

**UNIVERSITY OF GUELPH**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY**

**PHIL 1010-02, Fall 2011**

**Introduction to Philosophy: Issues in Social and Political Philosophy**

**Dr. Omid A. Payrow Shabani**

**Office Mackinnon 327**

**Phone: 824-4120 ext: 53201**

**Email: oshabani@uoguelph.ca**

**Office hours: Wed. & Fri. 10:30-11:30**

**Course Description:**

Taking philosophy in a general way to be the investigation of the most fundamental questions in various fields, this course aims to examine questions in relation to social and political areas of human interaction such as what is justice? What is a just state? What is the political? How should we understand the relation between political authority and individual liberty? What is democracy? Is the law the instrument of justice, or the tool of powerful interests? What is civil society? The answer to these questions will be sought, first, by a study of canonical texts of Western political philosophy which will include both ancient and contemporary contributions, and secondly, by a discussion of current controversies as found in the court cases and news. By the end of the course, students not only will have a sense of main topics and issues in social and political philosophy but will also be able to examine and analyze such arguments as found in their everyday life.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the course the students should be able to

- Have a good grasp of the history and the range of social and political theories.
- Be able to identify, critically examine and assess social and political issues.

-Be able to develop and formalize their own thoughts on social and political issues.

### **Required Text:**

John Arthur & William H. Shaw, *Social and Political Issues*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall

**Students are responsible both for the *textbook material* and the *lecture material*.**

### **Course Evaluation:**

There are three assignments for this course:

- 1) Five short quizzes each worth 12%, totaling 60% of the final mark.
- 2) Participation mark of 10% which will be assigned by the TAs, who will be leading your seminar sessions, based on your participation in the seminars.
- 3) A final take-home exam in the form of an essay question worth 30% of your final grade, and due on Dec. 8th. (an essay topic, detail description of the essay and its evaluation scheme will be posted on the courselink in early November)

### **Other Rules**

-Because of the large size of the class, **I won't be able to answer your email queries**, but I will be more than happy to talk to you during my office hours about any issue of your concerns.

-If you can't meet me during my office hours, please let me know of your availability and I will try to meet with you at a time of your choosing.

-Late assignments or make up exams will be allowed only after an official certification either from a doctor or your program counselor is provided; otherwise a mark of zero will be entered for the assignment. (See the Addendum to Course Outline at the end of syllabus)

-Request for extension on the take-home exam will be accommodated with proper documentation (e.g., doctor's note).

-There is a **two week** window after each assignment when you can contest your mark.

**-Laptops are not allowed in class.**

**-Cell Phones should be turned off (no texting in class).** If you ignore this rule, you'll be asked to leave the class room.

**-No recording (audio or visual) without the expressed consent of the instructor.**

### **Class Schedule:**

Fri. Sep. 9: No class or seminar is scheduled

Week I:

Mon. Sep. 12: Introduction to the course

Wed. Sep. 14: Plato's Republic, p. 443

Week II:

Mon. Sep. 19: Aristotle's *Politics*, p. 463

Wed. Sep. 21: Hobbes' *Leviathan*, p. 474

**Week III:**

Mon. Sep. 26: Hobbes Cont.

Wed. Sep. 28: **First Test**

Week IV:

Mon. Oct. 3: Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*, p. 493

Wed. Oct. 5: Locke's *A letter Concerning Toleration*, 205; & *Wisconsin v. Yoder*, 261

Week V:

Mon. Oct. 10: **No Classes: Thanksgiving**

Wed. Oct. 12: Marx and Engels's *Communist Manifesto*, p. 506

**Week VI:**

Mon. Oct. 17: John Stuart Mill: Utilitarianism, p. 526

Wed. Oct. 19: **Second Test**

Week VII:

Mon. Oct. 24: Mill: *Consideration on Representative Government*, p. 89

Wed. Oct. 26: Mill: *On Liberty*, p. 279

**Week VIII:**

Mon. Oct. 31: Isaiah Berlin: Two Concepts of Freedom, p. 298; and Paris Adult Theater

v. Slaton: Obscenity, p. 356

Wed. Nov. 2: **Third Test**

Week IX:

Mon. Nov. 7: Rawls' *Theory of Justice*, p. 542

Wed. Nov. 9: Sandal: Morality and the Liberal ideal, p. 564

**Week X:**

Mon. Nov. 14: Robin West: Political theory and Gender, p. 569

Wed. Nov. 16: **Fourth Test**

**Week XI:**

Mon. Nov. 21: Kymlicka: Sexual Equality and discrimination, p. 415

Wed. Nov. 23: Singer: Equality and its implications, p. 365

Week XII:

Mon. Nov. 28: The Problem of Facial Discrimination, p. 420; and Michael M. v. Sonoma  
County Superior Court, p.427

Wed. Nov. 30: Singer: Democracy, Fairness and Compromise, p.113

Thu. Dec. 1: Make up class for Oct. 12: **Fifth Test**

**Thu. Dec.8:** Final take-home exam due. I will be in my office until noon collecting the essays. After that your essay is late and for each day it is late five marks (out of thirty) will be deducted. (please note that the main office in the philosophy department will not accept your essays). Do not drop your paper under my office door as it may be picked up by the house keeping staff.

## 8 Standard Statements of the College of Arts

FALL 2011

### 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 2011 courses, without academic penalty, is **Thursday November 3**. 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>