusion Episode 2</i>
Feb. 26	Due before class: read “The Declaration of Independence”, Benjamin Banneker’s Letter, The Memorial of Cherokee Nation, Thomas Jefferson, <i>Notes on Virginia</i> , and Angela Davis’s <i>Women, Race, Class</i>
Feb. 28	Due before class: read Weber’s <i>Foreigners in Their Native Land</i> , Ortiz’s <i>An African American and Latinx History of the United States</i> , listen to selected episodes of the University and Slavery podcast; read Emory University Land Acknowledgement Statement.
Mar. 4	Due before class: read Iris Marion Young’s <i>Five Faces of Oppression</i>
Mar. 6	Iris Marion Young, cont.
Mar. 11-15	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS and no assignments. REST
Mar. 18	Due before class: read Steven Sacco’s “Abolishing Citizenship”
Mar. 20	Due before class: Calvin John Smiley’s <i>Purgatory Citizenship</i>
Mar. 25	Due before class: listen to Rev Left Radio podcast on border imperialism, read Aviña’s “The American Maginot Line”
Mar. 27	Due before class: read Walia’s <i>Undoing Border Imperialism</i> and <i>Border and Rule</i>
Apr. 1	Due before class: read <i>Feminism for 99% Manifesto</i>

Apr. 3	Due before class: readings on social reproduction of labor and immigration detention centers
Apr. 8	Due before class: read Henaway's <i>Essential Work, Disposable Workers</i>
Apr. 10	Due before class: read Denvir's <i>All-American Nativism</i>
Apr. 15	TBD
Apr. 17	TBD
Apr. 22	TBD
Apr. 24	Read Walter Johnson, "to Re-Make the World"
Apr. 29	Workshop on Final Projects