



# Northwestern University

## TEACHING PORTFOLIO

Joshua Kissel

Winter 2020

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### *Teaching Philosophy*

I am motivated to teach philosophy because I believe the reasoning skills constitutive of good philosophical argument enable students to become better moral actors; an especially important skill as our globalizing world puts us in contact with an ever-increasing number of people from diverse backgrounds with distinct ways of life. My interest in teaching predated my interest in philosophy, but both were sparked by my high school social studies teacher at a time when I was increasingly skeptical of the values I ‘inherited’ from my family. I remember being interested not only in understanding *which* lives people lived, but *which* they, and we, *should* try to live. Though it would have been reasonable, this question did not directly motivate my interest in philosophy, I needed to first develop my confidence as a thinker. As a first-generation student I am especially susceptible to imposter syndrome. This aspect of my background means that I share many experiences with some of my most vulnerable students. At the same time many of these same students will often not see themselves in me, the professor at the front of the room. I therefore see bridging this gap as central to being an effective educator.

In order to become skilled thinkers and develop effective philosophical reasoning skills our students must first be confident enough to participate and make mistakes. A necessity unequally distributed among social categories of class, race, gender, disability, and so on. In order to diversify the field, share its benefits, and achieve the collaborative discourse necessary for philosophy I rely on a variety of teaching tools. Weekly reading responses offer opportunities to practice writing in low stakes situations. By referencing these in lecture; I offer my nervous students opportunities to have their thoughts steer discussion while demonstrating the value of their voices. I use ‘think/pair/share’ in order to give my students time to gather their thoughts, try their ideas out among their peers, and then ultimately share their ‘work’ with our class. This ensures my students recognize that I am interested in the knowledge and experiences they bring to class. It simultaneously promotes a wider diversity of views by preventing the most eager voices from dominating class discussions.

My pedagogy is skills centered. I model the importance of clear arguments by prompting my students to put their argument into premise-conclusion form in our discussions and encourage precision by directly praising students who raise clarifying questions in lecture. This demonstrates that confusion about philosophical problems is normal. Philosophy *is* difficult. In order to train valid argumentation I use scaffolded assignments that emphasize argument development; my first assessment is an outline, and only the final submission is a paper written completely in prose. In order to prepare students for effectively navigating the intense and value-laden disagreements of the real world I try to foster open and charitable discussions. I do this by acting as a ‘guide on the side’ who encourages my students to direct their comments, and their eyes, to their fellow classmates.

Naturally, responsible pedagogy requires a recognition of our limits. To actualize my commitment to improving my practice I enrolled in an optional Searle Center Teaching Certificate Program at Northwestern and regularly request feedback from faculty, fellow graduate workers, and my own students during my classes.

Finally, I am cognizant of my role as a mentor alongside the role of teacher and researcher. I therefore try to keep my office open to my students for discussion, even when it is only tangentially related to coursework. In addition to developing student confidence, this allows me to repay a debt of gratitude I owe to the TAs and faculty who gave me the time and space to become comfortable enough inside academia to end up writing this very statement.

### *Diversity Statement*

My high school social studies teacher is probably most responsible for my being here writing this letter. I was in his classes at a time when I was increasingly skeptical of the values I ‘inherited’ from my family. I wanted to understand not just *which* lives people lived, but which they *should* try to live. It might have been only natural that I developed an interest in critical philosophical thinking except that I grew up in a home with few books, most of which were religious, and so before I could develop an interest in critical thinking, I needed to first develop my confidence in my abilities as a thinker. It was mentors like Mr. Ristow who gave me such confidence. At each step along the way others stepped in and supported me. Whether by offering dozens of hours in their offices to talk philosophy, or merely explaining to a first-generation college student that you could be paid to go to graduate school through a graduate stipend! Thanks to them I am someone who believes in the importance of philosophy with a commitment to sharing its benefits widely.

