



**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

**PHILOSOPHY PROGRAMME
PHIL/POLS 262 MORAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

TRIMESTER 2 2009
13 July to 15 November 2009

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 13 July to 16 October

Study week: 19 to 23 October

Examination/Assessment period: 27 October to 15 November

Students who enrol in this course should be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the formal examination period stated above.

Lecturer:

Simon Keller

Room: MY 720

Phone: Extn. 8531

Email: Simon.Keller@vuw.ac.nz

Office Hours: Friday 1.00 - 3.00 pm

Classes:

One class a week: Monday, 11-2, Hunter LT220.

Course delivery

The weekly three-hour meeting will include some lecturing, plus discussion, informal group assignments, and time for questions.

Communication of additional information

There will be a course site on Blackboard, which will contain a copy of the course outline, any notes distributed in class, and any announcements. Nothing essential will be placed on the Blackboard site without being announced or distributed in class.

Course content

The course provides an introduction to some central problems and theories in contemporary political philosophy. We will examine such influential theoretical perspectives as liberalism, feminism, anarchism, communitarianism, and republicanism, and we will consider questions like the following. What is the role of the state? What rights do we have, and what are the implications of our holding those rights? Is there a human right to freedom from starvation? What is freedom, and what is valuable about freedom? Under what conditions is it morally permissible to go to war? What is democracy, and what is valuable about democracy?

Learning objectives and expectations

Students passing the course should understand the major positions in contemporary political philosophy, and should be able to apply the analytical methods of political philosophy to practical political problems.

Students passing the course should also advance their abilities to undertake logical and critical thinking, conceptual analysis and rational and ethical decision-making. They should also practice and improve their critical writing skills.

Students are expected to attend lectures regularly, take part in class discussion, and keep up with the reading.

Expected workload

The University's guideline for a 22-point course is 220 hours over the entire trimester, including time in class. This equates to about 18 hours a week.

Readings

All the required readings are in a coursebook. For the first two weeks of trimester the coursebook will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer. After week two it will be sold from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Students are expected to do the reading for each week prior to that week's class. There is not a great deal of reading for the course, but some of it is quite difficult and it must be done carefully.

Reading beyond the material in the coursebook is not required. If you would like to do some further reading, contact the lecturer for suggestions.

Assessment requirements

1. A 1500 words essay, due in class on 17 August, worth 30% of the final grade. Topics will be distributed on 3 August.
2. A 2500 word essay, due in class on 12 October, worth 40% of the final grade. Topics will be distributed on 14 September.
3. A closed-book final exam, to be scheduled during the exam period (27 October – 14 November), worth 30% of the final grade.

Submission information and penalties

You must submit your essays electronically via Blackboard on the due date, and you must also submit a hard copy in class. The electronic copy may be sent to turnitin.com, an anti-plagiarism website.

Essays must be typed in double-spaced text with wide margins. Legible hand-written essays are also acceptable. Remember to include your name and topic. Include page numbers and use a staple.

Requests for extensions must be submitted as early as possible, and will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Late papers without extensions will be penalised 5% for each day

of lateness. There will also be penalties for essays that exceed the word limit by more than 100 words.

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in this course, each student must complete both essays and the exam. (You cannot pass the course if you complete only two of the three pieces of assessment.)

Lecture schedule, topics, and readings

13 July	Introductory class	
20 July	Utilitarianism	Kymlicka, 'Utilitarianism'
27 July	Rawls's liberalism	Selections from Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i>
3 August	The libertarian challenge	Selections from Nozick, <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i>
10 August	Gender and liberalism	Selections from Okin, <i>Justice, Gender, and the Family</i>
17 August	Patriotism and communitarianism	MacIntyre, 'Is Patriotism a Virtue?' FIRST ESSAY DUE
7 September	Positive and negative freedom	Berlin, 'Two Concepts of Liberty'
14 September	Republican freedom	Selections from Pettit, <i>Republicanism</i>
21 September	Poverty and human rights	Ashford, 'Freedom from Poverty as a Human Right'
28 September	The ethics of war	Anscombe, 'Mr. Truman's Degree' and 'The Justice of the Present War Examined'
5 October	Anarchism and political obligation	Selections from Simmons, 'Moral Principles and Political Obligation'
12 October	Democracy	Swift, 'Democracy' SECOND ESSAY DUE

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

Use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

The AVC (Academic) website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates. This website can be accessed at:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/avcacademic/Publications.aspx>