



PHIL*2280 Key Concepts in Political Philosophy

Fall 2020

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 1.00 - September 16, 2020

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This course presents an in-depth treatment of one or more key concepts in political philosophy. Among the many possible concepts that the course may address are those of freedom, equality, power, community, identity, autonomy, justice, rights, political obligation, representation, authority, legitimacy, exploitation, emancipation, and development. These concepts may be explored historically or through contemporary political and/or philosophical debates.

Pre-Requisites: 0.50 credits in either Philosophy or Political Science

Restrictions: POLS*2000

1.2 Course Description

This course introduces students to some of the key ideas in political theory. What is the basis for political legitimacy and authority? What is the origin of justice? Is it an instrumental or intrinsic virtue? Are all humans free and equal by nature? What is the best form of government? Etc. We shall examine the views that some of the key figures in political thought have on these questions. We shall start from the earliest thinkers on the subject, such as Confucius, Aristotle and Cicero. We will then examine some medieval thinkers such as Mohammad, Augustine of Hippo and Thomas Aquinas. Finally, we shall examine some of the major contemporary trends in political thought.

1.3 Timetable

The course is an asynchronous online course.

Instructor will be for drop-in ZOOM chat every Tuesday and Thursday from 11am to 12noon.

Timetable is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

1.4 Final Exam

Exam Date: TBD

Exam Format: Online with Respondus

Exam time and location is subject to change. Please see WebAdvisor for the latest information.

2 Instructional Support

2.1 Instructional Support Team

Instructor:	Yussif Yakubu
Email:	yyakubu@uoguelph.ca
Office:	MCK 339
Office Hours:	Tuesdays & Thursdays 11AM - 12 NOON

2.2 Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistant:	John Klasios
Email:	jklasios@uoguelph.ca
Teaching Assistant:	Marie-Pier Lemay
Email:	mlemay01@uoguelph.ca
Teaching Assistant:	Richard Valliere
Email:	rvallier@uoguelph.ca

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resources

Sam Atkinson and Monica Saigal (eds.), *The Politics Book : Big Ideas.* (2013). DK Publishing, New York (2015). (Textbook)

4 Learning Outcomes

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Demonstrate a clear grasp of the fundamental concepts, principles and theoretical

debates in political philosophy

2. Apply the concepts and principles in political theory to contemporary political discourse.
 3. Critically evaluate any viewpoint, argument or theory in political philosophy.
 4. Clearly articulate their own stand on any political issue and construct a sound/cogent argument in its defence.
-

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

Description of Assessment #1 and Its Evaluation Criteria:

Each week, each student is required to submit a 250-word summary of the week's required reading. We read several political thinkers each week and students are required to compare and contrast the views of certain pairs or multiples of them. Students will be evaluated based on the effectiveness of their analyses and their demonstrated grasp of the content.. Each student is required to submit 10 of these summaries for 20% of the total marks in the course.

Description of Assessment #2 and their Evaluation Criteria:

This is aimed at assessing students' grasp of the political views, theories and principles discussed in the course and also, students' ability to apply those theories and principles to practical situations. In this assessment, students are required to post a response to some political issue or problem I shall post. Students will be assessed based on the quality of their contributions to the discussion. There will be 3 discussion posts in the course and each is worth 5%.

Description of Assessment #3 and Its Evaluation Criteria:

This essay will be on a topic chosen from a list I shall put up. It should be about 1400 words

in length. The criteria for evaluation will be clarity of thought and expression, persuasiveness of arguments, the demonstration of clear understanding of the issues and application of the relevant theoretical viewpoints in the analysis.

Description of Assessment # 4 and its Evaluation Criteria:

The final exam shall evaluate the entire set of competencies developed during the course. i.e. clear understanding of the key issues, debates and theoretical viewpoints in Political Philosophy and their proper application to contemporary political issues..

6.2 Assessment Details

Weekly Reading Summaries (20%)

Discussion Questions (15%)

Essay (25%)

Due Date: November 06 @ 11:59 pm

Final Exam (40%)

Date: Online. Monitored by Respondus

DATE: Wednesday, December 16th @7:00 PM.

Alternative time for students with conflicts: 11:30AM that day.

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>

7.9 Disclaimer

Please note that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic may necessitate a revision of the format of course offerings and academic schedules. Any such changes will be announced via CourseLink and/or class email. All University-wide decisions will be posted on the COVID-19

website (<https://news.uoguelph.ca/2019-novel-coronavirus-information/>) and circulated by email.

7.10 Illness

The University will not normally require verification of illness (doctor's notes) for fall 2020 or winter 2021 semester courses. However, requests for Academic Consideration may still require medical documentation as appropriate.