The problem, of course, is that while things are improving, philosophy as a discipline is especially unrepresentative of the diversity of people that make up our world. APA data suggests that only 30% of those receiving degrees in philosophy identify as females. Things look even worse for racial and ethnic minorities with under a quarter receiving B.As and a mere tenth earning PhDs.<sup>1</sup> I was unable to find reliable data on other underrepresented groups (e.g. sexual minorities, first-generation or working class students, or those with disabilities). Given my own background as a first-generation college student I share experiences with some of my most vulnerable students. But, as someone who has made it through the gauntlet, I have good reason to expect that many of these same students will not see themselves reflected in the white male at the front of their classroom. As a political philosopher I have no illusions that an individual mentor can bridge this gap and reach those students most susceptible to imposter syndrome all alone. But the importance of institutional and social change does not imply that there is little to be done. Insofar as I am committed to sharing the benefits of critical thinking and achieving the collaborative discourse necessary for effective philosophy, I really have no other choice.

I try to actualize this commitment in all areas of my work. My research is animated by the theoretical justification of egalitarianism and a commitment to thinking about how the application of these values to our world should happen. Inside the university I have participated mentorship events for first generation college students put on by Northwestern’s “I’m First” campaign and served as a graduate fellow at one of our residential colleges. I design my syllabi with a commitment to topics which offer practical importance, and which showcase the brilliance of underrepresented groups in philosophy. While I still have room to improve, I am glad to have a syllabus with 50% women authors without having to make any concessions in my choice of topics or quality of work. Finally, because I recognize that office hours are the place where I have the most flexibility, I encourage each of my students to have one visit with me early in the quarter. This helps them recognize this space as *theirs*. It is here where I am most cognizant of my role as a mentor in addition to a teacher and researcher. I therefore keep it open for discussion more tangentially related to coursework as my mentors did for me.

Beyond the walls of the university I have tried to offer the benefits of philosophy early through my role as an Ethics Bowl coach at a Chicago public high school. More indirectly I participate in social and political organizing to achieve equitable outcomes for the most disadvantaged. For example, by supporting the Chicago Teachers Strike to ensure that all our students receive the educations that prepare them to succeed in college or beyond. I have also helped organize the Chicago Effective Altruism chapter, setting up discussions, talks, and social events that help people put their time and money where we have reason to think it will do good. A noteworthy effect of this organization is that we often reach adults without any connection to philosophy, or sometimes even college, at all.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics from the APA fact sheets on Women and Minorities in philosophy:  
[https://www.apaonline.org/page/diversity\\_resources#data](https://www.apaonline.org/page/diversity_resources#data)

## Section 2: Teaching Evaluations

### **Explanation of Roles**

**Teaching Assistantship:** My primary role was a teaching assistant (TA) for the philosophy department (6 courses). For this role I was responsible for grading papers, holding offices hours, and leading weekly discussion sections.

**Grader:** I have also served as a grader with office hours responsibilities for a course in environmental studies and am presently serving in this role for a course in business ethics. Evaluations are unavailable for these courses.

**Lecturer:** Finally, I taught ‘Introduction to Philosophy’ last summer. I was responsible for all aspects of the course design, giving lectures, grading, and hold office hours. The syllabus I used is included in the next section.

### **Explanation of Evaluations**

Below you will find my average quantitative evaluations for my lecturer position followed by selected qualitative evaluations. I have also included averages for my TAships. The averages in my first TAship were particularly bad, after which I sought advice from other TAs, subsequently improving my scores considerably. I therefore include an average with and without this course included as well as a scatter plot with trendlines in order to demonstrate my improvement as a TA over time.

The final section of this portfolio includes my complete and unedited evaluations for reference.

### **Lectureship (Introduction to Philosophy)**

#### **Quantitative Evaluation**

Mean Scores, Rated from 1-6 (1 = very low, 6 = very high)	Scores as Lecturer
Rate the Course	Rate the Course
Overall Rating of Course	5.25
Estimate How Much You’ve Learned	5.88
Effectiveness in Challenging You Intellectually	5.75
Rate the Instructional Materials	5.63
Rate the Instructor	Rate the Instructor
Overall Rating of Instruction	5.5
Effectiveness in Stimulating Your Interest	5.5
How Well Prepared	5.63
Effectiveness Communicating Content	5.75
Instructor Enthusiasm	5.88

**Selected Qualitative Evaluations:**

Did the course help you learn? Why or Why not?

