

# PSCI 324: Contemporary Political Philosophy

Fall, 2013

DWE 3516, Monday 9:30am-12:20pm

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**Instructor:** Dr. Anna Drake

**Email Address:** [amdrake@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:amdrake@uwaterloo.ca)

**Office Location:** Hagey Hall 317

**Office Hours:** Tuesdays 2:30-4:30 and by appointment

**Contact Policy:** The easiest way to contact me is via email. I will typically respond within 24 hours (although this may not always apply 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 freedom and equality? What is the relationship between these concepts? We will examine different theories of justice (utilitarian, Rawlsian, libertarian, merit-based, global) and look at how these different interpretations influence the way we view freedom and equality. What role does our well-being play in these theories? If we could be hooked up to an "experience machine" that simulates pleasure would we want to do so, knowing it is at the expense of actual experiences? Can we think through questions of distributive justice from behind a "veil of ignorance" or by using an "envy test" to evaluate how well auctioning bundles of goods works? We will also look at different ways of structuring society (democratic, republican, communitarian) and investigate their core values and challenges, paying particular attention to pluralism, toleration, and individualism. Concepts will be grounded in and further explored through an analysis of current issues and problems.

**Pre-Requisites:** *PSCI 225 or 226*

## **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.

**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,

[Student Discipline http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71).

**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, [Student Petitions http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70). In addition, consult [Student Grievances http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes) for the Faculty of Arts’ grievance processes.

**Appeals:** A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, [Student Appeals http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72).

**Academic Integrity website (Arts):** [Academic Integrity http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

**Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo):** [Academic Integrity Office](http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/)  
<http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

### **Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:**

**Note for students with disabilities:** The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, 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:** Plagiarism detection 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. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See [Turnitin](http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo) <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo> for more information.

### **Texts:**

All course materials are available as e-readings on course reserves at the library and 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: at times you will be required to engage in some short, close reading to complete exercises during class.

### **Course Requirements and Assessment:**

<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Worth:</b>	<b>Due:</b>
Abstract and discussion questions	20%	Weekly (in class)
Proposal	0%*	Friday November 1 <sup>st</sup>
Introduction	10%	Friday November 22nd
Essay	40%	Wednesday December 4 <sup>th</sup>
Final exam	30%	Final exam period (date TBA)

\*This is still a requirement of the course.

## Course Requirements, Expectations, and Standards:

### **Assignments:**

#### **Abstracts & Discussion Questions**

Students should submit one discussion question and abstract per week for a total of 10 submissions. Questions must deal directly with (at least) one of the week's readings and should address significant themes, problems, etc. You must also include a brief abstract/overview of the article that your question speaks to. Abstracts should clearly state the context of the article, the author's main argument(s), and provide a brief overview of the structure. (We will look at an example of this in class; you can also look at abstracts at the beginning of journal articles if you are still unclear as to what is expected). Questions (and abstracts) will be graded for content and will be returned to you the following week.

***Due: The BEGINNING of each class*** (late assignments will NOT be accepted for marks). Due to the time-sensitive nature of the assignment (class discussion) there will be NO exceptions to this. If you have to miss class you should email a copy to me BEFORE class starts and also submit a hard copy to the main office.

#### **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 Friday November 1<sup>st</sup>*** (in the PSCI dropbox)

\*students who would like feedback earlier on can submit before this date

#### **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: Friday November 22<sup>nd</sup>*** (in the PSCI dropbox)

\*students who would like feedback earlier on can submit before this date

#### **Essay**

Students are required to write a 12 page (double-spaced; standard font and margins) essay. 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 texts, and for quality of analysis.

