University of New Hampshire
Spring Semester 2016
Philosophy 436.01: Social and Political Philosophy
Prof. Ruth Sample

SYLLABUS

Meeting Times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:10 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Conant Room 8.
Instructor: Professor Ruth Sample
Prof. Sample's Office: Nesmith 306; tel. 862-3074
Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12:35-1:35 p.m. I am also available by appointment if you cannot see me during office hours.
Email: ruth.sample@unh.edu (this is the best way to contact me)

Required Texts:

**Text available at Durham Book Exchange and the UNH bookstore. Some readings may be available as downloads from Canvas (https://mycourses.unh.edu/).

IMPORTANT: This course is taught through the on-line Canvas system. Students registered for this course are automatically enrolled as users of Canvas. Login using your UNH id and password at https://mycourses.unh.edu/.

A Brief Course Description:

In this course we will do two things:

1. We will explore the writings of the major social and political thinkers in Western philosophy, from Plato through John Rawls and his critics.

2. We will learn about the perennial issues of political theory, and how these philosophers have tried to solve them.

   • Why have governments at all?
   • Do we have an obligation to obey the state?
   • What do we owe other each other as citizens? As human beings?
   • Which forms of government are the most defensible?

We will use several different methods of learning and assessment:

   • Regular quizzes will prepare you for class as well as provide you with ongoing assessment of your knowledge of basic concepts and lines of thought.
• The two examinations will test your knowledge of the various views defended by the philosophers we study, the important conclusions they draw, and the reasons they give in support of those conclusions. They will also test the breadth and depth of your knowledge of the texts.
• Online discussions will hone your ability to ask and answer philosophical questions.
• Essays will give you an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of the moral philosophy we investigate, and to respond both analytically and creatively to the material.

This course is a discussion-based course, although I will spend part of each class lecturing. It is imperative that you complete each assigned reading before the class in which we discuss it. I expect you to read it at least twice during the week that it is assigned.

Course Requirements: You must complete all of the required assignments in order to pass this course.

• Two papers.
• Two in-class examinations.
• Weekly on-line discussion.
• Quizzes each Thursday, with exceptions as noted in the course schedule.
• Attendance at each class. Five or more absences will trigger a grade of AF (Administrative Failure)

Grading:

• Each paper counts for 15% of your final grade totaling 30%.
• Each examination counts for 15% of your final grade totaling 30%.
• Online discussion contributions count for 10% of your final grade.
• Quizzes (in class, most Thursdays) count for 20% of your final grade.
• Class participation will count for the remaining 10% of your grade.

Papers: Each paper will be 4-6 pages long.

Quizzes: Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped from the quiz average.

On-line Discussions: Each week you will participate in an on-line discussion via Canvas. You must either (a) post a question that was raised by the week’s reading, or (b) answer a question posed by another student, and (c) come to class prepared to discuss your question or response as an “ice-breaker.” Print out your discussion contribution before Thursday’s class; we will continue our discussion in class after the quiz.

Participation: Attendance and participation in discussion are required for this course. You may have two absences without penalty. Three to four absences will count against your participation grade. FIVE OR MORE ABSENCES WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESULT IN A GRADE OF AF (ADMINISTRATIVE FAILURE).
**Special Accommodations/Disabilities:**
The University is committed to providing students with documented disabilities equal access to all university programs and facilities. If you think you have a disability requiring accommodations, you must register with Disability Services for Students (DSS). Contact DSS at (603) 862-2607 or disability.office@unh.edu. If you have received Accommodation Letters for this course from DSS, please provide me with that information privately in my office so that we can review those accommodations.

Please do not hesitate to discuss this with me; I want to help you do your best work.