- This course was a great intro to philosophy. The course was structured in a way that was very accessible to someone without any background in the subject. The pacing of the course was also appropriate. Despite it being a 4 week course, the instructor was able to set up lectures and assignments that gave students enough space to learn and absorb material while still covering the entire syllabus. Feedback was collected at an appropriate time and lectures and how the class was structured were visibly improved after. The instructor was always approachable and very willing to take time outside class or office hours to go over things I needed clarification on. This level of dedication was shown to all students as well.

Please Summarize your reaction to this course focusing on the aspects that ere most important to you:

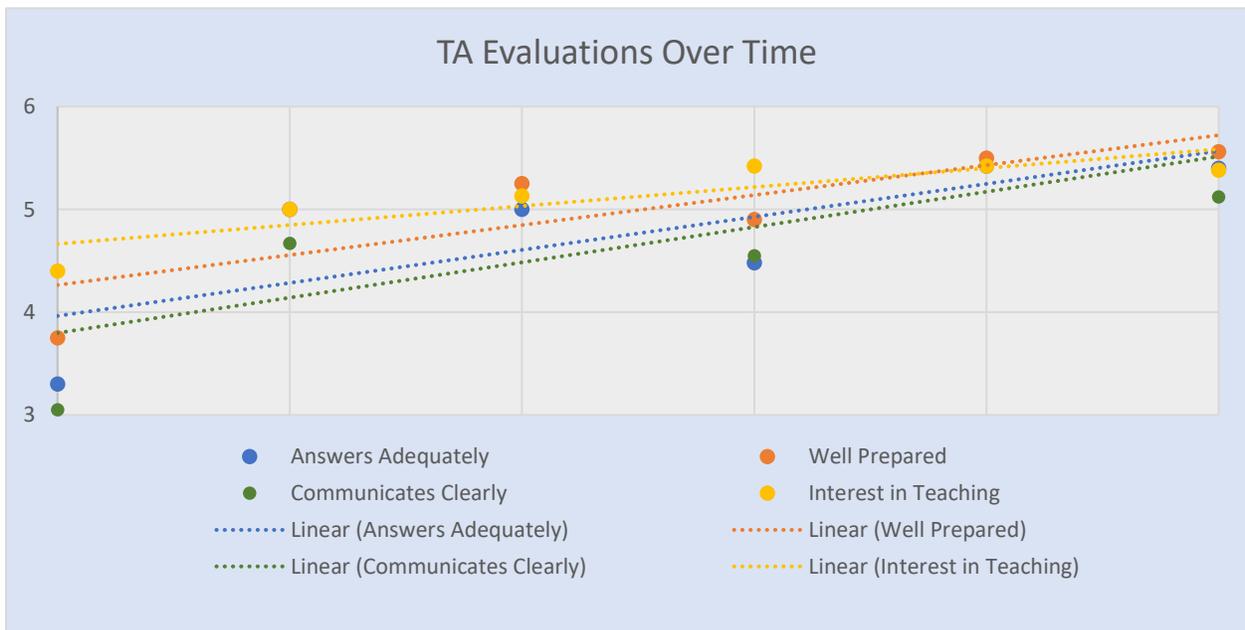
- The instructor was excellent! The readings were heavy since it is a 4 week course but the powerpoints used allowed me to align my takeaways from readings with the essentials we are supposed to learn. Despite it being a 3.5 hour class, the instructor was really engaging and challenged us to think critically. Overall a very enjoyable class and I learned a lot!
- Take this course with Joshua he's great!!! Awesome selection of diversified philosophical readings, well-structured powerpoints and lectures, and very thought–provoking questions! he's also helpful/responsive/accommodating AND super duper enthusiastic about his job which is admirable.

What are the primary teaching strengths of the instructor?

