

PHIL 4400 Major Texts in Philosophy
Mondays 8:30 – 11:30, MacKinnon 346

Department of Philosophy
University of Guelph
Fall 2014

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Office Hours: Mondays 12:00 – 2:00, or by appointment

Philosophy 4400: Major Texts in Philosophy
Political and Individual Responsibility

One of the distinguishing challenges of contemporary political philosophy is to contend with the unprecedented interconnection and interdependence of our socio-economic and political global reality. This global reality is no longer ‘modern’ in the sense of being comprised of territorially defined nation states that exclusively frame social relations and communities. It is one, rather, that amplifies the scope and depth of our actions in unforeseen and immeasurable new ways.

This has given new urgency to the age-old questions concerning responsibility and obligation. For instance, what are our responsibilities to others given these new circumstances? Do our responsibilities need to be rethought? Are traditional paradigms adequate to think about responsibilities in the age of interconnection? How should we think of responsibility or obligation when faced with social injustice? Does our responsibility primarily consist in duties of institutional and structural justice. That is to say, does our participation in unjust institutions and structures give rise to political responsibilities in us? Or, do we have individual responsibilities to compatriots, foreign nationals, and ‘distant others’ in need? Are these models of responsibility complementary or incompatible? If they are compatible, is one model prior to the other? In this course, we will attempt to answer these and related questions.

Course requirements/evaluation:

1. Class presentation of 15 – 20 min (10%). Critical discussion of a reading for that day. Presenters must circulate discussion questions.
2. 10 Critical summaries (20%) **due during class**. These will only be graded if class was attended.
3. One 8-page mid-term paper (30%), **due October 20**.
4. One 12-page final paper (40%), **due December 8**.

Readings

There are only two required books for this course, and several required articles/book chapters.

John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Harvard University Press, 1999)

John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Harvard University Press, 2001)

The remainder of the *required course readings* (journal articles and book chapters) will be available online through CourseLink.

Schedule of Readings

Monday, September 8	Introduction: defining responsibility
Monday, September 15	Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (1999), pp. 1 – 40.
Monday, September 22	Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (1999), pp. 47 – 98.
Monday, September 29	Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (1999), pp. 102 – 160.
Monday, October 6	Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (1999), pp. 293 – 243.
Monday, October 20	Rawls, <i>The Law of Peoples</i> (2001), pp. 11 – 88.
	<i>Mid-term paper due October 24</i>
Monday, October 27	Rawls, <i>The Law of Peoples</i> (2001), pp. 89 – 128.
Monday, November 3	Thomas Pogge, “Critical Study: Rawls on International Justice,” <i>The Philosophical Quarterly</i> 51 (2001).
	Thomas Pogge, “Severe Poverty as a Violation of Negative Rights,” <i>Ethics and International Affairs</i> 19 (2005).
	<i>*Optional:</i> Thomas Pogge, “Human Rights and Human Responsibilities,” in <i>Global Justice and Transnational Politics: Essays on the Moral and Political Challenges of Globalization</i> , ed. P. De Greiff and C. Cronin (2002).

- Monday, November 10 Iris Marion Young, "Responsibility and Global Justice: A Social Connection Model," *Social Philosophy and Policy* 23 (2004).
- Iris Marion Young, "Responsibility and Global Labor Justice," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 12 (2004).
- Monday, November 17 Abigail Gosselin, "Global Poverty and Responsibility: Identifying Duty-Bearers of Human Rights," *Human Rights Review* 8 (2006).
- Abigail Gosselin, *Global Poverty and Individual Responsibility* (2009), chapter 5.
- Monday, November 24 Hannah Arendt, *Responsibility and Judgment* (2003), selections.
- Second reading to be determined.
- Monday, November 28 To be determined.

Final Essay due December 8

Additional important information:

Papers: Please discuss your final paper topic with by mid-November. In general, I am happy to meet with you and talk about your critical review papers or any other questions you might have regarding the course content.

I require a hard copy of your papers (handed in to me directly) and an e-mail version.

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.

Drop Date

The last date to drop one-semester **Fall 2014** courses without academic penalty is **Friday October 31st**.

Copies of out-of-class assignments

Please keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: as 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>

Instructors have the right to use software to aid in the detection of plagiarism or copying and to examine students orally on submitted work, and they also have the right to enter sentences or phrases into a search engine, e.g. Google.

For students found guilty of academic misconduct, serious penalties, up to and including suspension or expulsion, can be imposed. Hurried or careless submission of work does not exonerate students of responsibility for ensuring the academic integrity of their work.

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.