



PHIL*3230 Theories of Justice

Winter 2019

Section(s): C01

Department of Philosophy

Credit Weight: 0.50

Version 2.00 - January 07, 2019

1 Course Details

1.1 Calendar Description

This is a course in social and political philosophy, which is the area of philosophy concerned with the morality of major social institutions such as the state, the economy, and the family. This course may engage in the detailed examination of one or more of the following questions: what justifies the state's claim to authority? What are the proper dimensions of individual liberty? What levels of material and social inequality are required for a society to be just? These questions will be pursued through reading historical and/or contemporary philosophical texts.

Pre-Requisite(s): 1.50 credits in Philosophy or 7.50 credits

1.2 Course Description

What does justice require? This course examines some current philosophical debates about what social and political justice demands, as proposed by contemporary philosophers and political theorists. Some of these concern the question of how best to distribute resources and opportunities fairly and justly within society (the problem of "distributive justice") Others center on whether and how the state should recognize group-based social differences, such as those relating to religion, language, and ethnicity (i.e., the question of "cultural justice"). Among the theories of justice we will consider are those of liberal distributive justice; libertarianism, both of the political right and left; the capability approach to justice; and multicultural justice/recognition theory.

1.3 Timetable

Class time: Tuesday/Thursday 10-11:20 MCKN 031

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

1.4 Final Exam

Final take-home exam due Wednesday, April 10 (10 pm).

2 Instructional Support

Instructor: Prof. Monique Deveaux

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Phone: 519-824-4120 x53233

Office: MacKinnon 356

Office hours: Tues, Thurs 12:30-1:30 or by appointment

TA: Shannon Buckley: sbuckley@uoguelph.ca

3 Learning Resources

3.1 Required Resource(s)

Readings (Textbook)

1. Harry Brighouse, *Justice* (Polity Press, 2004).

Readings (Other)

2. Various readings posted on the Ares Course Reserves System.
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4 Learning Outcomes

The course is designed to deepen your ability to evaluate, criticize, defend, and apply different concepts and arguments to do with social and political justice. As this is a large topic, we will not take up all relevant theories; nor does the course address other forms of justice, such as criminal justice.

Although it is an upper level course in political philosophy, it attracts a wide range of students, including non-majors. For students with no Philosophy background who may be unaccustomed to its modes of analysis and argumentation, please know that there is a learning curve to this; be patient, and give political philosophy a chance!

4.1 Course Learning Outcomes

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

1. Explain and critically evaluate key concepts and claims of the different theories of justice examined in this course.
2. Construct philosophical arguments by formulating a thesis or central claim, providing good reasons, and arguing for a conclusion.

3. Apply the different theories of justice studied in the course to concrete issues, like socioeconomic inequality and controversies over the proposed regulation of religious clothing and symbols.

5 Teaching and Learning Activities

This is a lecture course but one in which class discussion is encouraged. To ensure a good cross-section of opinion and participation, I may call on particular students rather than the first person with their hand up. If you'd prefer not to be called on, please let me know.

See course outline on Courselink for a full listing of lecture topics and readings for each class.

6 Assessments

6.1 Marking Schemes & Distributions

| Requirement | Description | Weight | Date |
|-------------------------|--|-----------------|--|
| 5 written reflections | Short reflections (250-300 words) on class readings — part summary, part analysis. | 15% (5 x 3%) | <u>Before</u> class (any 5 classes). At least 2 must be completed before Winter Break. |
| Take-home mid-term test | | 25% | Due Monday, February 25 (6 pm/18h00) |
| Essay | 2000-word essay (approx. 7 double-spaced pages) | 25% | Due Monday, March 25 (6 pm/18h00) |
| Final take-home exam | Cumulative | 35% | Due Wednesday, April 10 (exam questions will be available Sunday, April 7 by mid-day) |

6.2 Assessment Details

5 short reflection papers (15%)

Date: Due before class

These 5 short (250-300 words, or around 1 page) reflections must address course readings, though you are welcome to connect them to concrete social and political issues. They are part summary and part analysis. At least 2 must be completed before Winter Break. All reflection papers should be uploaded to Courselink Dropbox before the class for which those readings are assigned. These will be graded promptly (within a week), using the following grading scheme:

- 3 - very good/excellent
- 2 - satisfactory/good
- 1 - unsatisfactory
- 0 - did not write a paper

Take-home mid-term test (25%)

Date: Mon, Feb 25 - , 6:00 PM, Take-home

This take-home mid-term test is due after Winter Reading Break and covers material from units I, II, and III. It consists of short answer as well as essay-style questions, and must be uploaded to our Dropbox folder in Courselink (with Turnitin active). Questions for the mid-term will be available by Tuesday, Feb. 12; you are welcome to submit yours before Winter Break begins, if you prefer. All assignments received by the deadline of Monday, Feb. 25 (6 pm/18h00) will receive a grade and feedback at least a few days before the drop-date of March 8th.