- Professor Kissel is very eloquent in explaining the readings. He takes the class through each reading in detail and in chronological order. I like that he would ask us questions during class to promote participation! Furthermore, Professor Kissel always encouraged the entire class to participate and did his best not to favor those who were more ready to respond. I liked that he would always give examples and wasn't afraid to go off on a tangent if the class deemed it necessary!
- The instructor was always approachable and very willing to take time outside class or office hours to go over things I needed clarification on. This level of dedication was shown to all students as well. Collecting feedback midway was also a very good move. Different classes of students might have different needs/ requests and I think this is something that should be continued so the course can be more tailored to students, since feedback that could be implemented was implemented. Clear explanations were also given on top of the very comprehensive lecture slides. This coupled with the number of engaging in class discussions is comprehensive enough to suit different types of learners in the classroom! Especially for an engineering student like myself, I was unaccustomed to the amount of reading required and all these really helped me adjust quickly to the requirements of the course and subject. Comparing this with the other Weinberg classes I have taken, I am very impressed with the level of instruction!
- Enthusiastic-organized-helpful

**Teaching Assistantships**  
**Quantitative Evaluation**

Mean Scores from 1-6 1 = very low 6 = very high	The TA Was Able to Answers the Students' Questions Adequately	The TA Was Well Prepared for Each Session	The TA Communicated Ideas in A Clear Manner	The TA Showed Strong Interest in Teaching the Course
Average (All Courses)	4.76	4.98	4.66	5.04
Average (Most Recent 5)	5.06	5.23	4.98	5.17
Specific Courses	Specific Courses	Specific Courses	Specific Courses	Specific Courses
PHIL 260 – Fall 2015 Intro to Moral Phil.	3.3	3.75	3.05	4.4
PHIL 262 – Spring 2016 Environmental Ethics	5	5	4.67	5
PHIL 230 – Spring 2017 Gender, Politics, and Phil.	5	5.25	5.13	5.13
PHIL 262 – Winter 2017 Ethical Problems & Public Issues	4.48	4.9	4.55	4.9
PHIL 362 – Fall 2017 Critiques of Morality; Nietzsche and Williams	5.42	5.5	5.42	5.42
PHIL 230 – Spring 2018 Gender, Politics, and Phil.	5.4	5.56	5.13	5.38
Average (Mean)	Average (Mean)	Average (Mean)	Average (Mean)	Average (Mean)
Average of All Courses	4.76	4.98	4.66	5.04
Average of Last 5	5.06	5.23	4.98	5.17



## Section 3. Sample Syllabus 1 - Taught Summer 2019:

### Phil 101: Introduction to Philosophy

Instructor: Joshua Kissel  
Joshuakissel2014@u.northwestern.edu  
Office Hours: W 10-12 in Kresge 3430 and by  
appointment

Class Meeting:  
Week 1: W/F 2-5:30  
Weeks 2-4: M/W 2-5:30  
Location: Kresge 23

**\*NOTE:** This course meets Monday and Wednesday from 2-5:30 *except* the first week when it meets 2-5:30 Wednesday (June 26<sup>th</sup>) and Friday (June 28<sup>th</sup>)

#### Course Description:

This course is an introduction to philosophy. Valid and sound argument is the philosopher's tool and the truth is its intended product. This course trains students to use this tool themselves. We'll focus on the skills necessary to evaluate the arguments of others as well as to produce valid and sound arguments ourselves. We'll do this through an exploration of some of the most important discussions of philosophy.

Our course begins with a discussion of knowledge, what philosophers call 'epistemology.' We'll struggle with the problem of skepticism and the possibility that we're being tricked by an evil demon to perceive an external world that isn't there. We'll then discuss the problem of personal identity and the self. If I enter a teleporter that copies my body, cell by cell, and rebuilds a copy on Mars, did it rebuild *me*? We'll then shift our attention to the questions of moral and political theory and try to answer questions like: "What is the scope and demandingness of morality? How much do I owe the poor or other nonhuman animals?" We'll also engage more theoretical questions like "What would make a good moral theory?" We next widen our focus to the level of society. We'll first think about what justice entails using a veil of ignorance thought experiment. We'll also explore an analogical argument that bosses are like dictators and that as with the state, the workplace should be more democratic. In another class we'll ask if a camping trip can demonstrate the moral superiority of socialism. In our final class we ask whether we can legitimately judge other people, societies, and cultures, or if instead truth is more relative.

