



A M B R O S E

PH 350 Political Philosophy Fall 2007

Time: Tuesday & Thursday 9:45 – 11:00
Location: Room 753

Instructor Information:
Kenneth M. Nickel (MAR, MSc, PhD Cand)
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Course Description

The course exposes students to the major figures and ideas related to public relationships, political legitimacy, and social authority. The course examines, amongst other things, social contract theory, liberalism, libertarianism, communitarianism, and constitutionalism. Democratic, theocratic, aristocratic, and autocratic regimes will be considered.

Course Objectives

1. Students should learn the classical political ideas of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Hegel, Marx, and Mill.
2. Students should become conversant with the contemporary views of prominent philosophers such as John Rawls, Robert Nozick, Ronald Dworkin, and Alistair McIntyre.
3. Students should be able to synthesize and analyze political philosophy in terms of developed understandings in metaphysics, epistemology, and moral philosophy.
4. Students should appreciate the relationship that exists between ethics and philosophy of law.

Textbook

Kymlicka, W. (2002). *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*. (2nd ed.). Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Course Requirements

1. **Attendance and Participation** 15%
 - Students are expected to attend each class session with an engaged frame of mind, prepared to contribute meaningful conversation to the topics under discussion. An attendance sheet will be circulated, signed by each student in attendance, and collected at the beginning of each class session. Early departures from class should be cleared with the instructor. Leaving class early without excuse warrants a deletion from that day's class roster. Students who come to class late are not entitled to sign the attendance sheet. Each absence from class warrants a reduction of 1% (that is, one of the available 15 marks) and class participation is assessed on the balance. For example, if a student misses three classes and generally participates excellently in class he or she generally cannot achieve more than 12/15 for this portion of his or her evaluation.
 - Students may augment their participation by engaging in regular 'discussion room' conversation in the online classroom environment. Discussion topics will be posted on a regular basis and students are invited to respond with questions and reasoned opinions.

2. **Seminar Presentation** 20%
 - Details TBA

4. **Research Paper** 25%
 - Due: December 6th @ 9:45 AM.
 - Topics: TBA
 - A separate handout regarding format guidelines and late policy will be provided.

5. **Final Exam** 40%
 - Date: TBA
 - Students must pass the final exam to ensure a passing grade in the course. A student who performs well during the term but fails the final exam may fail the course.
 - Students should refrain from scheduling flights or travel of any sort that will conflict with the Final Examination schedule. Final examinations will not be rescheduled to accommodate travel arrangements.

Grading: The available letters for course grades are as follows:

| <u>Letter Grade</u> | <u>GPA</u> | <u>Description</u> | <u>Percentage</u> |
|---------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------------|
| A+ | 4.0 | | 90-100 % |
| A | 4.0 | Exceptional | 85-89 % |
| A- | 3.7 | | 80-84 % |
| B+ | 3.3 | | 77-79 % |
| B | 3.0 | Exceeds Expectations | 73-76 % |
| B- | 2.7 | | 70-72 % |
| C+ | 2.3 | | 67-69 % |
| C | 2.0 | Meets Expectations | 63-66 % |
| C- | 1.7 | | 60-62 % |
| D+ | 1.3 | | 55-59 % |
| D | 1.0 | Minimal Pass | 50-54 % |
| F | 0.0 | Failure | 49 < % |

Important Dates

- Last day to enter a course without permission and to withdraw from course and receive tuition refund is September 14th.
- Last day to withdraw from courses or change to audit without academic penalty is November 16th.
- Last day to request revised time for a final examination is December 5th.

Important Notes

- *Cell phones, recording devices, head phones, and all other technology that is not essential for class by the instructor's criteria are prohibited.*
- *Lap top computers, when not used exclusively for taking class notes, are often a distraction to classmates and even the individual user. Their use is discouraged.*
- *Lap tops used for purposes unrelated to taking lecture notes are prohibited. Violators will be asked to leave the class. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Deans Office.*
- *Students are expected to respect the learning environment of the classroom. Make every attempt to be on time. Be prudent and careful in your consumption of food and drink. Keep unnecessary conversations and comments to a minimum as they are distracting to both the instructor and fellow classmates. As well, they are often deleterious to a student's performance in the class.*
- *Ambrose is committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean.*

- *Students are responsible to check their Ambrose e-mail account regularly. E-mail may be used to notify students of cancelled classes or other important details relating to the course.*
- *Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.*
- *Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a "Course Extension." Alternative times for final examinations cannot be scheduled without prior approval. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar's Office by the appropriate deadline. Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise "due to circumstances beyond the student's control."*
- *Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.*