***Due: Wednesday December 4<sup>th</sup>*** (in the PSCI dropbox)

## **Tests & Examinations:**

### ***Final Examination:***

A 2.5 hour final exam will be scheduled during the exam period. The details of this will be discussed in class. **Please note: Student travel plans are not an acceptable reason for granting an alternative examination time.**

## **Late Policy:**

The essay and introduction are subject to a 5% per day late penalty. This INCLUDES weekend days. If for any reason you complete an assignment late on a weekend email me proof of completion to “stop the clock”; the electronic document will be checked against the hard copy that you submit to my dropbox at the first opportunity. If there are any discrepancies between the two copies, the latter will be used for grading purposes (and the electronic submission forfeited).

## **Policy on Extensions:**

Extensions will be granted for documented medical or compassionate reasons only. Please speak with me as soon as a problem arises.

Extensions will not be granted for a heavy workload 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 9<sup>th</sup>)**

No readings

### **Week 2: Liberty (Monday September 16<sup>th</sup>)**

Isaiah Berlin. 2002. “Two Concepts of Liberty.” In *Liberty: Incorporating Four Essays on Liberty*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.166-217.

### **Week 3: Rights (Monday September 23<sup>rd</sup>)**

Jeremy Waldron. 1989. “Rights in Conflict.” *Ethics* 99 (3): 503-519.

Judith Jarvis Thomson. 1971. “A Defense of Abortion.” *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 1(1): 47-66.

**Week 4: Equality (Monday September 30<sup>th</sup>)**

Ronald Dworkin. 1981. "What is Equality? Part 2: Equality of Resources." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 10 (4): 283-345.

**Week 5: Utilitarianism (Monday October 7<sup>th</sup>)**

J.J.C. Smart. 1978. "Distributive Justice and Utilitarianism." *Justice and Economic Distribution*, John Arthur and William H. Shaw, eds. 103-115.

Will Kymlicka. 2002. "Utilitarianism." *Contemporary Political Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 10-52.

**Week 6: (Monday October 14<sup>th</sup>) No class—Happy Thanksgiving!**

**Week 7: Justice as Fairness (Monday October 21<sup>st</sup>)**

John Rawls. 1978. "A Theory of Justice." In *Justice and Economic Distribution*, John Arthur and William H. Shaw, eds. Don Mills, ON: Longman Higher Education. 18-52.

**Week 8: Libertarianism (Monday October 28<sup>th</sup>)**

Robert Nozick. 1973. "Distributive Justice." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 3 (1): 45-126.

**Week 9: Justice, Desert, and Merit (Monday November 4<sup>th</sup>)**

David Miller. 1996. "Two Cheers for Meritocracy." *The Journal of Political Philosophy* 4 (4): 277-301.

**Week 10: Toleration (Monday November 11<sup>th</sup>)**

Anna E. Galeotti. 1993. "Citizenship and Equality: The Place for Toleration." *Political Theory* 21 (4): 585-602.

Thomas Scanlon. 2003. "The Difficulty of Tolerance." *The Difficulty of Tolerance: Essays in Political Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 187-201.

**Week 11: Democracy and Pluralism (Monday November 18<sup>th</sup>)**

Daniel M. Weinstein. 2001. "Saving Democracy From Deliberation." In *Canadian Political Philosophy*, Ronald Beiner and Wayne Norman, eds. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 78-91.

Jonathan Quong. 2004. "Disputed Practices and Reasonable Pluralism." *Res Publica* 10 (1): 43-67.

**Week 12: Communitarianism and Republicanism (Monday November 25<sup>th</sup>)**

Charles Taylor. 1985. "Atomism." *Philosophy and the Human Sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 187-210.

Philip Petit. 1999. "Republican Freedom and Contestatory Democratization." In *Democracy's Value*, Ian Shapiro and Casiano Hacker-Cordon, eds. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 163-90.

**Week 13: Global Justice and Human Rights (Monday December 2<sup>nd</sup>)**

Iris Marion Young. 2006. "Responsibility and Global Justice: The Social Connection Model." *Social Philosophy and Policy* 23 (1): 102-130.

Simon Caney. 2008. "Global Distributive Justice and the State." *Political Studies* 56 (3): 487-518.