

**UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

**PHIL 1010-01,
Introductory Philosophy: Social and Political Issues
Fall 2015**

Prof. K. Wendling

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Office hours: M 12:00-1:20 p.m., Th 4:00-5:20 p.m.,
and by appointment

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to philosophy through contemporary ethical, social and political issues. In particular, it is designed to get you to think about what it means to you to be Canadian. (If you are not a citizen, it is designed to get you to think about what it means to be Canadian.) We will begin with a brief discussion of ethical theories, political philosophy and the Canadian legal system. Then we will examine a range of perspectives on the role of government, war and its aftermath, Aboriginal rights, Quebec nationalism, and being English-speaking Canadians. The goals of this course are to help you understand the philosophical underpinnings of some social and political issues, to understand and appreciate their complexity, and to develop some philosophical skills (thinking, reading, and writing) that are applicable to many disciplines and contexts. At the end of the course, you should be better equipped to understand and evaluate philosophical arguments about social and political issues, and to develop and present your own reasoned positions on these and related issues. In addition, you should better understand your own political views and why you hold them, as well as others' views and why they hold them.

Required Text

Wendling, ed., *Ethics in Canada: Ethical, Social, and Political Perspectives*

Course Requirements

- 2 midterm tests, on Thursday, October 8 and Thursday, October 22, (17.5% each);
- an essay on an assigned topic, due Tuesday, November 10 by 4:20 p.m. (35%) – note: this is not a class day;
- a final examination on Saturday, December 12, 8:30-10:30 a.m. (30%).

Course Components

The tests will be in the second hour of class. They will consist of short-answer questions and an essay question. They will be open-book and open-note, and will be based on the lectures, class discussions, and readings. They will test your understanding of the material, not your ability to memorise facts.

The essay will be 1000-1500 words long (3-5 typed, double-spaced pages). It will be based on course material and readings. It will test your ability to produce a more sustained philosophical argument and to consider an objection to your view. Outside sources are not necessary. If you want to use them, you must clear it with me in advance.

The final exam will consist of short-answer questions and an essay question. It will be open-book and open-note, and will be based on the lectures, class discussions and readings. It will test your understanding of the material, not your ability to memorise facts.

Late Penalties and Other Threats

Make-up tests will require a note from your Program Counsellor. I may require further documentation.

Essays must be submitted in both hard copy (paper) to me and electronically to the Dropbox. The electronic copy is proof of when you submitted your assignment, so don't forget it! We will not grade your essay until you submit both the hard copy to me and the electronic copy to the Dropbox.

Late essays will be penalized 2% per day, to a maximum of 15%. For purposes of late penalties, the day ends at 4:20 p.m., except on Thursdays, when it ends at 6:50 p.m., before class begins.

Course readings and course material must be central to the analysis in your essay. Written work in which the relevant course readings and course material are not central may be assigned a grade of zero.

I reserve the right to require you to submit rough notes and rough drafts as part of your grade on any written piece of work. I also reserve the right to require an oral examination as part of any written piece of work. In such a case, the notes and drafts are worth 30% of your grade on that assignment, the essay is worth 30%, and the oral examination is worth 40%.

No essays will be accepted after the last day of classes without my written permission.

In this course we will be using Turnitin, integrated with the CourseLink Dropbox tool, to detect possible plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, or copying as part of the ongoing efforts to maintain academic integrity at the University of Guelph.

All submitted assignments will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

You will be able to screen your essay through Turnitin once before the due date. You may see and print a report that shows you exactly where you have properly and improperly referenced the outside sources and materials.

I hope using Turnitin and teaching you about avoiding plagiarism will help you avoid it rather than help me catch it.

What You Can Expect from Me in this Course

I will work with you to help you understand the course material, and to overcome academic difficulties you experience in this course.

Tests normally will be returned within one week.

Essays that arrive by the scheduled due date will be returned within ten days. Essays that come in after the due date will be returned later, and may receive sparser comments.

All course work will be graded fairly and consistently. I do not expect you to agree with me, the TAs, or any of the readings, but I do expect you to understand the course material. Your tests and essays will be graded on the quality of the reasons and arguments you give for your views, not on your agreement with me, the TAs, or any of the authors.