Final Essay (25%)

Due: Mon, Mar 25, 6:00 PM, Dropbox in Courselink

This is a formal essay (approximately 2000 words) requiring analysis and argumentation. Topics will be provided, but you are welcome to formulate your own topic (please run it by me no longer than a week before the essay is due). It is not a research paper as such, but outside sources may be consulted.

Take-home exam (35%)

Due: Wed, Apr 10 - , 10:00 PM, Take-home

This final take-home exam will be a combination of short and long essay questions. The exam questions will be made available on Courselink by mid-day on Sunday, April 7, and the completed exams must be uploaded to the Dropbox folder in Courselink.

7 Course Statements

7.1 Laptop and cell phone policy

Cell phones/smartphones should be on silent mode (not vibrate) and not used during class. Texting during class is distracting. If I notice you using your smartphone in class, I will ask you to stop. If I need to ask a second time, you'll need to hand your phone over to me for the remainder of class time, or leave the classroom.

Laptops may only be used in class for note-taking and for referring back to the reading. The science on this is clear: using them for non-course purposes reduces your comprehension of the course material, and distracts those sitting near you: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0360131512002254>

7.2 Lateness policy

The short (250-300 words) reflection pieces on readings must be handed in before the class for which the readings were assigned; no late written reflections will be accepted. For the February mid-term take-home test and March essay, 10% is deducted for every day that it is late (if it is less than 6 hours late, only 5% will be deducted). The latest date stamp on your essay submission to the Dropbox folder (in cases where you upload revised versions) will be taken as your actual submission date/time. Exceptions are only granted for medical or compassionate reasons, with documentation.

7.3 Course level/managing expectations

This course is open to non-majors and I have taken that into consideration in designing the course. However, please be aware that many Philosophy majors also take the course. In fairness to them, and reflecting the fact that it is a 3rd year course, it is not taught at a 1st year introductory level. The course takes up some of the main contemporary approaches to social and political justice, and some of the readings are challenging. [Criminal justice is not part of the subject matter of this course.] Please allow sufficient time to do the reading before class, and do feel free to ask for clarification during class – or stop by to see me during office hours if you prefer. I'll be happy to discuss the ideas with you.

7.4 Submitting written work

All written assignments – the short reflections, essay, and final take-home – must be uploaded in *.docx or *.doc format to a dropbox folder on our Courselink site. I may also require that you turn in a hard copy of your essays/papers. UofG provides you with free access to Office 365, and Microsoft also makes available a free online version.

Assignments in other formats (pdf, odt, *.pages/apple pages) are not accepted. Late penalties will apply (3% per day) until the work is submitted in the specified format. Please make sure your work is your own – ideas, analysis, and prose. Turnitin is used for all assignments, and additional software and search engines will be used if plagiarism is suspected.

7.5 Communication

CourseLink: All course announcements, assignments, dropbox folders for assignments, grades, and occasional news links will be posted on CourseLink. Check it regularly.

E-mail is the official means of communication between the University and its students, and that means using your <mail.uoguelph.ca> account. If another email account is your more usual account (gmail etc.), please remember that I will reply to your Guelph account, not your gmail – so be sure to check it regularly.

7.6 Slides and recording

Recording lectures with smartphones or other devices is not permitted. I will post my power-point slides to CourseLink, usually before class.

7.7 Class format

This is a lecture course, but I will invite discussion (and questions) during class. If you are an especially enthusiastic contributor to class discussion, please remember that I may need to hold off answering your hand until others have spoken, or until I have finished explaining a point. The goal of this is to ensure a good cross-section of student opinion and participation.

8 University Statements

8.1 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.

8.2 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>

8.3 Drop Date

Courses that are one semester long must be dropped by the end of the fortieth class day; two-semester courses must be dropped by the last day of the add period in the second semester. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the Undergraduate and Graduate 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>

8.4 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.

8.5 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.

More information can be found on the SAS website

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

8.6 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>

8.7 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.

8.8 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>