After a few intense weeks of study students will leave this course with a better sense of what they believe, how to argue for it, and how to listen to and understand the views of their interlocutors.

#### Course Objectives; this course enables students to:

- (1) Evaluate the validity and soundness of arguments.
- (2) Contrast competing solutions to philosophical problems.
- (3) Identify important claims underlying their own philosophical positions.
- (4) Assess the justifiability of these claims.

In addition, students will acquire a background in philosophical topics including; critical reasoning, epistemology, personal identity, ethics, and political philosophy.

Required Materials:

*Why Not Socialism?* by G.A. Cohen ISBN: 9781400830633

Note: Needed by July 10<sup>th</sup>. Please let me know if you have issues securing the text.

All other materials will be available on the Canvas website or hyperlinked in the syllabus.

Office Hours: on Wednesday 10-12 I will be in Kresge 3430 staring at a white wall unless students come to meet with me. This time is meant for you to ask questions, discuss philosophy, or just hangout. It is *your* time and you do not need an excuse or any clarity about what you want to do.

I request, but do not require, that you send me an email alerting me to when you want to come, and if you happen to know, what you plan to discuss.

If for whatever reason you cannot make my regular office hours please send me an email asap with a range of time that you could meet, and we'll try to work something out!

General Grading Schema:

1. Participation and Attendance      15 % of total. Pass/Fail
2. Five Reading Responses:            10% of total. Check + (100)/Check (92)/Check -(85)
3. Four Scaffolding Paper Outlines:    35% of total. 'A'-'F'
4. One Final Paper (1200-1500 words) 40% of total. 'A'-'F'

Assignment Due Dates [Details for Particular Assignments to Come]

Assignment	(Some) Details	Due Date
Reading Responses:	Each response is due on Canvas at 1pm before the relevant class takes places. And each must be on a different week. EX: Responses to Linda Zagzebski must be submitted <i>before</i> June 28	Submit by 1 pm on: June 28 for your 1st July 1 for your 2nd July 8 for your 3rd July 15 for your 4th July 17 for your 5th
First Paper Outline	This outline must be on a topic from class 2 or 3.	July 1 at 11:59 pm
Second Paper Outline	This outline must be on a topic from class 4 or 5	July 8 at 11:59 pm
Third Paper Outline	This outline must be on a topic from class 6 or 7	July 15 at 11:59 pm
Fourth Paper Outline	This outline must be on your final paper topic. It can be on a topic from any class.	July 17 at 11:59 pm
Final Paper		July 20 at 11:59pm

Absences:

Because this class is meets only 8 times and for 3 hours, there are no excused absences. If you have an emergency, please let me know as soon as possible so we can sort something out.

Screen Policy:

This class is a screen free environment. This means no computers, tablets, phones, or other such devices. If you violate the policy, you may be marked absent for the day. [Special accommodations exempted]

Students with Disabilities:

Any student needing accommodations should speak directly to AccessibleNU ((847) 467-5530 or [accessiblenu@northwestern.edu](mailto:accessiblenu@northwestern.edu)) and to me as early as possible in the quarter. Be aware that AccessibleNU will help arrange reasonable accommodations for both physical and mental health concerns. Barring unforeseen circumstance, any necessary arrangements should be made within in the first week of class. All discussions will remain confidential.

