

PHIL 236
Introduction to Social & Political Philosophy

Department of Philosophy
University of Victoria
Winter Session – Second Term

Wednesdays
3:30-6:20
Cornett B135

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Office Hours: Mondays & Thursdays 2:00-3:00 (or by appointment)

Course Description:

In this introductory course on Social and Political Philosophy, we'll have the opportunity to read classical and contemporary texts in Political Philosophy, beginning with Plato, and extending to the present. However, this will not be the whole of the course. Instead, each of the classical readings in Political Philosophy will be paired with a case study, dealing with political issues arising in the Canadian context. By way of examples, selections from Plato's *Republic* paired with a consideration of the relevance of the Canadian Senate, selections of Hobbes' *Leviathan* will be paired with a consideration of Quebec's Bill 78 which severely restricted the rights of students to protest. More contemporary readings will pair, for example, selections from Susan Moller Okin's *Justice, Gender and the Family* with the 1990 Supreme Court decision in *R.v. Lavallee* which took up the question of Lavallee's appeal to a battered spouse defence after killing her abusive husband, while a reading by the Canadian political philosopher, Charles Taylor will be paired with a consideration of a reasonable accommodation of cultural and religious diversity in Quebec.

Each class we will begin our discussion with a consideration of the relevant case, with a view to generating a sense of your intuitions about the matter. We will then turn to a close reading of the classical and contemporary reading and then finally end by returning to the case in order to assess how the philosophy affects our reading of it.

Given the three-hour time slot, and the nature of the material, I am expecting this to be a discussion intensive course, and you are all encouraged to voice your thoughts on the material!

Reading:

Diversity Statement:

UVic is committed to equity, diversity, social justice and fostering a welcoming and diverse learning, teaching and working environment. These are essential elements in achieving excellence in research and education. As members of a diverse and dynamic learning community, we each have a role to play in creating safe, supportive, inclusive and healthy learning environments that foster mutual respect and civility, and that recognize that people are our primary strength.

Accessibility Statement:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning (CAD) as soon as possible. The CAD staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations <https://www.uvic.ca/services/cad/>. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Policy on Names:

Though there is no official University policy on the use of names and pronouns appropriate to individual students' identities, my own personal policy is that of respecting the student's own wishes for how he/she/they would like to be addressed. Please feel comfortable talking to me about which names and pronouns are appropriate to you.

Territorial Acknowledgment:

We acknowledge with respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and SAWIT peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

UVic Important Dates:

Sun. Feb. 10	Last day for 50% reduction of tuition fees. 100% of tuition fees to be assessed after this date.
Mon. Feb. 18-Fri. Feb. 22	Reading Break- No classes
Thur. Feb. 28	Last day for withdrawal without penalty of failure.
Friday. Apr. 5	Last day of classes

Grade Scale & Description:

Grade	Percentage	Description
A+	90-100	
A	85-89	
A-	80-84	

Topic 7

Chapter X

John Rawls

Reading:

- Selections from A Theory of Justice

Case:

- Universal Health Care in Canada: C