

PHIL 5500:
Topics in Contemporary Philosophy

Science, Values, and Democracy



Winter 2018
Course Outline

I. Admin

Instructor: Gabriele Contessa

Office: PA 3A43

Office Hours: Fridays, 1:35pm-2:25pm or by appointment

E-mail: gabriele_contessa@carleton.ca

[Seminar Schedule](#)

II. Description

Science is held by many in high regard as an exemplar of objectivity and a source of knowledge. And yet scientists do not seem to be immune from the influence of personal interests, social prejudices, political ideologies, etc., which, according to critics of science, undermines their ability to be objective. But how can science be objective if scientists are not immune from extra-scientific values and to what extent does science need to be value-free or objective in order for society to rely on it as a source of knowledge? And what should the relationship between science and society be in a democracy? In this seminar, we will explore these and related questions by looking at some contemporary work on the social dimension of science and on the relationship between science and democracy.

III. Prerequisites

Registration in a Philosophy Master's Program.

IV. Readings

- 1) Helen E. Longino, *Science as Social Knowledge: Values and Objectivity in Scientific Inquiry*, Princeton University Press, 1999.
- 2) Philip Kitcher, *Science, Truth, and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, 2001.
- 3) Heather E. Douglas, *Science, Policy, and the Value-Free Ideal*, University of Pittsburgh Press, 2009.

All three books are all available for purchase and/or rent at the the Carleton University Bookstore. Douglas' book is also on a 2-hour reserve at the Library and Kitcher's book can be accessed through the e-Library.

V. Assignments and Grading (Please see the Seminar Schedule for assignment deadlines and presentation dates)

- a. Class Attendance and Participation (worth 15% of the final grade).
- b. Three Essays (each worth 20% of the final grade)
- c. Weekly Summaries (jointly worth 10% of your final grade)
- d. Weekly Discussion Questions (jointly worth 15% of your final grade).

VI. Policies

Attendance. Attendance is mandatory. If you are absent, you are responsible for finding out what has been covered in class and for any course-related announcements. If unforeseen circumstances are preventing you from attending class regularly, it is your responsibility to inform me as soon as possible.

Readings. You are responsible for consulting the Seminar Schedule online before each class to find out the readings for that class and for reading each of them carefully. Please be aware that, if you don't do the readings, you are very unlikely to do well in this course.

Communications. You are responsible for checking regularly your Carleton email account for course-related messages and announcements. You are also responsible for checking regularly the Seminar Schedule online for any changes or updates.

Assignments. Instructions for each assignment will be sent to your Carleton email account about two weeks before the assignment is due. *Please follow those instructions very carefully, as failure to do so may result in penalties.* If you have not received the instructions for an assignment two weeks prior to the deadline for that assignment, it is your responsibility to contact me to let me know.

The deadline for each assignment is at 11:59pm of the day the assignment is due (see Schedule below). Unless I have granted you an extension in writing (see below), 5 points will be subtracted from your grade for every day the assignment is late. Late assignments will be marked but not commented upon in writing. If you wish to receive detailed feedback on a late assignment, you will have to make an appointment with me to discuss it. *Failing to submit an assignment will result in a 0% on that assignment.*

Each assignment must be exclusively the work of the individual student submitting it. Please be aware that plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration are very serious academic offences (see below) and that I am bound to report any suspected academic offence directly to the Office of the Dean.

Summaries. Summaries are to be submitted each week before the beginning of the seminar meeting. In each summary, you have to outline in your own words and as clearly, informatively, accurately, and concisely as possible the key theses and/or arguments of each of the week's readings. Summaries cannot exceed 500 words. Longer summaries will be penalized. Please submit each summary by sending it in the body of an e-mail with subject line 'Seminar Summaries for [date]' (e.g. 'Seminar Summaries for October 23'). Each summary must include a word count. Graduate students will take turns to introduce each chapter/article by reading their summary of it in class. *Failing to submit a summary on time will result in a 0% on that summary.*

Discussion Questions. Discussion Questions are to be submitted by e-mail each week before the beginning of the seminar meeting (with the exception of the first meeting and of those meetings in which you are doing a presentation). The subject line of the message should read 'Seminar Discussion Questions for [date]'. (e.g. 'Seminar Discussion Questions for October 23') You are expected to submit one

Interpretive Question and one Evaluative Question for each chapter to be read for that day. Examples of Interpretive Questions are questions such as ‘What do you think is the argument in the x^{th} paragraph of page y ?’ or ‘What do you think the author means when s/he says ‘ x ’ on page y ?’. Examples of Evaluative Questions are questions such as ‘Do you think that the argument for x on page y succeeds?’ or ‘Do you think that the author is correct in claiming that x on page y ?’. Everything else being equal, specific questions (i.e. questions that refer to a specific sentence or paragraph) are preferable to general questions. In class, students will take turn to ask their questions. Each student is expected to offer a reasoned answer to the question they ask. *Failing to submit your discussion questions on time will result in a 0% for that week.*

Drafts. While I am happy to answer any general questions about you might have about your assignments, please be advised that I am not able to provide any feedback on draft assignments.

Extensions. Extensions will be granted only in *extraordinary* circumstances (e.g. serious illness or family emergency) *and* only if the extension is requested *in writing before* the assignment deadline. If you think you may need an extension, please contact me as soon as possible by e-mail.

Academic Integrity. You are responsible for ensuring that you understand the nature of academic offences (such as plagiarism and unauthorized collaboration), as defined in the Undergraduate Calendar (see [here](#)), and to avoid both committing them and aiding or abetting academic offences perpetrated by other students. Please be aware that I am bound to report any suspected academic offence directly to the Office of the Dean.

Final Grades. All final grades are subject to the approval of the Dean.

VII. Schedule

The Seminar Schedule contains the readings for each week, as well as other important information about the course. Please check the Seminar Schedule regularly for any changes or updates.

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/academicrogulationsoftheuniversity/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

Registrar's Office: 520-2110
300 Tory

www.carleton.ca/registrar

Academic Advising Centre: 520-3500
302 Tory

www.carleton.ca/academicadvising

Writing Services: 520-7850
4th Floor, Library

<http://www.carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>

MacOdrum Library 520-3822
<http://www.library.carleton.ca/>

520-2735