**Course Outline (and Readings)**

- 1. Introduction to Philosophy (Wednesday 6/26)**
  - a. Introduction to the course and syllabus overview
  - b. The Philosopher's Tools:
    - i. Validity and Soundness
    - ii. Thought Experiments
- 2. Knowledge and Truth (Friday 6/28)**
  - a. Read: Linda Zagzebski "What Is Knowledge?" (25 pages)
  - b. Read: Miranda Fricker "Testimonial Injustice" (21 pages)
  - c. Listen to: [Miranda Fricker talking about Epistemic Injustice](#) on Philosophy Bites Podcast (13:47 minutes)
- 3. Personal Identity (and the Self?) (Monday 7/1)**
  - a. Read: Derek Parfit "Personal Identity" (26 pages)
  - b. Watch: [Personal Identity](#) (8:32 minutes)
- 4. Scope and Demandingness in Ethics (Wednesday 7/3)**
  - a. Read: Peter Singer "Famine, Affluence, and Morality" (16 pages)
  - b. Read: Alastair Norcross "Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases" (17 pages)
- 5. Normative Ethical Theories: Consequentialism, Deontology, and Virtue Ethics (Monday 7/8)**
  - a. Three Views:
    - i. **Consequentialism**; John Stuart Mill's *Utilitarianism*; Excerpts of Chapter 2. Read pages 4-8, 11-13, 16-18 [Optional to read sections "Happiness as an Aim", "Is Utilitarianism Chilly?", "Utilitarianism as 'Godless'", and "Expediency"] (10 pages)
    - ii. **Deontology**; Read: David Velleman "A Brief Introduction to Kantian Ethics" (33 pages)
    - iii. **Virtue Ethics**; Read: Rosalind Hursthouse "Normative Virtue Ethics" (8 pages)
    - iv. **Recommended to watch (10 minutes each)**:
      1. [Kant & Categorical Imperatives: Crash Course Philosophy](#) (10:28 minutes)
      2. [Utilitarianism: Crash Course Philosophy](#) (10 minutes)

- 6. Justice; behind the Veil of Ignorance and Inside the Workplace (Wednesday 7/10)**
  - a. In Class Activity: The Veil of Ignorance Game based on John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*
  - b. Read: Robert Nozick: Anarchy, State, and Utopia, Excerpt from Chapter 7 and Chapter 8. (41 pages)
  - c. Read: Elizabeth Anderson "[How bosses are \(literally\) like dictators Dictatorship at Work](#)" (3000 words)
- 7. Socialism and Capitalism (Monday 7/15)**
  - a. Read: G.A. Cohen *Why Not Socialism* (Read the whole book ~35 pages as an article)
- 8. Can We Judge Others? (Wednesday 7/17)**
  - a. Read: Mary Midgley "Trying Out One's New Sword" (7 pages)
  - b. Read: Susan Moller Okin "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women" (20 pages)
  - c. Read: Martha Nussbaum "Judging Other Cultures" (12 pages)

## Section 4. Sample Syllabus 2 – To Be Taught Summer 2020

### Phil 261: Introduction to Political Philosophy: The State, Economy, and Society

Instructor: Joshua Kissel

[Joshuakissel2014@u.northwestern.edu](mailto:Joshuakissel2014@u.northwestern.edu)

Office Hours: TBD and by appointment

Class Meeting: MTW June 22 – July 22

Class Location: TBD

Office Location: Kresge 3430

#### Course Description:

This is an introductory level philosophy course in contemporary political philosophy for majors and nonmajors. This course deals with normative questions, rather than asking how the world *is* arranged we will focus on asking how it *ought* to be arranged. Because these are normative or ethical questions this course fits into the wider field of moral philosophy or value theory.

This course breaks into four distinct parts, a brief introductory section in moral theory, two conceptual sections on the state and economy, and, finally, one applied section. Students will first be introduced to ethical theories like consequentialism and deontology in order to enable them to articulate moral arguments about society and politics. In the first conceptual section we will try to answer the question “what makes an authority legitimate?” We will consider and assess the answers offered by four schools of political philosophy; republican, democratic, libertarian, and anarchist. In the third section of the course we shift focus from the state to the economy. Here we will evaluate justifications for capitalist and socialist property schemes as well as the justification of the market. We will finish our course with opportunities to apply the theories we’ve studied to contested questions in political philosophy such as “what does justice demand we do about the global poor?” and “are non-humans subjects of justice, and if so, what do we owe them?”

