

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY PHIL 30900

Spring 2015

MW 9.30-10:45am

NAC 7/225

Professor Jennifer M. Morton  
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Office Hours: W 11:00am-2.00pm & by appointment

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** We are social beings that thrive in communities, yet we have different values, moral commitments, and opinions on a diversity of matters. Questions in political philosophy center on how political institutions and practices should be organized to allow us to live together despite these disagreements. This course will serve as an introduction to social and political philosophy, including historical figures such as Mill, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Marx, and Rousseau, as well as contemporary figures, such as Rawls, Nozick, and Okin.

**PREREQUISITES:** An introductory level philosophy course (Phil 10200, Phil 30000, Phil 20100, or Phil 20200).

**READING:** There are two books required for this course Jonathan Wolff's [An Introduction to Political Philosophy](#) (Oxford University Press, 2006) and [The Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought: Essential Readings: Ancient, Modern, and Contemporary Texts](#) (eds. A. Bailey, S. Brennan, W. Kymlicka, et al Broadview Press, 2012)

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Every week, you will be required to turn in a 1-2 page polished reading response based on the assigned reading and a prompt I will post on Blackboard. Be ready to share your reading response with the rest of class. You are responsible for one in-class exam and one paper (6-8 pages) during the course of the term. You are also required to complete a group presentation related to your paper topic, a draft of your paper, and a peer review. Most importantly, you are expected to attend every meeting and actively participate in class discussion.

9 Reading Responses (1-2 pp)	30%
Exam	30%
Paper Stages (Summary, Draft, etc)	5%
Paper (6-8 pages)	25%
Group Presentation	5%
Participation & Attendance	5%

A	95-99%
A-	90-94%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
B-	75-79%
C+	70-74%
C	65-69%
C-	60-64%
D	51-59%
F	0-50

**LATE ASSIGNMENT POLICY:** **NO LATE Reading responses** will be accepted (no exceptions!). You will, however, be allowed to make-up 1 reading response during the last week of class. Late papers will only be accepted in cases of emergency AND arrangements must be made with me at least **48 hours in advance**. No exams will be issued after the exam date, except for in extreme medical circumstances with a doctor's note.

**SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS:** A printed copy **AND** an electronic copy (via Safe Assign) should be submitted.

**ATTENDANCE:** **Regular attendance is required.** You will be granted up to **3 excused absences** (medical, family emergencies, etc) throughout the term, any absences above that number will affect your grade significantly. If you arrive **late to class**, I will call on you and you **must** contribute to the class discussion in the form of a **thoughtful** question or comment in order to count as having attended the class.

**PLAGIARISM:** You will receive **no credit** for a plagiarized assignment and your participation grade will be significantly lowered. Any act of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating will be subject to penalties in conformity with the College's policy on Academic Integrity. ([http://www1.cuny.edu/facultystaff/provost/policies\\_integrity.cfm](http://www1.cuny.edu/facultystaff/provost/policies_integrity.cfm))

**ELECTRONICS:** No phones, laptops, or other electronic devices allowed in class.

**LEARNING COURSE OBJECTIVES:** By the end of this course you should: (1) Improve your ability to read philosophy, that is, to identify the thesis of a piece of philosophical writing and the arguments or evidence adduced in support of that thesis. (2) Be able to identify and debate central issues in social and political philosophy. (3) Be able to develop and argue for a critical position in a philosophy paper that engages with a central issue in social and political philosophy.

Date	Reading Assignment	Written Assignment	
W	1/28	Introduction of <b>IPP*</b> (pp. 1-6)	
THE STATE OF NATURE			
M	2/2	Ch. 1 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 6-17), Hobbes, <u>Leviathan</u> Ch. 13-15.7, 17 ( <b>BA*</b> pp. 258-268, 276-278)	
W	2/4	Hobbes, <u>Leviathan</u> Ch. 17-19 ( <b>BA</b> pp. 276-289)	R. Response #1
M	2/9	Ch. 1 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 17-23), Locke, <u>Second Treatise</u> Ch. 2-3 ( <b>BA</b> pp. 333-338)	
W	2/11	Ch. 1 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 24-33), Rousseau, <u>Discourse</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp.422-426, 435-44, 441-451)	R. Response #2
JUSTIFYING THE STATE			
M	2/16	Ch. 2 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 34-48), Locke, <u>Second Treatise</u> Ch. 8-14, ( <b>BA</b> pp. 356-375)	
W	2/18	Ch. 2 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 48-55), Mill, <u>Utilitarianism</u> Ch. 2-5 ( <b>BA</b> pp. 658-668)	R. Response #3
M	2/23	Ch. 2 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 55-61), Hume, <u>Of the Original Contract</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp.403-412)	
GROUP PRESENTATIONS			
W	2/25	Group Presentation #1—Tommie Shelby, “Justice, Deviance, and the Dark Ghetto” <b>BB*</b>	Paper Summary Due
M	3/2	Group Presentation #2—Virginia Held, “Non-Contractual Society: A Feminist View” <b>BB</b>	
WHO SHOULD RULE?			
W	3/4	Ch. 3 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 62-74), Plato, <u>The Republic</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 59-64)	R. Response #4
M	3/9	Ch. 3 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 74-87), Rousseau, <u>The Social Contract</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 470-490, 504-507)	
W	3/11	Ch. 3 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 87-103), Madison, Federalist Paper #10 ( <b>BA</b> pp.552-555)	R. Response #5
THE PLACE OF LIBERTY			
M	3/16	Ch. 4 of <b>IPP</b> (pp.104-128), Mill, <u>On Liberty</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 627-640)	
W	3/18	Ch. 4 of <b>IPP</b> (pp.128-132), Mill, <u>On Liberty</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 640-650)	R. Response #6
M	3/23	Marx, <u>The Communist Manifesto</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 717-727)	
GROUP PRESENTATIONS			
W	3/25	Group Presentation #3—Alexander Guerrero, “Against Elections: The Lottocratic Alternative” <b>BB</b>	Paper Critique Due
M	3/30	Group Presentation #4—Jeremy Waldron, “Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom” <b>BB</b>	
THE DISTRIBUTION OF PROPERTY			
W	4/1	Ch. 5 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 133-143) Locke, <u>Second Treatise</u> Ch. 5 ( <b>BA</b> , pp. 338-345)	R. Response #7
M	4/6	No Classes-Spring Break	
W	4/8		
M	4/13	Ch. 5 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 143-152), Marx <u>Estranged Labor</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 692-698)	
W	4/15	Ch. 5 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 152-168) Rawls, <u>A Theory of Justice</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 862-872)	R. Response #8
M	4/20	Rawls, <u>A Theory of Justice</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 872-890)	
W	4/22	Ch. 5 of <b>IPP</b> (pp. 168-176) Nozick, <u>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</u> ( <b>BA</b> pp. 907-924)	R. Response #9
GROUP PRESENTATIONS			
M	4/27	Group Presentation #5—Lea Ypi “What’s Wrong With Colonialism?” <b>BB</b>	
W	4/29	Writing Workshop	Paper Draft Due
CONTEMPORARY ISSUES			
M	5/4	Ch. 6 of <b>IPP</b>	R. Response Make-Up
W	5/6	Exam Review	Final Paper Due
M	5/11	In-Class Exam	
W	5/13	Wrap-Up	
Sa	5/16	Optional Paper Rewrite	

\***IPP** designates Introduction to Political Philosophy by Wolff; **BA** designates The Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought: Essential Readings; **BB** designates Blackboard