

FSYM 1209-A
Seminar in Contemporary Moral, Social, and Religious Issues
Fall 2016/Winter 2017
M – 8:35-9:55/W – 8:35-9:55

Winter Syllabus

Instructor: Josephine Nielsen
Office hours: M – 10:15-11:15/ W – 10:15-11:15
Room: 329B Paterson Hall
email: josephine.nielsen@carleton.ca

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is intended to introduce students to philosophy generally, and, more specifically, to academic approaches to moral, social and religious issues that we are faced with everyday. This term the course will jump directly into practical philosophy.

The topics that will be covered are: (i) capital punishment, (ii) euthanasia and assisted-suicide, (iii) abortion, (iv) same-sex marriage, (v) organ sales, (vi) procreative beneficence, and (vii) animal rights. These seven topics will be addressed from multiple directions. Students are encouraged to bring their own perspectives to light on these topics *in a respectful and thoughtful manner*.

As with all other courses, students will be expected to come to class prepared (i.e., having done the readings and prepared to participate in the class discussion). However, since this is a first year seminar course, students will additionally be expected to give individual presentations and hand in weekly comment sheets. This is meant to prepare students for upper level courses, both in philosophy, and in general.

CONDITIONS FOR ENROLMENT

Precludes additional credit for PHIL 1500 and PHIL 1550.

Prerequisite(s): normally restricted to students entering the first year of a B.A., B.Cog.Sc., or B.G.In.S program.

REQUIRED TEXTS

All texts for the winter term will be available through CULearn and the library.

COURSE EVALUATION

1) 10 comment sheets (15%)

Students are expected to write and submit a comment sheet each week of class, to be submitted Monday *or* Wednesday. Comment sheets need only be submitted 10 of the 12 weeks of classes in the winter term as only 10 comment sheets are required. Students are *permitted* to pass in all 12 comment sheets. In that case, the 10 with the highest grades will be counted towards the final grade. Comment sheets will *not* be accepted outside of class or through email unless required documentation is provided.

Comment sheets are very short discussion papers – no longer than one page single-spaced – in which you explain and discuss a question or concern from one of the two reads for that week. Other than being expected to provide thoughtful, informed, and clearly written commentaries, the way in which you approach the comment sheets are largely up to you.

2) Individual presentation (15%) Presentations (10%), handouts (5%)

In the winter term, students will give one presentation individually. These presentations are meant to give the class an introduction to the paper being discussed that day. In addition to outlining the paper, presenters are expected to highlight some key questions that they encountered when reading the text. This will serve as a jumping off point for the class discussion of the paper.

Presenters are expected to give handouts to the class highlighting the major points of the paper. Handouts should also include some questions concerning the paper. There will only be one handout between the two presenters. Presentations should only be 20 minutes so as to allow ample discussion afterwards.

3) Paper outline (10%) Date: January 30th

Instead of having a midterm in the winter term, students will be coming up with their own essay question. They are expected to talk to the instructor about their proposed topic, and write an outline, discussing the topic, the argument, and the sources that will be used. Students are expected to use *at least* three scholarly sources in the paper and so should have them included in the paper outline.

4) Essay (20%) Due: March 6th

Students are expected to write a five to six page, double-spaced, paper on the topic of their choice and which has been discussed with the instructor and proposed in the paper proposal. This paper is intended to be evaluative of a topic either already covered in the class, or one which will be covered during the term.

The paper is to be submitted on CULearn by 11:55pm on. Past this time a late deduction will be applied to the final grade.

These papers will be handed back quickly with *extensive* comments. This is meant to make the second paper easier.

- 5) Take-Home Exam (40%)
Due: April 25th

The take-home exam will be a revised version of the paper due on March 6th. Students are to take the comments given in the first paper to revise and improve their papers. The expectation is that the paper will be revised in such a manner that it is six to eight pages long, double spaced. The paper should *not* be on a different topic than the first paper.

The take-home exam/paper is to be submitted on CULearn. The take-home exam/final paper *must* be submitted by 11:55 on. Anything after this and the paper will be considered not passed in.

NOTE: The final grade that a student receives in the winter term will count as 50% of their overall grade for the two term course.

POLICIES

- Given the sensitive nature of the topics covered in the class, students are expected to be respectful and thoughtful of one another – everyone will have a chance to voice their thoughts without being interrupted or spoken down to. Anyone who does not follow this may be asked to leave the classroom.
- Electronics (computers, tablets, phones, etc.) will not be permitted in the class unless for academic accommodations purposes. This is meant to ensure that students focus fully on the discussion. As handouts will be given each class, and as the class is mainly a forum of discussion, only limited notes should need to be taken.
- The instructor will be available for discussion and questions in class, during office hours, and through email (both josephine.nielsen@carleton.ca and CULearn). That being said, please limit email questions to administrative questions.
- Late submissions will not be allowed expect for under extenuating circumstances and with the proper documentation (e.g., a doctor's note). Comment sheets will *not* be accepted late under any circumstances and will *only* be accepted in class. The final paper/take-home exam cannot be passed in late. This is per university policy.
- Late papers will be deducted 3% per day (including weekend days). This means that a paper that originally received an 82% will be deducted to a 79% if passed in one day late.