#### Course Objectives; this course enables students to:

- (1) Evaluate the validity and soundness of arguments.
- (2) Contrast competing solutions to political questions offered by various political theories.
- (3) Identify the normative and empirical claims underlying their own political positions.
- (4) Assess the justifiability of these normative claims.

In addition, students will acquire a background in important areas of philosophy and political theory including; critical reasoning, basic normative theory, political ideologies including liberalism, republicanism, libertarianism, and anarchism, justifications of capitalism and socialism, and applied questions related to poverty and our duties to the poor, the status of non-human animals, and the experience of oppression.

#### Office Hours:

## Joshua Kissel – Teaching Portfolio

During my office hours I will be in Kresge 3430 staring at a white wall unless students come to meet with me. This time is meant for you to ask questions, discuss philosophy, or just hangout. It is *your* time and you do not need an excuse or any clarity about what you want to do. I request, but do not require, that you send me an email alerting me to when you want to come, and if you happen to know, what you plan to discuss.

If for whatever reason you cannot make my regular office hours please send me an email asap with a range of time that you could meet, and we'll try to work something out!

### General Grading Schema:

- |                                 |  |
|---------------------------------|--|
| 1. Participation and Attendance | 10% of total. Pass/Fail                            |
| 2. Five Reading Responses:      | 10% of total. Check + (100)/Check (92)/Check -(85) |
| 3. Normative Theory Exam        | 15% of total. 'A'-'F'                              |
| 4. Three Paper Outlines         | 30% of total. 'A'-'F'                              |
| 5. One Final Paper (~5 pages)   | 35% of total. 'A'-'F'                              |

### Assignment Due Dates [Details for Particular Assignments to Come]

Assignment	(Some) Details	Due Date
Five Reading Responses:	Each response is due on Canvas at least 2 hours before the relevant class takes places. And each must be on a different week. EX: Responses to Hursthouse on Virtue Ethics would need to be submitted <i>before</i> our June 23.	Submit by 11 am on: June 24 for 1st July 1 for 2 <sup>nd</sup> July 8 for 3 <sup>rd</sup> July 15 for 4 <sup>th</sup> July 22 for 5 <sup>th</sup>
Normative Theory Exam	This will be a take-home exam, assigned after the 2 <sup>nd</sup> class and due the day before the 4 <sup>th</sup> class.	June 25 11:59pm
First Paper Outline	This outline must be on a topic related to the State.	July 2 at 11:59 pm
Second Paper Outline	This outline must be on a topic related to the Economy	July 9 at 11:59 pm
Third Paper Outline	This outline must be on a topic related to Applied Political Philosophy	July 16 at 11:59 pm
Final Paper	This is a ~5-page paper written in prose on any topic related to the State, Economy, or Applied Political Philosophy	Friday July 24 at 11:59pm

General Course Outline: We have 15 2-hour sessions meeting Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from June 22 – July 22. We will normally do two 55-minute sessions with a 10-minute break.

