

PHIL 2400 (19259)  
WF 9:35am-10:55am in Denney Hall 238

Autumn 2015

## Political and Social Philosophy

How should we live together? This course provides an introductory survey of leading answers to this question from the history of social and political philosophy. We contrast ancient and modern responses to this question in order to understand how an appreciation for anthropology and psychology might be at stake in a response. But these responses do not contain a clear or distinct account of society, and its proper relationship to the state and the individual. Is the state necessarily a crony of economic and social forces, or can it adequately serve as an opposing or limiting source of power? How might we design and reform our public lives to eliminate or minimize the negative effects of majoritarianism, conformism, and capitalism? Finally, we look at one recent effort to articulate a defensible set of principles to guide how we should live with each other under conditions of moral and political disagreement. Do these accounts adequately respond to historical and structural forms of injustice, especially patriarchy, white supremacy, and colonialism? How should we live together now in light of these inheritances?

This course fulfills the following General Education requirement: Cultures and Ideas.

### Instructional Staff

Professor Shuster University Hall 337H <a href="mailto:shuster.67@osu.edu">shuster.67@osu.edu</a> Skype: professor.shuster Weds & Fri 1:00-2:30pm, and by appointment	Grader Evan M. Thomas University Hall 214 <a href="mailto:thomas.3172@osu.edu">thomas.3172@osu.edu</a> Weds & Fri 11:00am-12:00pm	Writing Associate Max Orr <a href="mailto:orr.227@osu.edu">orr.227@osu.edu</a> By appointment
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### General Education Goal

- Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for: aesthetic and historical response and judgment, and interpretation and evaluation.

### General Education Expected Learning Outcomes

- Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.
- Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

Students will achieve these goals through thoughtful reading of assigned texts, participation in class activities, and successful completion of formal and informal writing assignments.

### Course Materials

*Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought: Essential Readings* (9781554811021)  
Resources posted to our course website in Carmen  
Reading guides posted to Carmen  
Discussion board on Carmen

## Assessments

Overall course grade is computed with the following weighted value of each component:

10%	Good Citizenship
10%	Argumentative Paragraphs
50%	Problem Essays
20%	Final Exam
10%	Wild Card

You must complete each component of the course in order to receive at least a passing grade. Grades posted during semester to grade book in Carmen.

**Important dates** (like major assignment due dates and the final exam date) are noted in **bold** in the Schedule of Classes at the end of this Syllabus.

**Good Citizenship** measures how students contribute to the learning of fellow students and to the educational environment of our class. Class attendance and participation in class discussions and group work comprise the majority of this assignment. In order to be able to participate fully, carefully read and take notes on the assigned texts for that day of class in advance of class. Expect to spend 1-2 hours reading in advance of each class. To aid you in this endeavor, I distribute reading guides. These guides are designed to help you more effectively take notes on the assigned texts: to recognize key terms and their definitions, the important steps in an argument, and connections to other class texts. After taking these notes, come to class with questions about elements of the text that you did not fully understand or that were particularly interesting to you. You should bring to class the text(s) assigned for discussion, as noted in the Schedule of Classes, as we will reference the text regularly in class. To contribute to the educational environment, you should project respect for and interest in the contributions of fellow students both in what you say and how you comport your body. Respect comes in a variety of forms, including but not limited to disagreement that takes the ideas of others seriously and sincerely, asking others to say more about their ideas, connecting the ideas of students, listening attentively, and reflecting back to others what you hear them saying. Lack of respect also comes in a variety of forms, including but not limited to arriving late to class and doing things during class that should be done outside of class (e.g. checking your phone, work for other classes). Finally, informal writing during class contributes to this assignment, including individual and group writing. I encourage you to speak with me about your response to these writing exercises after they are returned. Extra credit can be earned for contributions to our discussion board in Carmen; these opportunities are described more fully on the discussion board.

**Argumentative Paragraphs** are assigned to help students learn a basic but not obvious component of college-level, philosophical writing. After instruction on the elements and purpose of argumentative writing, students are asked to turn in a single paragraph (of approximately 350 words) three times during the semester. Students who earn an A or A- on the first two paragraphs do not have to turn in the third paragraph; all other students must turn in three paragraphs in order to complete this assignment. The grade for this assignment will be determined by the average of your two best paragraphs.

**Problem Essays** offer students the opportunity to formalize their engagement with the course material in writing. You will respond to a prompt for at least two (2) of the four (4) due dates. You must turn in an essay for either the first or the second due dates (and you are allowed to write for both). Prompts for each due date will be distributed in class and posted to Carmen several weeks in

advance. Excellent responses will accurately, clearly, and appropriately explain the relevant course material (with correct citations) and develop an insightful, original (i.e. your own) argument. Essays should be at least 1500 words and not much more than 2000 words in length, use [Chicago "Author-Date" in-text citation style](#), and include a complete and accurate list of references. Any works consulted (print, online, or interpersonal) should also be acknowledged as per standard academic procedure and the prescriptions of the OSU [Code of Student Conduct](#). A lexicon and rubric describing the elements of the academic essay at various levels of accomplishment will be distributed in class. Essays will be uploaded as MS Word compatible documents to Carmen. See Course Policies uploaded to Carmen for information on late assignments and extensions. The grade for this assignment will be determined by the average of your two best essays.

