

PHIL 2020 Practical Philosophy: The Social Contract

Winter 2018 Tuesday/Thursday SA 406 1:05-2:25

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Office: Paterson 3A55 Tuesday 3-4:30 pm or by appointment

Course Description:

Social Contract Theory (SCT) addresses itself to a key question of practical philosophy, namely, what is the source of the state's legitimacy, and thus the source of our duty to obey it. According to SCT, the legitimate authority of government is grounded in the hypothetical consent of the governed, where the form and content of this consent derives from the idea of contract or mutual agreement. Proponents of the theory have provided diverse and conflicting accounts of the nature of consent and the conditions under which it should be given, as well as diverse conceptions of what it means for a legitimate state to treat all those on whom it depends for its authority with an equal concern and respect. This course will track the development of social contract theory from the ancient period to the present, while exploring some of its moral and political limitations. SCT is central to the broad terrain of practical philosophy as it connects abstract conceptual ideas of justice to matters of significant practical concern.

Course Assignments:

There will be three essay assignments for this course, one group presentation, and a final take-home exam. The essays will be 3-4 pages in length; and in them students will be asked to reconstruct, in logical form, a key argument from course materials, and to raise a brief criticism of the argument. The purpose of these assignments is to accustom new philosophers to the basic structure of analytic philosophical writing. For their presentations students will work in pairs/groups and present on a topic/issue of ongoing practical concern to which they will apply the philosophical view under consideration. More information on both the essay format and the presentation is available below the course schedule. We will also devote a day of class in January to discussing both types of assignments. The final take-home exam will be essay based and will require that students explain and engage critically with the course materials.

Grade Breakdown:

- **Essay 1: 15% Due February 6**
- **Essay 2: 15% Due March 6**
- **Essay 3: 15% Due April 5**
- **Presentation: 14% Sign up on Cu Learn for preferred date by January 30**
- **Attendance on presentations days: 6% (February 13, 15 & March 13, 15)**
- **Take-home exam: 35% Posted on April 10, due on April 26**

Course Readings: linked below or available as pdfs on CU Learn

Course Schedule:

Jan 16: Introduction to the course

Jan 18: Plato, *Crito* <http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/crito.html>

Jan 23: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I ch. 13-15

Jan 25: Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I ch. 16-21, 28-29

<https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/h/hobbes/thomas/h68l/contents.html>

Jan 30: **Seminar on philosophy papers and presentations**

Feb 1: John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, ch. 1-8

<https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/l/locke/john/l81s/contents.html>

Feb 6: John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, ch. 9-19 ****1st Essay Due**

Feb 8: David Hume, *Of The Original Contract*

<http://www.constitution.org/dh/origcont.htm>

Feb 13: Hobbes Presentations

Feb 15: Locke Presentations

Reading Break

Feb 27: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I ch. 1-9

Mar 1: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book II ch. 1-8

https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/r/rousseau/jean_jacques/r864s/contents.html

Mar 6: John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 3-19, 47-81 ****2nd Essay Due**

Mar 8: John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, pp. 102-135

Mar 13: Rousseau Presentations

Mar 15: Rawls Presentations

Mar 20: Anita Silvers and Leslie Frances, "Justice Through Trust: Disability and the Outlier Problem in Social Contract Theory," pp.40-77

Mar 22: Jean Hampton, "Feminist Contractarianism," pp. 1-38

Mar 27: Charles Mills, "The Domination Contract," pp. 79-105

Mar 29: Peter Singer, "All Animals Are Equal," pp. 187-195 and Tom Regan, "the Case for Animal Rights" <http://www.animal-rights-library.com/texts-m/regan03.htm>

Apr 3: Mark Rowlands, "Contractarianism and Animal Rights," pp. 235-247

Apr 5: Peter Singer, "Famine, Affluence, and Morality," pp. 229-243 ****3rd Essay Due**

Apr 10: Thomas Nagel, "The Problem of Global Justice," pp. 113-147

Apr 12 and 13: Additional Office Hours for Review and Exam Discussion, Times TBD.

