



PHIL*6200 Problems of Contemporary Philosophy

Fall 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - September 09, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

A study of a particular set of problems in contemporary philosophy.

1.2 Course Description

The Ethics and Politics of Higher Education: Issues in Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

We'll explore questions about university life and governance in the context of contemporary moral and political theory, including feminist ethics. Topics to be covered include freedom of expression and academic freedom; ownership of research and open access publishing; excellence and equity as values; justice and calls to indigenize the university, universal design, disability and inclusion.

Why take this class? What will I learn? Increasingly faculty, grad students, and other members of the university community are expected to be up-to-date on the issues and challenges facing universities. These include the role of universities and higher education in society but also issues of governance and policy making within the university. This course will introduce you to a range of these issues and give you some understanding of the larger ethical and political context in which these debates occur. Philosophers have made substantial contributions to these debates and discussions and we'll engage with some of that literature.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Those of us teaching and learning at the University of Guelph acknowledge that this university resides on the ancestral lands of the Attawandaron people and the treaty lands

and territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit. We uphold the significance of the Dish with One Spoon Covenant and the continuing relationship our Indigenous neighbours have with this land. We recognize that today this gathering place is home to many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and acknowledging them reminds us of our relationships to this land where we learn and work.

1.3 Timetable

Tuesdays 230-530

Office hours Tuesdays 530-630

1.4 Final Exam

There is no final exam.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor:	Samantha Brennan
Email:	sjbrennan@uoguelph.ca
Telephone:	+1-519-824-4120 x53301
Office:	MCKNEXT 0005
Office Hours:	Office hours to be held in my Philosophy office

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

Courselink (Article)

All reading materials are available through courselink

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1.

Orally Articulate and Defend a position on a philosophical topic, either in class discussion or in a formal presentation, that is clear, accurate, and well-reasoned.

2.

Develop research methods for gathering a wide range of primary and secondary source materials, and synthesize these materials and evaluate their credibility.

3.

Demonstrate Independence in articulating an original approach to a significant philosophical topic.

4.

Write clearly and cogently on complex problems in philosophy.

5.

Read extensively and systematically in a specialized area of philosophical research.

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

5.1 Seminar

Topics:

Week 1

Sept 10 The Big Picture

Read excerpts from The Aims of Higher Education: Problems of Morality and Justice, University of Chicago Press, 2015, edited by Harry Brighouse and Michael McPherson

Available online from the University of Guelph library, Chicago Scholarship Online

Problems of Morality and Justice in Higher Education, by Harry Brighouse and Michael McPherson

What Makes a University Education Worthwhile?, by Amy Gutmann

Week 2

Sept 17 Defending the Humanities

Martha Nussbaum, Not for Profit: Why Democracy Needs the Humanities (in Dropbox)

Fareed Zakaria, In defense of a liberal education

In Defense of a Liberal Education, Fareed Zakaria

Defending the Humanities in a Liberal Society

<https://chicago.universitypressscholarship.com/view/10.7208/chicago/979780226259345-chapter-3?print=pdf>

Christopher Bertram

Week 3

Sept 24 Academic Freedom, Guest: Shannon Dea, Professor, University of Waterloo

Dispatches on Academic Freedom, University Affairs, <https://www.universityaffairs.ca/opinion/dispatches-academic-freedom/>

The following readings are all in our dropbox:

On Free Speech and Academic Freedom, Joan Scott

UGFA document on academic freedom

Academic Freedom in a Non-Ideal World, Shannon Dea

Week 4

Oct 1 Open Access. Guest: Amy Buckland, Head of Research and Scholarship, University of Guelph Library

Political arguments for open access. Who owns research? How should we share it? What are our ethical obligations as researchers? As institutions?

Open Access - Peter Suber - Chapter 1

<https://archive.org/stream/9780262517638OpenAccess/9780262517638>

Platform Capitalism and the Governance of Knowledge Infrastructure - Leslie Chan

<https://zenodo.org/record/2656601#.XMm6abh7ky4>

Why Are So Many Scholarly Communication Infrastructure Providers Running a Red Queen's Race? - Educopia Institute

<https://educopia.org/red-queens-race/>

Week 5

Oct 8 Implicit Bias, Climate, and University Life, Guest: Carla Fehr, Professor, University of Waterloo

C. Fehr. 2011. "What Is in It for Me? The Benefits of Diversity in Scientific Communities." Feminist Epistemology and Philosophy of Science: Power in Knowledge. Grasswick, Heidi E. (Ed.). Springer (in Dropbox)

C. Fehr. In progress. "Avoiding Cultures of Epistemic

Exploitation.”

Please also look at these two websites:

APA CSW Site Visit Program:

<http://www.apaonlinecsw.org/home/site-visit-program>

Engendering Success in STEM: <http://successinstem.ca>

Oct 15 No CLASS--University holiday, rescheduled for Nov 28

Week 6

Oct 22, The Inclusive Academy, Guest: Leela MadhavaRau, Director of Human Rights and Equity, Brock

<https://brocku.ca/brock-news/2018/07/brock-names-first-director-of-human-rights-and-equity/>

Readings tba

Week 7, Oct 29, Micro-inequities

Brennan, Samantha. "The moral status of micro-inequities: In favour of institutional solutions," in *Implicit Bias and Philosophy, Volume 2: Moral Responsibility, Structural Injustice, and Ethics*, edited Michael Brownstein and Jennifer Saul

<https://philpapers.org/rec/BRETMS-4>

<https://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198769780198766179-chapter-11>

Brennan, Samantha. "Rethinking the Moral Significance of Micro-Inequities: The Case of Women in Philosophy," in *Women in Philosophy: What Needs to Change?*