- All grades will be given as percentages first and then converted to letter grades.
- The readings outlined in the syllabus *may* change throughout the term and so should not be taken as definite.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Capital Punishment

Jan 9 – Introductory Class

Capital Punishment

Jan 11 – “For Capital Punishment” (Ernest van den Haag)

Jan 16 – “An Abolitionist’s Survey of the Death Penalty in America Today” (Hugo Adam Bedau)

Jan 18 – “An Abolitionist’s Survey of the Death Penalty in America Today” (Hugo Adam Bedau)

Jan 23 – “Why the Death Penalty is Morally Permissible” (Louis P Pojman)

Jan 25 – “Why the Death Penalty is Morally Permissible” (Louis P Pojman)

Euthanasia and Assisted-Suicide

Jan 30 – “Voluntary Euthanasia” (The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy)

Feb 1 – “Medical Expertise, Existential Suffering and Ending Life” (Jukka Varelius)

“Setting a Principled Boundary”? Euthanasia as a Response to ‘Life Fatigue’” (Richard Huxtable)

Feb 6 – “Child Euthanasia: Should We Just Not Talk About It?” (Luc Bovens)

“Against Euthanasia for Children: a Response to Bovens” (Christopher Kaczor)

Abortion

Feb 8 – “A Defence of Abortion” (Judith Jarvis Thomson)

Feb 13 – “Why Abortion Is Immoral” (Don Marquis)

Feb 15 – “Abortion and Infanticide” (Michael Tooley)

Feb 20 – No Class (Reading Week)

Feb 22 – No Class (Reading Week)

Feb 27 – “Abortion and Infanticide” (Michael Tooley)

Same-Sex Marriage

Mar 1 – “The Fundamental Argument for Same-Sex Marriage” (Ralph Wedgwood)

Mar 6 – “Contra Same-Sex Marriage” (Jeff Jordan)

Mar 8 – “Gay Marriage: An American and Feminist Dilemma” (Ann Ferguson)

Organ Sales

Mar 13 – “A Legal Market in Organs: the Problem of Exploitation” (Kate Greasley)

“The Case for Allowing Kidney Sales” (Janet Radcliffe-Richards, et al.)

Mar 15 – “Kidney Sales and the Analogy with Dangerous Employment” (Erik Malmqvist)

Procreative Beneficence

Mar 20 – “Procreative Beneficence: Why We Should Select the Best Children” (Julian Savulescu)

Mar 22 – “Deaf Lesbians, ‘Designer Disability’, and the Future of Medicine” (Julian Savulescu)

“The Best Possible Child” (Michael Parker)

Mar 27 – “In Defence of Procreative Beneficence” (Julian Savulescu)

Animal Rights

Mar 29 – “Animals and the Frontiers of Citizenship” (Will Kymlicka and Sue Donaldson)

Apr 3 – “Companion and Assistance Animals: Benefits, Welfare Safeguards, and. Relationships” (Jean Harvey)

““Pets”: The Inherent Problems of Domestication” (Gary L. Francione)

Apr 5 – Essay Writing Class

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (2016-17)

Assignments:

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips

must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box)

must include the following:

student name

student number

course number and section

instructor's name

No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates in next column.

Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by 4:15 on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.

Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. For deferred examinations (both formally scheduled and take-homes), you must apply within 3 working days after the scheduled date of the exam. To apply for deferral of a final assignment, you must apply within 3 working days of the last scheduled day of classes. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information.

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. (Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations, section 14.3, or

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv14/>

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website:

<http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation:

Write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).

Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 7	Classes start.
Sept. 20	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall and Fall/Winter courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving Day – University closed.
Oct. 24-28	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 25	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 9	Last day of classes, Fall term. Classes follow a Monday schedule.
Dec. 9	Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for Fall term courses.
Dec. 9	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 10-22	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses. Exams are normally held all seven days of the week.

- Dec. 22 Take-home exams are due.
- Jan. 5 Winter term classes begin.
- Jan. 18 Last day for registration and course changes in Winter term classes.
- Jan. 31 Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter courses or winter portion of two-term courses.
- Feb. 20 Family Day – University closed.
- Feb. 20-24 Winter Break, no classes.
- Mar. 24 Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
- Apr. 7 Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for Fall/Winter and Winter term courses.
- Apr. 7 Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
- Apr. 10-25 Final Examinations. Exams are normally held all seven days of the week.
- Apr. 14 Good Friday – University closed.
- Apr. 25 Take-home exams are due.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy: 3A35 Paterson Hall

www.carleton.ca/philosophy

520-2110

Registrar's Office: 300 Tory

www.carleton.ca/registrar

520-3500

Student Academic Success Centre: 302 Tory

www.carleton.ca/sasc

520-7850

Writing Tutorial Service: 4th Floor, Library

<http://www1.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/>

520-6632

MacOdrum Library

<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>

520-2735