

**PHL 126: Social and Political Philosophy
Denison University, Fall 2008**

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M/W/F 9:30-10:20 AM
Knapp 202
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Course Description: Social and Political Philosophy is about justification, of power and freedom in their many crude and subtle forms, and about whether objective or rational justifications in political and social action are practical or even possible. The course will take into account the various methods utilized by philosophers in rendering their world views. It includes an exploration of a network of fundamental philosophical questions regarding the nature of the community, the state, the role of the individual and the relationships among them. Students will become comfortable with some of the great classical texts in Western political thought from Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Smith, Marx and Nietzsche as well as with more contemporary sources. Thus, this course raises questions about the social practices of Western culture, including the issue of whether the social and the political dimensions of our thinking can be justifiably separated.

Required Texts:

John Locke, *Second Treatise on Civil Government* (Hackett 1990). ISBN: 0915144867

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (Hackett, 1987) ISBN: 087220068X

Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* (Hackett, 1983) ISBN: 0915145472

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett, 1978) ISBN: 0915144433

Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, ed. Simon (Hackett, 1994) ISBN: 0872202186

John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* ed. E. Kelly (Harvard, 2001)
ISBN: 0674005112

Course Schedule: All dates and content scheduled is tentative and subject to change by the Instructor at any time for any reason.

DATE	ASSIGNMENT	TOPIC
1 Sept:	Introduction	
3 Sept:	Plato, "Crito"	Obedience and Authority
5 Sept:	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , Chs. I-IV	The State of Nature

8 Sept:	Locke, Chs. V	Property
10 Sept:	Locke, Chs. VI-VII	Parental vs. Paternal Power
12 Sept:	Locke, Chs. VIII-XV	The Social Contract and Democracy
15 Sept:	Locke, Chs. XVI-XIX	Revolution
17 Sept:	TBA	
19 Sept:	Jean Jacques Rousseau, <i>Social Contract</i> , Book I	The Origins of Authority
22 Sept:	Rousseau, Book II	Law and the General Will
24 Sept:	Rousseau, Book III	Sovereign and Legislator
26 Sept:	Rousseau, Book IV	Principles of Government and Usurpation
29 Sept:	Rousseau, Book IV (continued)	Government, Citizenship and the Roman model
1 Oct:	TBA	
3 Oct:	Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with Cosmopolitan Intent"	Cosmopolitanism
6 Oct:	Kant, "What is Enlightenment?"	Enlightenment
8 Oct:	Kant, "Speculative Beginning of Human History"	The Social Contract reconsidered
10 Oct:	Kant, "Theory and Practice"	Praxis
13 Oct:	Kant, "Perpetual Peace" I	International Politics
15 Oct:	Kant, "Perpetual Peace" II	Morality and Politics
17 Oct:	TBA	
20 Oct:	John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , Chapter I	Tyranny of the Majority
22 Oct:	Mill, Chapter II	Liberty of Thought and

		Discussion
24 Oct:	Mill, Chapter III	Individuality
27 Oct:	Mill, Chapter IV	Limits of Society over the Individual
29 Oct:	Mill, Chapter V	“Applications”
31 Oct:	TBA	
3 Nov:	Karl Marx, Selected Writings	Marx Myths
5 Nov:	Marx, “Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts”	Alienation
7 Nov:	Marx, selection from <i>German Ideology</i> , Part I	Ideology
10 Nov:	Marx, Capital I	The Commodity
12 Nov:	Marx, Capital II	Surplus Value
14 Nov:	Marx, “The Manifesto”	Communism
17 Nov:	TBA	
19 Nov:	Rawls, <i>Justice as Fairness</i> , Part I	The Original Position
21 Nov:	Rawls, Part II	Principles of Justice
24-28 Nov:	Thanksgiving Break	No Class!!
1 Dec:	Rawls, Part III §§23-26	The Veil of Ignorance
3 Dec:	Rawls, Part III §§26-40	Kantian and Utilitarian conceptions of Justice
5 Dec:	Rawls, Part IV	Justice as Fairness
8 Dec:	Rawls, Part V	Stability
10 Dec:	TBA	
12 Dec:	Review for Final	
15 Dec:	Final Exam (9 - 11 AM)	

Note on the Indeterminacy of Time: Rarely is there enough time in the semester to cover everything an ideal course in philosophy should cover. Although everything on the reading list this semester is

important, I reserve the right to alter the schedule to correspond with the pace of the class.