**Class Rules:**

1. Treat your fellow students with respect. Listen when others are speaking, and give them your full attention.
2. Try not to talk over or interrupt others in discussion. This can be difficult to do (especially during a heated discussion), but we will have plenty of practice!
3. Do not eat in class. You may drink coffee or soda, but please do not make noise.
4. Do not read or do homework in class.
5. Do not talk or whisper with classmates during class.
6. Students may not leave, except in the case of emergency, once our session has begun.
7. Use the bathroom before class.
8. **Absolutely no texting/email checking, etc. during class.** Turn off all electronic devices at the start of class, and keep them off until class is dismissed.
9. Do not arrive late. If for some reason you do arrive late, please be quiet when you do so.
10. If you must leave early, let me know in advance and sit near the door. Please be quiet when you exit.
11. Participants in varsity sports will need a special note from the coach or other relevant athletic authority in order to miss class or make up quizzes or exams because of away games. Athletes may not leave class early in order to get to practice early. If this course conflicts with your practice schedule, you should resign from the course or quit the team.
12. If you miss a quiz, you may not make it up. You may drop it as your lowest quiz grade.
13. Do not make travel plans (e.g., airline reservations) that would conflict with any examination times. You must take the quizzes, as any examinations, in class at the designated times.
14. Do not plagiarize. SafeAssign on Canvas is a program that detects plagiarism, and all papers are submitted via SafeAssign. Respect the UNH policy on academic integrity and honesty. For more information on this, see [http://www.unh.edu/liberal-arts/plagiarism/plagiarismHome.cfm](http://www.unh.edu/liberal-arts/plagiarism/plagiarismHome.cfm).
COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of this semester, you will be able to

• Recognize key issues of political theory
• Reframe those issues in your own words
• Discuss those issues with others in an informed and thoughtful way
• Identify philosophical arguments and their component parts
• Critically assess philosophical arguments
• Formulate your own responses to philosophical arguments
• Develop reasons for your own philosophical views
• Formulate criticisms of your own philosophical views
• Respond to those criticisms with reasons
• Define key philosophical terms in social and political philosophy
• Identify the major social and political theories of Western philosophers
• Explain the arguments of those philosophers
• Explain the major criticisms of those views
SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR DOING WELL IN THIS COURSE

1. **Read the syllabus carefully.** The syllabus provides an overview of the course, but it also has important details about the requirements for the course and my expectations of all students who take it.

2. **Buy the assigned books; buy the assigned editions.** Textbooks cost money, but it is really very little compared to what you are spending on your education overall. Do not use internet versions of assigned readings. Web versions may not include the relevant commentary, footnotes, or ancillary material.

3. **Do the assigned reading before class.** You should read it at least twice.

4. **Come to class every day.** This is a component of your grade and a requirement for passing the class. However, lecture and discussion are also crucial to understanding philosophy. For most of people in this course, philosophy is completely new. Give yourself the benefit of lecture and discussion.

5. **Check Canvas every day. Check the syllabus every day.** Don’t hesitate to ask questions if you find something confusing. I post many short, simple handouts on Canvas to supplement lecture and readings, and to assist you with assignments.

6. **Turn your papers and Canvas discussion contributions on time.** Late papers will be downgraded. My specific policies regarding late papers can be found in the Writing Folder on Canvas. Because you will submit your papers as a Word file through SafeAssign on Canvas, it is always clear when your paper was submitted.

7. **Listen to your classmates respectfully; participate in discussion.** You will get the most out of this class if you are prepared for discussion and actively engaged in it. Try to really listen to what others say, and if you don’t understand it, ask a question. This helps you as well as everyone else. Be a participant, not a spectator.
Philosophy 436.01: Social and Political Philosophy  
Prof. Ruth Sample  
Course Schedule  
Spring Semester 2016

