Instructor: Dr. Anna Drake  
Email Address: amdrake@uwaterloo.ca  
Office Location: Hagey Hall 317  
Office Hours: Thursdays 2:30-4:30pm 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 stop by during my office hours, or speak with me before or after class. If you can’t make my office hours please email 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, oppression, systemic racism and sexism. Concepts will be grounded in and further explored through an analysis of current issues and problems (poverty, abortion, Black Lives Matter, colonialism, feminism, assisted dying, 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 and Discipline

*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 [Office of 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. Check the [Office of Academic Integrity](#) for more information. 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](#).

Grievances and Appeals

*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 alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

**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 ext 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 form 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)
Download the WatSafe app to your phone to quickly access mental health support information

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

**Format**
This is a lecture course. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class.

**Course Requirements and Assessment:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Worth:</th>
<th>Due:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exam #1</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Wednesday October 17th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>0%*</td>
<td>Monday October 29th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Essay introduction</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Monday November 19th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam #2</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Monday December 3rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>Monday December 10th</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Course Requirements, Expectations, and Standards:

Assignments:

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 29th (uploaded to the LEARN dropbox by 10am)
*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 19th (uploaded to the LEARN dropbox by 10am)
*Students who would like feedback earlier on can submit before this date

3) Final Essay
Students are required to write a 2500 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 10th (uploaded to LEARN dropbox & hard copy in PSCI dropbox by 10am)
Tests & Examinations:

In-class exams:
There will be 2 in-class exams: one on Wednesday October 17th and one on Monday December 3rd. Details of these will be discussed in class. Each exam will cover both assigned readings and lecture material. The second exam focuses on material assigned/taught after the first exam (although students may have the option of drawing from material taught in the first half of the course). If you miss an exam (for reasons noted below) you must contact me ASAP. Failure to do so within 24 hours after the exam may result in a “0.”

Late Policy:

The introduction and final 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.

Please note you are required to submit a hard copy of the Final Essay (in addition to uploading it to LEARN). If you do not submit a hard copy within 24 hours of submitting your e-copy I will deduct a 5% penalty.

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.

https://uwaterloo.ca/student-success/

https://uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre/

https://uwaterloo.ca/counselling-services/node/1

https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/mental-health-services

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 2: Introduction**

**Monday September 10**th

Introduction: No assigned readings

**Wednesday September 12**th


**Week 3: Freedom**

**Monday September 17**th


**Wednesday September 19**th


**Week 4: Freedom**

**Monday September 24**th

Nozick, continued.

**Wednesday September 26**th


**Week 5: Challenges to Freedom**

**Monday October 1**st


**Wednesday October 3rd**


**Week 6: Rights Conflicts**

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

**Monday October 8th & Wednesday October 10th**

No class. Happy Thanksgiving & study break!

**FRIDAY October 12th**


**Week 7: Rights Conflicts**

**Monday October 15th:**


**Wednesday October 17th**

*** Exam #1 (IN CLASS) ***

**Week 8: Rights & justice**

**Monday October 22nd**


**Wednesday October 24th**

Rawls, cont. and essay workshop: please read the academic integrity exercise and the essay-writing slides on LEARN.
**Week 9: Justice & merit**

**Monday October 29**


**Wednesday October 31**

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


**Week 10: Equality**

**Monday November 5**


**Wednesday November 7**

Dworkin, continued

**Week 11: Systemic inequality**

**Monday November 12**


**Wednesday November 14**


**Week 12: Systemic inequality**

**Monday November 19**

Wednesday November 21<sup>st</sup>


**Week 13: Inequality, obligation, & responsibility**

Monday November 26<sup>th</sup>


Wednesday November 28<sup>th</sup>


**Week 14:**

Monday December 3<sup>rd</sup>

*** EXAM #2 (IN-CLASS) ***