**Fiona Jenkins and Katrina Hutchison (editors),
OxfordUniversity Press (in Readings)**

Listen to the podcast:

<https://publicethicsradio.wordpress.com/2012/02/01/episode-16-samantha-brennan-on-microinequalities/>

Week 8 Nov 5 Disability

Read

https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/20190719_inclusive_teaching

Excerpts from Jay Dolmage's Academic Ableism

Margaret Price's Mad at School

**Universal design for learning in higher education,
https://werklund.ucalgary.ca/tandl/files/tandl/udl-guide_2018_05_04-final.pdf**

Week 9 Nov 12 Diversity and Inclusion

Guest: Alexandra Rodney, Postdoctoral Fellow at University of Guelph

Readings:

Davis, Alexander K. Toward exclusion through inclusion:

Engendering reputation with gender-inclusive facilities at colleges and universities in the United States, 2001-2013. *Gender & Society* 32(3): 321-347.

<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0891243218763056>

-this one is interesting because it looks at inclusion projects as performative acts (ally theatre/virtue signalling) that ultimately benefit the institution rather than individuals

Zheng, Robyn. 2018. Precarity is a Feminist Issue: Gender and Contingent Labor in the Academy. *Hypatia* 33(2): 235-255.

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/hypa.12401>

-This one argues that as academia has become more diverse, academic jobs are also becoming worse jobs....interesting parallels here with other occupations that have had an influx of women....as occupations become less white/male-dominated, the status of those jobs decreases and jobs become less standardized (part-time, lower wage, no benefits)

Ahmed, Sarah 2007. The language of diversity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 30(2): 235-256.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01419870601143927>

(This is the paper precursor of her book: Ahmed, Sarah (2012). *On Being Included: Racism and Diversity in Institutional Life*. Durham: Duke University Press.)

-Ahmed argues that diversity is an appealing concept for universities to market themselves positively as "not racist"; certain groups are perpetually positioned as outsiders; admin positions such as "diversity officers" are created as shields for the institution.

Week 10 Nov 19 The Inclusive Academy and Reconciliation

Excerpt from Colonized Classrooms Racism, Trauma and Resistance in Post-Secondary Education By Sheila Cote-Meek

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-981-10-4062-7_7

Week 11 Nov 26 Government funding, who pays, should tuition be free?

Jason Brennan,

Chapter 11 of https://www.amazon.com/Cracks-Ivory-Tower-Higher-Education/dp/0190846283/ref=redir_mobile_desktop?_encoding=UTF8&fbclid=IwAR1K0&ref_=dbs_a_w_dp_0190846283

Week 12, Nov 28th THURSDAY

Final paper presentations and discussion

Daniel Weinstock, https://academicmatters.ca/equality-of-opportunity-equality-of-means-an-argument-for-low-tuition-and-the-student-strike/?fbclid=IwAR2_xwFTCb4QVEvsYAC6eBUaDe_CWIZKQ9HtJ_19gGpw

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

Assessment:

10 short weekly discussion papers, QFCs, 40%

Seminar paper, 20-25 pages, 60%, due December 1

QFCs: "Questions For Consideration"

In weeks 2-11, you will write a one QFC per class on a reading assigned for that class. You can miss one without penalty or write them all and I'll drop your lowest grade. Worth 4% each.

A QFC is a brief (1-1.5 page, single-space) document that does three things:

1. Reproduces a very brief excerpt, with page reference, from one of the readings. You should reproduce an excerpt that exemplifies, or gets to the heart of, the question you will pose (See step 2).
2. Poses an open, searching question about the reading. What do I mean by "open, searching question"? I mean that it must be a question for which you do not know the answer, and one that you wish to investigate with your fellow students and me. The question will not, that is, be a criticism in disguise. It will be something you genuinely wish to work with the group, and with the text, to figure out.
3. Ventures a tentative answer to the question.

Each class, we will work through all of the QFCs students have prepared for that class. That

is, your QFCs and the work they encourage us to do **are** the class.

Acknowledgement: I originally got the idea for QFC's from Prof. Kate Norlock at Trent University. She got it from someone else; she doesn't remember who. I borrowed this version from Prof. Shannon Dea at the University of Waterloo.

Norlock writes about QFCs here: Norlock, K. "Grading

(Anxious and Silent) Participation: Assessing Student Attendance and Engagement with Short Papers on a 'Question For Consideration'." *Teaching Philosophy* 39.4 (December 2016) 483-505

7 University Statements

7.1 Email Communication

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

7.2 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. The grounds for Academic Consideration are detailed in the Undergraduate and Graduate Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Consideration and Appeals

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

Graduate Calendar - Grounds for Academic Consideration

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Academic Consideration, Appeals and Petitions

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/index.shtml>

7.3 Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all students (undergraduate, graduate and diploma) except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in their respective Academic Calendars.

Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses

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

Graduate Calendar - Registration Changes

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/genreg-reg-regchg.shtml>

Associate Diploma Calendar - Dropping Courses

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/diploma/current/c08/c08-drop.shtml>

7.4 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.

7.5 Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability.

Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to book their exams at least 7 days in advance and not later than the 40th Class Day.

For Guelph students, information can be found on the SAS website

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/sas>

For Ridgetown students, information can be found on the Ridgetown SAS website

<https://www.ridgetownc.com/services/accessibilityservices.cfm>

7.6 Academic Integrity

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 encourages academic integrity. 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.

Undergraduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

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

Graduate Calendar - Academic Misconduct

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/registrar/calendars/graduate/current/genreg/index.shtml>

7.7 Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work - including lectures - cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

7.8 Resources

The Academic Calendars are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies, and regulations that apply to undergraduate, graduate, and diploma programs.

Academic Calendars

<https://www.uoguelph.ca/academics/calendars>
