

**University of Guelph
Department of Philosophy**

**PHIL 3410
Major Texts in Philosophy: Bentham and Mill**

Prof. K. Wendling

Fall 2014

TuTh 11:30-12:50, MacKinnon 116

Office hours: Tu 1-2:30, Th 2-3:30, and by appointment

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Course Description

Utilitarianism was the dominant theory in English-speaking ethics and social and political philosophy for more than 150 years, and is still going strongly today. It has been influential not only philosophically but also in the real world; from the beginning, utilitarian philosophers set out to improve the world. In this course, we will study the two best-known 19th-century utilitarians, Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill.

Required Texts

- Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Early Modern Texts version, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/authors/bentham.html>;
- John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, *On Liberty*, and *On the Subjection of Women*, Early Modern Texts versions, <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/authors/mill.html>;
- some secondary sources TBA.

Course Requirements

- Class participation and answers to discussion questions, 10%;
- Essay 1, due Oct. 7, 30%
- Essay 2, due Oct. 29, 30%
- Essay 3, due Dec. 1, 30%.

Information about the Assignments

I will hand out discussion questions for each week, usually on the previous Friday. Each student will be assigned responsibility for one or two discussion questions. You should be prepared to present your answer during the relevant class discussion, and to defend it if necessary.

- Bring your answer(s) to class printed or written, legibly, on a full-size sheet of paper.
- There are 19 classes on the readings. You may opt out of 4 of the classes, either because you are absent or because you choose not to answer that day. Your discussion grade will be based on your best 15 of 19 class discussions and answers to discussion questions.

The essays will be on assigned topics, which will be handed out ten days to two weeks before the essay is due. Each essay should be 1250-1500 words, 1750 words maximum. You will have some choice among the topics. You may write on other topics only with my written approval.

You should use the essays to engage philosophically with Bentham's and/or Mill's ideas. The primary texts and class discussions must be central to your analysis. Written work in which the relevant primary texts and class discussions are not central will be assigned a grade of zero.

All essays must be submitted in both hard (paper) and soft (electronic) copies.

- The electronic copy is proof that you submitted the essay, and when.
- You may use any of the following formats: doc, rtf, wpd, odt, and pdf. I prefer the first four.
- A corrupt file does not count as a submission.
- I grade hard copies; I will not grade your essay until you give me a hard copy. (It won't be late if you get the electronic copy in on time, but it will go in my "grade later" pile.)

I give a two-day, no-questions-asked extension on the essays.

- For longer extensions, I may require a note from your Program Counsellor or a medical note.
- Essays that come in after the scheduled due date (Oct. 7, Nov. 4, and Dec. 1) probably will be returned later, and may receive sparser comments.

Late penalties are 2% per day, to a maximum of 15%. Saturday and Sunday count 2% each.

- If you're rushing to get your essay in at the last minute, take the small late penalties and use a day or two to polish it. You are almost certain to get a better grade than if you hand in rough work; better to lose 4% than 10-20%. Please don't waste my time and yours.

Essays normally will be returned in two weeks.

No essays will be accepted after I hand back the first batch of graded essays on that topic, unless you have a very serious and well-documented excuse.

Standard Statements:

Email communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their uoguelph.ca email account regularly: email 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 in writing, with your name, id#, and email contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar's information on regulations and procedures for Academic Consideration.

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester courses, without academic penalty, is Friday, October 31, 2014. See the Undergraduate Calendar's regulations and procedures for Dropping Courses.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

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

Accessibility

The University of Guelph is committed to creating a barrier-free environment. Providing services for students is a shared responsibility among students, faculty and administrators. This relationship is based on respect of individual rights, the dignity of the individual and the University community's shared commitment to an open and supportive learning environment. Students requiring service or accommodation, whether due to an identified, ongoing disability or a short-term disability should contact the Centre for Students with Disabilities (soon to be re-named Student Accessibility Services) as soon as possible. For more information, contact CSD at 519-824-4120 ext. 56208 or email csd@uoguelph.ca or refer to the CSD website.

Academic Misconduct

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of 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. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The Academic Misconduct Policy is detailed in the Undergraduate Calendar:

<https://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 or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a classmate or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs: <http://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars>.

Laptops and tablets are not permitted in the classroom.

Schedule

Bring the readings to every class.

- Sept. 4 Introduction
- Sept. 9 Bentham, Preface & ch's 1 & 2, pp. 1-20
Sept. 11 Bentham, ch's 3-5, pp. 20-29; "Understanding Plagiarism" (Links page of CourseLink)
- Sept. 16 Bentham, ch 6, pp. 29-43
Sept. 18 Bentham, ch's 7-9, pp. 43-54
- Sept. 23 Bentham, ch 10, pp. 55-72
Sept. 25 Bentham, ch's 11 & 12, pp. 72-91
- Sept. 30 Bentham, ch's 13-15, pp. 92-107
Oct. 2 Bentham, ch 16, pp. 108-142
- Oct. 7 Bentham, ch 16, pp. 108-142 (cont.) → → → → → **Essay 1 due**
Oct. 9 Bentham, ch 17 & Material added nine years later, pp. 142-157
- Oct. 14 Fall Study Break – no class
Oct. 16 Utilitarianism, ch's 1 & 2, pp. 1-18
- Oct. 21 Utilitarianism, ch's 3-5, pp. 18-44
Oct. 23 On Liberty, ch's 1 & 2, pp. 1-35
- Oct. 27 On Liberty, ch's 1 & 2, pp. 1-35 (cont.)
Oct. 29 On Liberty, ch 3, pp. 36-48
- Nov. 4 On Liberty, ch 4, pp. 49-61 → → → → → **Essay 2 due**
Nov. 6 On Liberty, ch 5, pp. 61-76
- Nov. 11 Subjection of Women, ch 1, pp. 1-16
Nov. 13 Subjection of Women, ch 2, pp. 17-28
- Nov. 18 Subjection of Women, ch 3, pp. 29-46
Nov. 20 Subjection of Women, ch 4, pp. 47-60
- Nov. 25 secondary sources TBA
Nov. 27 secondary sources TBA
- Dec. 1 → → → → → **Essay 3 due**