Essays:

There are three essays for this course. They will be 3-4 pages in length, and due on the dates identified in the course schedule. We will spend time as a class discussing the requirements of philosophical writing on January 30th. Your TA will also hold office hours throughout the term to discuss the expectations of philosophical writing further. **In your essays you will be asked to 1) schematize, 2) exposit and 3) evaluate** a text, or portion thereof. To **schematize** means to reproduce an argument in its logical form: identifying its ultimate conclusion and supporting premises. You should use as few premises as possible and organize them in the most logical order possible. To **exposit** means to explain, using your own words, the author's argument. You can elaborate here on the schema's structure, explain the author's intentions and identify any missing premises (that the author may need or assume but not actually include). And finally, to **evaluate** means to critically engage with the argument. Is it valid (if the premises are true, does the conclusion follow)? Is it sound (are the premises and conclusion all true)? What challenges can you raise against one of the argument's premises, or its conclusion, and what implications does this challenge have for the argument as a whole?

Essay Due Dates:

Essay 1: February 6

Essay 2: March 6

Essay 3: April 5

Presentations:

Students will work in groups of 2 or 3 and give presentations of 25 minutes, including time for discussion, on one of the designated presentation days. Students must **sign-up on CU Learn by January 30th** for their preferred presentation date, and must contact me regarding the practical topic of their presentation no later than one week before their presentation date. When your group selects a topic let me know right away and I will mark it as having been reserved and not available to the other groups on your day. Note that the topics suggested below are merely suggestions, and also that each topic could work for one author as easily as for any of the others. In your presentation you should: 1) **explain** the nature of the practical dilemma and the moral issues it raises, 2) **exposit** the author's relevant views, 3) **apply** the author's views to the dilemma, 4) **evaluate** the appropriateness and validity of the author's views as applied to the dilemma.

Presentation Dates: Sign up on Cu Learn by Jan 30th

Hobbes: February 13

Locke: February 15

Rousseau: March 13

Rawls: March 15

Take Home Exam will be assigned on April 10 and due by email no later than April 26

Recommended Presentation Topics:

Hobbes' *Leviathan*

The Death Penalty: is it right to kill as punishment for killing?

Just War and Terrorism: if war is the state of nature, is there such thing as a just war?

The Free Rider Problem: how to resolve collective action problems (eg the prisoner's dilemma) where self-interest makes parties worse off than they would be if they cooperated?

Locke's *Treatise on Government*

Global Poverty: should we share resources with those who have none? What if we failed to leave enough and as good?

Environmentalism: does private property protect or threaten the environment?

Revolution: do citizens have a right/obligation to revolt against unjust regimes?

Rousseau's *Social Contract*

Inheritance and Inequality: should the rich be allowed to inherit /bequeath?

Gender Inequality: how does it originate and what should be done about it?

Censorship: can/should the state censor views that don't support state values?

Voting and Electoral Practices: does campaign financing undermine democracy?

Separation of Church and State: should the state support one religion?

Rawls' *Theory of Justice*

Multiculturalism: should we protect religious freedom when it threatens equality?

Public Education: can we really achieve equal opportunity through education?

Public/Private Health Care: does justice demand public health care?

Black Lives Matter: where is race in the social contract?

The Welfare State: can the state force the 1% to help the 99%?

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (Fall/Winter 2017-18)

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 Final Exams:

If you miss a final examination (formally scheduled or take-home) because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral. You must apply within 3 working days after the scheduled date of your formally scheduled exam or within 3 working days after the due date of a take-home exam. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information:

<http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/#2.5>

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. <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

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*). 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. 6	Classes start.
Sept. 19	Last day for registration and course changes for Fall term and Fall/Winter (two-term) courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 9	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Oct. 23-27	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 24	Last day for summative or final examinations in Fall term courses before the official examination period.
Dec. 8	Last day of Fall term classes. Classes follow a Monday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from Fall term courses. 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 a Fall term course.
Dec. 10-22	Final examinations for Fall term courses and mid-term examinations in two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Dec. 22	All take-home examinations are due.
Jan. 8	Classes begin.
Jan. 19	Last day for registration and course changes in the Winter term.
Jan. 31	Last day for a full fee adjustment when withdrawing from Winter term courses or from the Winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 19	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Feb. 19-23	Winter Break – no classes.
Mar. 27	Last day for summative or final examinations in Winter term or two-term courses before the official examination period.
Mar. 30	Statutory holiday. University closed.
Apr. 11	Last day of two-term and Winter term classes. Classes follow a Friday schedule. Last day for academic withdrawal from Fall/Winter and Winter courses. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for two-term and for Winter term courses.
Apr. 14-26	Final examinations for Winter term and two-term courses. Examinations are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 26	All take home examinations are due on this day.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Academic Advising Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/academicadvising 520-7850
Writing Services:	4 th Floor, Library http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/ 520-3822
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735