**Final Exam** study questions will be distributed well in advance of the end of the semester. The key concepts noted for each class period in the Schedule of Classes are part of this study guide. The exam will comprise a selection of these questions, which will pertain to all the course material and discussions (i.e. it is cumulative). You will be asked to write a number of short, expository responses and one argumentative essay. Expository responses accurately and clearly explain the course material. Argumentative essays require that you develop an original (i.e. your own) argument in response to the course material, thus they also include an expository component. If you have a conflict with our exam time (as noted in the Schedule of Classes), then please notify me by **September 18** so that we can make alternative arrangements.

**Wild Card** is designed to allow you to engage with the course material in light of your distinct talents and interests. Here are a few options to consider:

- 1) Write a third problem essay for a due date that you have not already written for.
- 2) Use your grade on the final exam as the grade for this assignment.
- 3) A piece of public writing of at least 1200 words (e.g. blog post, letter to an editor, newspaper editorial); consult with course instructor on topic and audience. For example: <https://civitasperegrina.wordpress.com/2013/06/27/doma-and-distributive-justice/> or <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/9366177/A-philosopher-for-the-Facebook-generation.html>
- 4) An original illustration, drawing, collage or other artwork of a core concept or idea from the course material. For example (though far more involved than expected for this assignment): <http://comment.rsablogs.org.uk/2010/06/28/rsa-animate-crisis-capitalism/> or <http://existentialcomics.com/>
- 5) A soundtrack of at least 12 songs that illustrate or exemplify ideas from the course, along with a description of how you see each song (or a significant set of lines from the lyrics) relating to the course.
- 6) A prezi for one class lecture (must be an improvement over the existing class A/V material). Create an educational account for free using your OSU email address at: [prezi.com](http://prezi.com).
- 7) If you are majoring in Education or considering a teaching career, design a lesson plan (including all necessary A/V material) that introduces one of our course readings on a topic central to the course theme to a student population that you anticipate teaching. For sample lesson plans (not all topically relevant), see <http://www.tocqueville.org/>
- 8) Another appropriate project of your design approved by the course instructor.

You will be asked to declare your Wild Card intention on the last day of class. If you chose an option numbered 3-8 above, then you must turn in a proposal of your planned project on the last day of class. Consult the course instructor at least a week in advance of the last day of class to learn what to include in your proposal.

## Schedule of Classes

- Weds, 8/26*      How should we live together?  
Key concepts: capabilities approach, contractarianism, contractualism  
Watch in advance: Martha Nussbaum from [The Examined Life](#) (8 min)
- Fri, 8/28*      What are we?  
Key concepts: *eudaimonia*, capacity, activity, human function  
Read in advance: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Book.chapter) 1.1-5, 1.7-8, 1.13
- Weds, 9/2*      Cultivating human capability  
Key concepts: intellectual virtues, character virtues, the mean, contextualism, virtue  
Read in advance: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 2.1-9
- Fri, 9/4*      How social and political life relate to human capability  
Key concepts: association, the citizen, plurality, self-sufficiency, justice, equality  
Read in advance: Aristotle, *Politics*, 1.1-4, 1.12-13, 2.1, 3.1, 3.5-6, 3.12, 7.3, and 7.8
- Mon, 9/7*      **Argumentative Paragraph 1 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 9/9*      What are we (without a common coercive authority)?  
Key concepts: state of nature, atomism, self-preservation, ambivalent nature of man  
Read in advance: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chapters 8, 11, 13 and 17
- Fri, 9/11*      How government arises  
Key concepts: the social contract, commonwealth by institution and by acquisition, minimalism versus perfectionism  
Read in advance: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chapters 18, 20, and 30
- Mon, 9/14*      **Argumentative Paragraph 2 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 9/16*      The source(s) of government  
Key concepts: nature versus convention, laws of nature, civil laws  
Read in advance: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Introduction, chapters 14-15, and skim 26
- Fri, 9/18*      The origin and nature of society, an alternative psychology and anthropology  
Key concepts: egocentricism, pity, perfectibility, moral inequality, dependence  
Read in advance: Rousseau, selections from "Discourse on Inequality"
- Mon, 9/21*      **Problem Essay 1 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 9/23*      Rights and (property) ownership before the state of war and civil state  
Key concepts: right of the strongest, right of the first occupant  
Read in advance: Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, 1.1-9 (book.chapter); and Locke, *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, chapter 5
- Fri, 9/25*      A legitimate source of coercive authority  
Key concepts: particular will, the general will, the will of all, common interest  
Read in advance: Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, 2.1-4, 2.6, 2.11-12, 4.1-2

