PSCI 324
Contemporary Political Theory
Fall 2017
HH 334, Monday & Wednesday 10-11:20am

Instructor: Dr. Anna Drake
Email Address: amdrake@uwaterloo.ca
Office Location: Hagey Hall 317
Office Hours: Mondays 1-3pm and by appointment

Contact Policy: The easiest way to contact me is via email. I will typically respond within 24 hours (except during weekends and holidays). Please feel free to stop by during my office hours, or to speak with me before or after class. If you can’t make my office hours you can always email me to make an appointment for an alternate time.

Course Description: This course examines central questions and core texts in contemporary liberal and democratic theory. How do different theorists understand concepts? We will examine different theories of justice (Rawlsian, libertarian, merit-based, global) and look at how these interpretations influence the way we view freedom and equality. We will also investigate core values and challenges embedded in the way we structure society, paying particular attention to pluralism, systemic racism and sexism, oppression, individualism, and animal rights. Concepts will be grounded in and further explored through an analysis of current issues and problems (poverty, abortion, Black Lives Matter, Indigenous peoples, feminism, euthanasia, polygamy, global inequalities, environmental justice, etc).

Pre-Requisites: Level at least 3A.

Learning Objectives:
Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe the problems each theorist investigates, as well as identify their main arguments and key concepts
- Think critically about the different arguments and concepts and identify areas of agreement and contention between the different authors
- Develop critical analytical skills, both written and verbally
  - Effectively convey understanding of different concepts
○ Develop their own arguments, and be able to support these with evidence

University Regulations:

Cross-listed course
Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity

*Academic Integrity:* In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. See the UWaterloo Academic Integrity webpage and the Arts Academic Integrity webpage for more information.

*Discipline:* A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline. For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties.

*Grievance:* A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

*Appeals:* A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to Policy 72 - Student Appeals.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

*Note for students with disabilities:* The AccessAbility Services office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.
*Turnitin.com:* Text matching software (Turnitin®) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. Students will be given an option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin®. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about arrangements and

**Mental Health Support**
All of us need a support system. The faculty and staff in Arts encourage students to seek out mental health supports if they are needed.

**On Campus**
- Counselling Services: counselling.services@uwaterloo.ca / 519-888-4567 xt 32655
- MATES: one-to-one peer support program offered by Federation of Students (FEDS) and Counselling Services
- Health Services Emergency service: located across the creek from Student Life Centre

**Off campus, 24/7**
- Good2Talk: Free confidential help line for post-secondary students. Phone: 1-866-925-5454
- Grand River Hospital: Emergency care for mental health crisis. Phone: 519-749-433 ext. 6880
- Here 24/7: Mental Health and Crisis Service Team. Phone: 1-844-437-3247
- OK2BME: set of support services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning teens in Waterloo. Phone: 519-884-0000 extension 213

Full details can be found online at the Faculty of ARTS website
Download UWaterloo and regional mental health resources (PDF)

**Texts:**
All course materials are available as e-readings on LEARN.

**Format**
This is a lecture course. Students are expected to attend classes having completed the assigned readings and prepared to engage with the material. Please bring the week’s reading to class as a reference.

**Course Requirements and Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Worth:</th>
<th>Due:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Article breakdown and questions</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>8:30am Mon &amp; Wed (see schedule)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>0%*</td>
<td>Monday October 30th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay introduction</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Monday November 20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-class exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Monday December 4th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>Monday December 11th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
*This is still a requirement of the course.

Course Requirements, Expectations, and Standards:

Assignments:

Article Breakdown and Questions
Students should submit a brief critical summary and discussion question for an assigned reading for a total of 5 submissions.* Summaries should be broken down into four labelled categories: 1) the question or problem the author is responding to; 2) the author’s main argument; 3) key steps in the author’s argument; and 4) a brief explanation of a major concept. Each category should be no more than a few sentences long. A discussion question should follow this breakdown, and should be a few sentences long. The question must deal directly with the reading (provide context to “set up” your question) and should address significant themes, problems, etc. in the article. Assignments will be graded for content and will be returned to you the following week.

Due: Mondays and Wednesdays by 8:30am (uploaded to the LEARN dropbox)
Late assignments will NOT be accepted for marks. Due to the time-sensitive nature of the assignment (class discussion, availability of lecture slides) there will be NO exceptions to this.

*Students may submit 6 assignments and I will count the highest 5 grades.

