



SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

PHILOSOPHY and POLITICAL SCIENCE PHIL/POLS 262 Moral and Political Philosophy

TRIMESTER 2 2010
12 July to 13 November 2010

Trimester dates

Teaching dates: 12 July 2010 to 15 October 2010

Mid-trimester break: 23 August to 5 September 2010

Study week: 18 to 22 October 2010

Examination/Assessment period: 22 October to 13 November 2010

Please note that this course will have an examination during the university examination period. You should make sure that you will be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the examination period.

Withdrawal dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

Lecturer

Simon Keller

Office room: Murphy (MY) 720

Office phone: 463 9638

Email: Simon.Keller@vuw.ac.nz

Office hours: Tuesdays 11-12 and by appointment

Class times and locations

Lecture time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 9.10-11am

Lecture venue: Hunter LT119

Course delivery

The bi-weekly meetings will include some lecturing, plus discussion, informal group assignments, and time for questions. There are no tutorials for this course.

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 perspectives in contemporary moral and political philosophy. We will address questions like the following. Is there a single true morality? Is it possible to make moral progress? What obligations do people in affluent countries have towards impoverished people in other parts of the world? What is justice? What is freedom? What is equality? Should we be patriotic? Under what conditions, if any, is it permissible to fight a war?

Learning objectives

Students passing the course should understand the major positions in contemporary moral and 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 classes regularly, take part in class discussion, and keep up with the reading.

Graduate attributes

As with all PHIL courses, learning objectives of this course contribute to the attainment of specific attributes in the areas of logical and critical thinking, conceptual analysis and rational and ethical decision-making. For more details please consult our website www.victoria.ac.nz/phil/degrees/index.aspx

Expected workload

The University's guideline for a 20-point course is 200 hours over the entire trimester, including time in class.

Readings

Essential texts:

Students must purchase the PHIL/POLS 262 Course Book. For the first two weeks of trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two all undergraduate textbooks will be sold from vicbooks and student notes from the Student Notes Distribution Centre on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone: 463 5515.

Recommended Reading:

Extra reading is not necessary. The following two books provide helpful backgrounds to many of the topics on the course.

Will Kymlicka, *Contemporary Political Philosophy* 2nd Ed. (Oxford University Press, 2002).

Adam Swift, *Political Philosophy* (Cambridge: Polity, 2006).

Assessment requirements

1. A 1000 word essay, due in class on Tuesday 12 August, worth 20% of the final grade. Topics will be distributed on Tuesday 22 July.
2. An in-class exam on Tuesday 7 September, worth 20% of the final grade.
2. A 2500 word essay, due in class on Thursday 14 October, worth 30% of the final grade. Topics will be distributed on Tuesday 14 September.
3. A two-hour closed-book final exam, to be scheduled during the exam period (22 October to 13 November), worth 30% of the final grade.

Penalties

A make-up for the in-class test will be granted only for valid grounds, such as a serious illness. Presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary. In such cases, you must notify the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Students will be penalised for late submission of essays—a deduction of 2.5% for each day. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds, e.g., illness (presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary) or similar other contingencies. In these cases, you must notify the course coordinator as soon as possible.

It is permissible to go 10% over the word limit for each of the essays (but try to avoid it!). Any further material will not be marked. (So, if you submit 2000 words for the first essay, you will be marked on the first 1100 words only.)

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in this course, each student must complete both essays. (It is possible to pass the course if you skip the test or the exam, but not possible if you fail to submit one of the essays.)

Return of assignments

Essays and tests will be returned during lectures. The final essay and any other uncollected work may be collected from the Programme Office on the fourth/fifth floor between the hours of 2 and 3pm on Monday to Friday.

Class Representative

A class representative will be elected in the first class, and that person's name and contact details will be available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

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_victoria/avcademic/Publications.aspx