- Weds, 9/30* From contract to an idea of reason  
 Key concepts: contractarianism versus contractualism, categorical imperative, maxim, right, public right, freedom, equality, independence  
 Read in advance: Kant, "On the Common Saying: 'This May Be True in Theory, but It Does Not Apply in Practice'" Section II, and a page from *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*
- Fri, 10/2* Civil society and the state without contracts  
 Key concepts: right, public right, coercion, the (civil) state  
 Read in advance: Kant, *Metaphysics of Morals* §D, §43-45 and §52
- Mon, 10/5* **Problem Essay 2 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 10/7* How modern social life threatens liberty  
 Key concepts: utility, living belief, dead dogma, appropriate region of human liberty  
 Read in advance: J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, selection from chapters 1-2
- Fri, 10/9* Individuality and legitimate interference  
 Key concepts: experiments in living, limits of liberty, right of discrimination  
 Read in advance: J.S. Mill, *On Liberty*, selection from chapters 3-4
- Weds, 10/14* Alienation under capitalism  
 Key concepts: materialism, labor's realization, labor's objectification, four aspects of estrangement (or alienation), social property, human emancipation  
 Read in advance: Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, "Estranged Labor" and "Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*"
- Fri, 10/16* No class due to Autumn Break  
**Argumentative Paragraph 3 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 10/21* The contradiction between liberty and private property  
 Key concepts: liberal freedom, Marxist freedom, rights of man  
 Read in advance: Marx, selection from "On the Jewish Question"
- Fri, 10/23* Class canceled due to Association for Political Theory conference
- Mon, 10/26* **Problem Essay 3 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 10/28* Justice as fairness  
 Key concepts: the original position, social cooperation, utilitarianism  
 Read in advance: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* §3, §4, §5-6
- Fri, 10/30* The principles of justice  
 Key concepts: principles of justice, difference principle, basic structure  
 Read in advance: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* §11, §13, and §14
- Weds, 11/4* Reasoning from the principles of justice  
 Key concepts: social goods, redress, reciprocity, fraternity, veil of ignorance  
 Read in advance: Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* §15, §17, and §24

- Fri, 11/6* From idealized contracts to legitimacy  
Key concepts: overlapping consensus, fact of (reasonable) pluralism, social unity, political conception of justice  
Read in advance: Rawls, "The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus"
- Weds, 11/11* No class due to Veteran's Day observation
- Fri, 11/13* Contracting for Male Domination  
Key concepts: the sexual contract, patriarchal right, civil mastery, civil subordination, contractarianism, patriarchy  
Read in advance: Carole Pateman, selections from *The Sexual Contract*
- Weds, 11/18* Contracting for White Supremacy  
Key concepts: the problem of the color line, the veil, double-consciousness, the racial contract, the racial state, epistemology of ignorance, exploitation contract  
Read in advance: selections from W.E.B. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk* and Charles W. Mills, *The Racial Contract*
- Fri, 11/20* Contracting for Modern Colonialism  
Key concepts: two senses of *terra nullius*, strict versus tempered logic (plus examples), legitimate private war, occupation, Locke on private property, who is and is not party to the settler contract  
Read in advance: Carole Pateman, "The Settler Contract"
- Mon, 11/23* **Problem Essay 4 due by 10:00pm to Carmen**
- Weds, 11/25* No class due to Thanksgiving break
- Fri, 11/27* No class due to Columbus Day observation
- Weds, 12/2* Against contracts as the paradigmatic relationship  
Key concepts: mothering person, non-patriarchal household, voluntariness, non-replaceability, empowerment, vulnerability, shared goals and interests  
Read in advance: Virginia Held, "The Non-Contractual Society"  
**Check in with Professor Shuster about Wild Card options**
- Fri, 12/4* The inevitability of disability  
Key concepts: 10 central human capabilities, circumstances of justice, purpose of social cooperation, good care, varieties of guardianship, equal respect for dignity, respect for human individuality  
Read in advance: Martha Nussbaum, selections from *Frontiers of Justice*
- Weds, 12/9* How should we live now in light of these features and inheritances?  
Key concepts: review all  
Read: no assignment  
**Declaration of Wild Card intention due in class.**
- Thurs, 12/10* Reading Day

*Thurs, 12/17* Final Exam from 8:00-9:45am in Denney Hall 238

**NB: This syllabus is subject to change with appropriate notice  
Changes will be announced in class and posted to our course website in Carmen.**

### **College of Arts and Sciences Required Statements**

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>.

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

**Consult Course Policies (PDF) posted to Carmen > Content > Syllabus & Policies  
for policies and procedures developed specifically for this course.**