

**PHIL 261: Introduction to Political Philosophy (28460), Winter 2021**  
**TTh 3:30-4:50 PM, Online via Zoom, +1hr Discussion**

**Instructor:** Chad Horne ([chad.horne@northwestern.edu](mailto:chad.horne@northwestern.edu)).

**Office Hours:** TW 2:00-3:00 PM, via Zoom, and by appointment.

**Teaching Assistants:**

Mauricio Maluff Masi ([mauriciomaluff2013@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:mauriciomaluff2013@u.northwestern.edu)).

Kenni Zellner ([Ken-TerikaZellner2025@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:Ken-TerikaZellner2025@u.northwestern.edu)).

**Course Description:** This course is an introduction to some of the core problems of political philosophy through a study of major historical and contemporary figures. In the first half of the course, we will study important historical accounts of the origin and purpose of political society, from Aristotle to the present. In the second half of the course, we will consider some philosophical problems related to the meaning and implementation of equality in a modern multicultural society.

**Learning Objectives:** Participation in this course will help you:

- 1) Understand the moral ideals animating a diverse range of political-philosophical views in the Western tradition.
- 2) Acquire proficiency in recognizing, reconstructing, and critically evaluating political-philosophical arguments.
- 3) Develop and defend your own answers to important philosophical questions.

**Required Texts:** All readings for this course will be made available online through Canvas.

**Evaluation:** Your grade in this course will be based on the following four elements, weighted as indicated:

Two Essay Assignments (2 @ 25% each):	50%
Take-Home Final Examination:	25%
Attendance and Participation in Discussion Section:	25%

Specific expectations for each of the above elements will be discussed in class.

**Grading Scale:** This course will use the standard Weinberg College grading scale, where grades ending in 7-9 receive the “plus” designation and grades ending in 0-3 receive the “minus” designation; thus, for example, a grade of 87 is a “B+” and a grade of 93 is an “A-.”

**Discussion Section Attendance Policy and Accommodations:** Attendance in discussion section is mandatory and essential for success in this course. Your section participation grade is *not* a mere attendance grade; informed and enthusiastic participation is expected. ***For each unexcused absence from discussion section after the first, your final grade in this course will be lowered by a full grade increment.*** So, for example, after two unexcused absences from section, a course grade of “A-” becomes a “B+”; after three unexcused absences, a grade of “A-” becomes a “B.”

**Discussion Section Attendance Policy and Accommodations (continued):** An e-mail informing your TA that you are ill and unable to attend section is a welcome courtesy, but normally *absences are excused only with documented evidence of personal illness, family emergency, or significant university or professional obligation*. Note that even if your absence is excused, you may still be required to submit written work during the week of your absence in order to make up for missing section.

Accommodations are possible for students who will have problems attending discussion sections on a regular basis, for example because of time zone differences or lack of reliable internet access. Such accommodations should be arranged with your Teaching Assistant as soon as possible.

**Conduct of Lecture:** Course lectures will be delivered via Zoom at our scheduled lecture times (i.e. 3:30-4:50 PM CST). Links to these lectures can be found on the course Canvas page under the Zoom tab. It is expected that your work in this course will display mastery of the material presented in lecture. When joining our Zoom lectures, please try to find a space where you can be present and uninterrupted for the duration of class. If you are not talking, please have your microphone off.

**Recording of Lecture:** Zoom lectures will be recorded by the instructor for educational purposes and available to the class during the quarter. You can find these recordings under the Zoom tab on Canvas. None of these recordings will be saved beyond the current term.

Unauthorized student recording of classroom or other academic activities (including office hours) is prohibited. Unauthorized recording is unethical and may also be a violation of University policy and state law. Students requesting the use of assistive technology as an accommodation should contact AccessibleNU. Unauthorized use of classroom recordings – including distributing or posting them – is also prohibited. Under the University’s Copyright Policy, faculty own the copyright to instructional materials – including those resources created specifically for the purposes of instruction, such as syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, and presentations. Students cannot copy, reproduce, display or distribute these materials. Students who engage in unauthorized recording, unauthorized use of a recording or unauthorized distribution of instructional materials will be referred to the appropriate University office for follow-up.

**Contact:** E-mail is a good way to get in touch with me outside of office hours with administrative questions, but substantive questions about readings or lecture are best raised in class or during office hours. I will answer e-mail in a timely fashion during normal business hours. Normally, if I don’t respond to your e-mail within 24 hours (48 hours on weekends), it is a good idea to re-send it.

**Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism is a serious offense and will be treated as such in this course. Suspected violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Dean’s Office. For more information on Northwestern’s academic integrity policies, please see <https://www.weinberg.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/courses-registration-grades/integrity/>.

All student work in this class may be analyzed electronically for violations of the University’s academic integrity policy and may also be included in a database for the purpose of testing for plagiarized content.

**Accessibility Needs:** Students with a disability are entitled to reasonable accommodations. Any student requesting accommodations related to a disability or other condition is required to register with AccessibleNU and provide professors with an accommodation notification from AccessibleNU, preferably within the first two weeks of class. Accessible NU may be reached at [accessiblenu@northwestern.edu](mailto:accessiblenu@northwestern.edu) or 847-467-5530. All information will remain confidential.

**Student Support:** Students can find useful resources for safety and security, academic support, and mental and physical health and well-being at the NUhelp website and app. Visit <https://www.northwestern.edu/nuhelp/>.

**Course Schedule:** Please be aware that the following schedule is tentative and may be modified as we go along.

**Date: Readings and Assignments:**

T 1/12 Course Introduction.

***Part I: The Aims and Limits of Political Authority***

Th 1/14 Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I, Chapters 1-7.

T 1/19 Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III, especially Chapters 1, 4-13, and 16-18.

Th 1/21 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I, Chapters 6, 11, and 13.  
**First Essay Assignment Distributed.**

T 1/26 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I, Chapters 14-16.

Th 1/28 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part II, Chapters 17-21.

T 2/2 Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Preface and Part I.

Th 2/4 Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II.  
**First Essay Assignment Due.**

T 2/9 Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 1.

Th 2/11 Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters 3-4.

**Course Schedule (continued):**

***Part II: Liberalism, Diversity, and Political Equality***

- T 2/16 Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," Parts I-III.
- Th 2/18 Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," Part IV; Appiah, "Identity Against Culture," pp. 16-27.  
**Second Essay Assignment Distributed.**
- T 2/23 Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, Chapter 1.
- Th 2/25 Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, Chapter 5.
- T 3/2 Shelby, "Integration, Inequality, and Imperatives of Justice,"
- Th 3/4 Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, Chapter 1.  
**Second Essay Assignment Due.**
- T 3/9 Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*, Chapter 5.  
**Take-Home Final Examination Distributed.**
- Th 3/11 Course Review and Wrap-Up.
- T 3/16 **Take-Home Final Examination due at 12:00 PM.**