I am a tough professor. I have high expectations, and because a good number of students consistently meet or exceed them, I see no reason to change them. The grade distribution in my courses is within the University average, but you should expect to work hard for your grades.

If I write something down, I mean it.

What I Expect from You in this Course

I expect you to attend class regularly, to arrive on time and not to leave before the class is over.

I expect you to come to class having done the course readings, prepared to participate in small group discussions on the scheduled material. I expect you to take good notes, and to get the notes from another student in the course if you miss a class.

I expect you to allow yourself adequate time to read, reflect on and understand the course material.

I expect you to be respectful of others' views in this course. Respect does not mean mindless agreement, however. In philosophy, we show respect for others by giving good reasons for our agreement or disagreement with their views.

I expect you to let me know if you are having trouble with the course material. I can only help you if you let me know about your difficulties, though; please come to my office hours or contact me sooner rather than later.

If you are on Academic Probation, you have until Thursday, October 1 to tell me.

E-mail Communication

As per University regulations, all students are required to check their uoguelph.ca e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the university and its students.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons, please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, ID#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-ac.shtml>

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester Fall 2015 courses, without academic penalty, is November 6, 2015. For regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses, see the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Student Rights and Responsibilities

Each student at the University of Guelph has rights which carry commensurate responsibilities which, broadly, being a civil and respectful member of the University community. The Rights and Responsibilities are detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c14/c14-strightsrespon.shtml>

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and enjoins all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/c08/c08-amisconduct.shtml>

Recording of Materials

Presentations which are made in relation to course work – including lectures – cannot be recorded in any electronic media without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate, or guest lecturer.

Resources

The Undergraduate Calendar is the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate programs. It can be found at: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/undergraduate/current/>

If you find yourself in difficulty, contact the undergraduate advisor in your program, or the BA Counseling Office: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/baco/contact.shtml>

Schedule

(C) = Courselink, on the Content page, under Handouts

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings & Assignments</u>
Th Sept. 10	Introduction	
Th Sept. 17	Philosophical Background	A Short Primer, pp. 1-26 (skim pp. 2-10, read the rest more carefully); Avoid Unthinking Academic Misconduct & Ten Rules (C)
Th Sept. 24	The Role of Government	Part III Intro, ch. 7 Intro, & Wendling, pp. 266-286; Abbrev'ns & Demystifying Grading (C)
Th Oct. 1	The Role of Government	ch. 7 Kheiridden & Daifallah, Roberts, & Broadbent, pp. 287-304; What Does One Do (C)
Th Oct. 8	War & Its Aftermath ☞ ☞	Part IV Intro, ch. 10 Intro, & Orend, pp. 396-404 & 413-422; ch. 11 Govier & Verwoerd, pp. 475-482 Test 1 (2nd hour)
Th Oct. 15	War & Its Aftermath	ch. 10 Dallaire x2 & Arbour, pp. 422-442; Technical Requirements of Essays (C)
Th Oct. 22	Aboriginal Peoples ☞ ☞	Part I Intro, ch 1 Intro, & Tully, pp. 30-55 Test 2 (2nd hour)
Th Oct. 29	Aboriginal Peoples	ch. 1 Borrows & Deveaux, pp. 56-79
Th Nov. 5	Quebec Nationalism	ch. 2 Intro & Chaput, pp. 81-98
Tu Nov. 10	☞ ☞ (not a class day)	Essay due to McKn 359 by 4:20 p.m. – remember, both paper & electronic copies must be submitted
Th Nov. 12	Quebec Nationalism	ch. 2 Lamoureux & Taylor, pp. 98-115
Th Nov. 19	English-speaking Canadians	ch. 4 Intro & Segal, pp. 161-171
Th Nov. 26	English-speaking Canadians	ch. 4 Kymlicka, pp. 171-187
seminars end Th Nov. 26 (no seminars W Dec. 2)		
Sat. Dec. 12	☞ ☞ 8:30-10:30 a.m.	Final Exam