- All readings are from Cahn, Steven M., ed. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*, 3rd edition, and on Canvas.
- Read the introductions at the beginning of each section. They are great!
- Read each assignment twice before class to prepare for lecture, discussion, and quizzes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPICS/READINGS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td><strong>INTRODUCTORY REMARKS: WHAT IS SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| January 28   | **PLATO**  
In “Political Philosophy,” (hereafter PP), pp. 5-30  
(*Defense of Socrates, Crito*)  
**Quiz 1** |
| February 2   | **PLATO**  
Paul Butler, “Black Jurors: Right to Acquit?” (Canvas)  
[https://harpers.org/author/paulbutler/](https://harpers.org/author/paulbutler/)  
PP, pp. 51-66  
(*Republic, Book II*)  
**Quiz 2** |
| February 9   | **HOBBES**  
PP, pp. 312-330  
(*Leviathan, Part I*)  
“Man is Rescued by Stranger on Subway Tracks,” (Canvas)  
**Quiz 3** |
| February 11  | **HOBBES**  
PP, pp. 330-343  
(*Leviathan, Part II*)  
**Quiz 3** |
| February 16  | **HOBBES** |
| February 18  | **LOCKE**  
PP, pp. 365-392  
(*Second Treatise of Government*)  
**Quiz 4** |
February 23  
*LOCHE*  
Justin P. McBrayer, “This Land is Your Land. Or is It?” (Canvas)  
[http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/01/05/this-land-is-your-land-or-is-it/?_r=0](http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/01/05/this-land-is-your-land-or-is-it/?_r=0)

February 25  
*LOCHE*  
PP, pp. 393-399 (*Letter Concerning Toleration*)  
**Quiz 5**

March 1  
*ROUSSEAU*  
PP, pp. 422-436 (*Discourse on The Origin of Inequality*)

March 3  
*ROUSSEAU*  
PP, pp. 437-466 (*Of The Social Contract*)  
First paper due in class; upload via SafeAssign on Canvas  
No quiz

March 8  
*ROUSSEAU*  
MIDTERM REVIEW: in class

March 10  
MIDTERM EXAMINATION: in class  
No quiz

March 14-18  
UNH SPRING BREAK: NO CLASSES.

March 22  
MIDTERM RESULTS,  
*KARL MARX* and *FRIEDRICH ENGELS*  
PP, pp. 701-707  
(*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*)

March 24  
*KARL MARX* and *FRIEDRICH ENGELS*  
PP, pp. 708-727  
(*The Manifesto of the Communist Party; A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*)  
**Quiz 6**

March 29  
*MARX* and *ENGELS*  
PP, pp. 728-738.  
(*Value, Price, and Profit.*)

March 31  
*JOHN STUART MILL*  
PP, pp. 741-746  
(*Utilitarianism*)  
**Quiz 7**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 5</td>
<td><strong>JOHN STUART MILL</strong></td>
<td>PP, pp. 747-808 (On Liberty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 7</td>
<td><strong>JOHN STUART MILL</strong></td>
<td>(On Liberty) Quiz 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 12</td>
<td><strong>JOHN STUART MILL</strong></td>
<td>PP, pp. 808-824 (The Subjection of Women)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 14</td>
<td><strong>JOHN RAWLS</strong></td>
<td>PP, pp. 917-932. (A Theory of Justice) Quiz 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 19</td>
<td><strong>JOHN RAWLS</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 21</td>
<td><strong>JOHN RAWLS</strong></td>
<td>Quiz 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 26</td>
<td><strong>ROBERT NOZICK</strong></td>
<td>PP, pp. 957-970 (Anarchy, State, and Utopia)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 28</td>
<td><strong>ROBERT NOZICK</strong></td>
<td>Quiz 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 3</td>
<td><strong>VIRGINIA HELD</strong></td>
<td>PP, pp. 1006-1010 (Non-contractual Society: A Feminist View)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May 5</td>
<td><strong>KWAME ANTHONY APPIAH</strong></td>
<td>PP, pp. 1077-1086 (The Ethics of Identity) Second paper due in class; upload via SafeAssign on Canvas No quiz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LAST DAY OF CLASSES:** May 9  
**READING DAY:** May 10-12  
**FINAL EXAM:** TBA