Evaluation: The main point of evaluation for this course will be 6 short response papers (2-3 pages in length) each due throughout the semester. Due dates for these papers will be announced. The one lowest grade on the short response papers will be “dropped” when calculating your final grade. *Late response papers will receive a full letter grade deduction per day late.* Please note that two copies of the paper are always required: one hard copy in class, the other uploaded to Blackboard <http://courses.denison.edu>, under “Assignments.” Your grade will be reduced for failing to deliver both copies by the due date.

In addition to the short papers, an in-class comprehensive final exam will be given on Monday, December 15 at 9:00 AM, in conjunction with the University schedule. Anyone who cannot take the final exam for any reason must make arrangements to make it up at least one week prior to the scheduled exam date. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade for the exam.

The following weighting will be used to calculate your grade:

Short response Papers (2-3 pp.)	10% (each)
(best five of six grades) x 5 =	50 %
Attendance and Participation	20 %
Final Exam	30 %

Note on Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism is the ultimate mortal sin of academia. Please, cite properly and document accordingly anything that may appear in your written work for this class. If you are unclear about how to properly document a paper, simply ask me. But err on the side of caution: clear-cut cases of plagiarism (deemed so by myself) will result in the possibility of up to and including a “F” for the course. Don’t try me, I will catch you. All submissions for this class will be cleared through electronic methods to detect plagiarism.

If you are unsure of what plagiarism constitutes, I highly recommend you view the tutorial at the following link: <http://www.cte.usf.edu/plagiarism/index.html>. Ignorance of the law, as they say, is no excuse.

The students and faculty of Denison University and the Department of Philosophy are committed to academic integrity and will not tolerate any violation of this principle. Academic honesty, the cornerstone of teaching and learning, lays the foundation for lifelong integrity.

Academic dishonesty is, in most cases, intellectual theft. It includes, but is not limited to, providing or receiving assistance in a manner not authorized by the instructor in the creation of work to be submitted for evaluation. This standard applies to all work ranging from daily homework assignments to major exams. Students must clearly cite any sources consulted - not only for quoted phrases but also for ideas and information that are not common knowledge. Neither ignorance nor carelessness is an acceptable defense in cases of plagiarism. It is the student’s responsibility to follow the appropriate format for citations.

As is indicated in Denison’s Student Handbook, available through mydenison.edu, instructors must refer every act of academic dishonesty to the Associate Provost, and violations may result in failure in the course, suspension, or expulsion. (For further information, see <http://www.denison.edu/student->

Students with Disabilities: Any student who feels he or she may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately as soon as possible to discuss his or her specific needs. I rely on the Academic Support & Enrichment Center in 102 Doane to verify the need for reasonable accommodations based on documentation on file in that office.

Expectations, Suggestions and Mandates for an efficient class:

1. Please arrive to class on time and expect to stay the entire duration of the class. If this is an impossibility, please make every attempt to notify me in advance of tardiness or absence.
2. Especially true in philosophy more than most other areas of study, diligence is important. Some of the reading will be difficult, since these are some of the most profound texts in the history of the world. The difficulty of the subject is indirectly proportional to the amount of work put into the course. Expect to have up to ten hours per week of reading and thinking in order to get an "A" for the course. Additionally, for these reasons, attendance is of vital importance.
3. Please come to class prepared (i.e., any reading assigned read, any questions concerning readings or lectures prepared, etc.)
4. Please be respectful of each other in the class. There will be times when students disagree about a topic discussed in class. This is a didactic process, not a combative one.
5. Due to the great excess of material and limited time in which we must over ground, please do not create a disruption for those people who are attempting to learn. Disruptions include blurting out answers, name calling, chiding each other, snoring, etc. Laughing at the Instructor's jokes is obviously exempted from this policy. In addition, personal audio devices (except those in use to record lectures) and loud crunching snack foods are prohibited from the classroom. ***PLEASE TURN OFF your cellphones in class.***
6. Please feel free to make mistakes. We all will from time to time, even your omniscient instructor.
7. Please make use of my office hours. Waiting until the last moment in the semester to catch up is not advisable. I am excellent at fixing small problems, but horrendous at fixing large ones. The only difference between small and large problems is time.
8. Have fun! The material is only as dry as you make it out to be. Sharpening one's mind can be an exhilarating process.