Essay assignment
The essay for this course is not a research essay; instead, it is a critical analysis of one or more of the course’s readings. The purpose of this is to develop your critical reading and analytical skills. There are three stages to the assignment (outlined below), structured to give you feedback—and to help you improve your work—at multiple stages in the process.

1) Proposal:
You must submit a short (one page) essay proposal. In the proposal you should set out the problem that you plan to address, and include a brief overview of how you plan to structure the paper. Proposals will not be graded for content, but you MUST hand one in and have it approved before you submit your introduction and final paper. Failure to do so may result in a paper grade of “0”.

Due: Monday October 30th (uploaded to the LEARN dropbox by 1pm)
*Students who would like feedback earlier on can submit before this date

2) Introduction:
Students must submit the introduction to their essay. This should be a polished piece of writing and should conform to the requirements (we will discuss this in class). In order to complete this assignment well you are advised to have written a detailed outline or a draft of your essay.
Due: Monday November 20th (uploaded to the LEARN dropbox by 1pm)
*Students who would like feedback earlier on can submit before this date

3) Essay
Students are required to write a 3500-4000 word essay (approximately 10 pages). This paper is a critical analysis of one or more of the course’s readings—NOT a research paper (no outside sources are permitted). Within these requirements you are free to write on a question of your choice. Papers will (in addition to content, organization, and style) be graded for engagement with the central issues of the course and of the text(s), quality of analysis, and development of your own argument. We will go over expectations and structure in-class.

Due: Monday December 11th (uploaded to LEARN dropbox & hard copy in PSCI dropbox by 1pm)

Tests & Examinations:

In-class Final Exam:
There will be an in-class final exam on Monday December 4th. The details of this will be discussed in class. It will cover both assigned readings and lecture material. If you miss the exam (for reasons noted below) you must contact me ASAP. Failure to do so within 48 hours after the exam may result in a “0.”

Late Policy:

The introduction and essay are subject to a 5% per day late penalty. This INCLUDES weekend days. If students require an extension (see policy below) please contact me as soon as possible. Failure to do so within 48 hours after the assignment deadline may result in denial of an extension/forfeiting the assignment.

Policy on Extensions:

Extensions will be granted for documented medical (physical or mental health) or compassionate reasons only. Please speak with me as soon as possible and, if you can, before the assignment is due. Please note that verification of illness forms required by UW will cost you $20.

The student success office and the writing centre offer a number of workshops and one-on-one sessions. Counselling services offers a variety of free resources, including coping skills workshops and crisis support.

Student Success https://uwaterloo.ca/student-success/
Writing Centre https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre/
Extensions will not be granted for a heavy workload, conflict with employment, or for computer problems. It is strongly recommended that students use a program such as dropbox to continually back up their files.

Schedule:

**Week 1: Introduction**

**Monday September 11th**

Introduction: No assigned readings

**Wednesday September 13th**


**Week 2: Freedom**

**Monday September 18th**


**Wednesday September 20th**


**Week 3: Freedom**

**Monday September 25th**

Nozick, continued.

**Wednesday September 27th**

**Week 4: Challenges to Freedom**

**Monday October 2nd**


**Wednesday October 4th**


**Week 5: Rights & Rights Conflicts**

*** This week follows the Fall Break calendar: note the date change ***

**Monday October 9th**

No class. Happy Thanksgiving!

**THURSDAY October 11th**


**Week 6: Rights & Justice**

**Monday October 16th:**


**Wednesday October 18th**


**Week 7: Rights and Justice**

**Monday October 23rd**

**Wednesday October 25th**

Rawls, cont. and essay workshop: please read the academic integrity exercise and the essay-writing slides on LEARN.

**Week 8: Justice and Merit**

**Monday October 30th**


**Wednesday November 1st**

Lauren Dobson-Hughes. 2015. “Diversity and merit—we can have both.” *Policy Options* June 30.


**Week 9: Equality**

**Monday November 6th**


**Wednesday November 8th**

Dworkin, continued

**Week 10: Systemic Inequality**

**Monday November 13th**


**Wednesday November 15th**

**Week 11: Systemic Inequality**

**Monday November 20th**


**Wednesday November 22nd**


**Week 12: Remedying Injustice**

**Monday November 27th**


**Wednesday November 29th**


Exam review

**Week 13:**

**Monday December 4th**

***FINAL QUIZ (TO BE WRITTEN IN-CLASS)***