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Class	Topic	Readings	Assignments
1 – June 22 Political Philosophy and Normative Theory	Introduction  Consequentialism	John Stuart Mill – <i>Utilitarianism</i> ; Excerpts of Chapter 2. Read pages 4-8, 11-13, 16-18	
2 – June 23 Political Philosophy and Normative Theory	Deontology and Rights Theory  Virtue Ethics	David Velleman – A Brief Introduction to Kantian Ethics  Rosalind Hursthouse – Normative Virtue Ethics	Normative Theory Take-Home Exam [Due June 25]
3 – June 24 Authority and the State	Republicanism  Democracy	Republican: Philip Pettit – Freedom as Anti-Power  Democratic: Thomas Christiano – The Authority of Democracy	1 <sup>st</sup> Reading Response [11am]
4 – June 29 Authority and the State	Anarchist Criticism of the State; Individualist and Social	Robert Paul Wolff – <i>In Defense of Anarchism</i> , Chapter 1  Emma Goldman – <a href="#">Anarchism: What it Really Stands For</a>	
5 – June 30 Authority and the State	Critical Accounts of Liberalism and Republicanism	Susan Moller Okin – Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?  Martha Nussbaum – The Feminist Critique of Liberalism	1 <sup>st</sup> Paper Outline [11:59pm July 2 <sup>nd</sup> ]
6 – July 1 The Economy	Rawls and the Veil of Ignorance Game	<u>No Required Reading</u>	2 <sup>nd</sup> Reading Response [11am]
7 – July 6 The Economy	A Feminist Critique of Rawls	Susan Moller Okin – <i>Justice, Gender, and the Family</i> Chapter 5; Justice as Fairness: For Whom? 89-109	
8 – July 7 The Economy	A Libertarian Critique of Rawls	Robert Nozick – <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i> , Excerpt from Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.	
9 – July 8 The Economy	Defending Socialism	G.A. Cohen – <i>Why Not Socialism</i>	3 <sup>rd</sup> Reading Response [11am]  2 <sup>nd</sup> Paper Outline [11:59pm July 9 <sup>th</sup> ]
10 – July 13 The Economy	Critiquing Socialism	Richard Arneson – Why not capitalism?	

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	Defending Capitalism	Milton Friedman – The Social Responsibility of Business is to Increase its Profits	
11- July 14 The Economy	Democracy and the Workplace	Elizabeth Anderson - " <a href="#">How bosses are (literally) like dictators Dictatorship at Work</a> "	
12 – July 15 Applied Political Philosophy	Poverty and Personal Obligation	Peter Singer – Famine, Affluence, and Morality  Matthew Snow – <a href="#">Against Charity</a>	4 <sup>th</sup> Reading Response [11am]
13 – July 20 Applied Political Philosophy	Effective Altruism and It's Critique	Amia Srinivasan – <a href="#">Stop the Robot Apocalypse</a>  Joshua Kissel – <a href="#">Effective Altruism and Anti-Capitalism</a>	3rd Paper Outline [11:59pm]
14 – July 21 Applied Political Philosophy	The Scope of Justice – Animals and the Environment	Alastair Norcross – Puppies, Pigs, and People: Eating Meat and Marginal Cases  Sue Donaldson and Will Kymlicaka – <i>Zoopolis</i> , excerpts	
15 – July 22 Applied Political Philosophy	Power and Social Interaction	Iris Marion Young – Five Faces of Oppression  Miranda Fricker – Testimonial Injustice	5 <sup>th</sup> Reading Response [11am]  Final Paper [11:59pm July 24 <sup>th</sup> ]

## Section 5: Additional Course Details and Sample Materials for Introduction to Political Philosophy

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#### a. Assessment Plan:

Course Objectives	Assessments
Primary:1,2 Secondary: 3, 4	<p><b>Five Weekly Reading Response:</b> Students must write a short 100-200 word reading response based on the day’s readings. These can raise questions, note problems, or offer objections. This is not a summary or mere “sharing of thoughts.”</p> <p><b>Grading:</b> 2%/Response. Graded Check + (100)/Check (92)/Check -(85)</p>
Primary: 1,2 Secondary: 3	<p><b>Argument and Normative Theory Exam:</b> Students will need to answer a few short answer questions about each of the three major schools of normative theory (Consequentialism, Deontology, and Virtue Ethics). Students will be asked to answer three questions for each:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Broadly, what does the view claim?</li> <li>2. Offer your best argument in favor of this view.</li> <li>3. Offer your best objection to this view.</li> </ol> <p>Students will then answer a final, longer 10<sup>th</sup> question where they identify which of the theories they find most plausible and why.</p> <p><b>Grading:</b> 15%. Graded A-F.</p>
Primary: 1,2 Secondary: 3, 4	<p><b>Abstract and Outline:</b> (~1-2 page) This assignment has three parts. First, you should write a (clear and concise) introduction. Second, you should reconstruct a formalized argument from one of the readings. Third, you should construct your own formalized argument, either supporting or objecting to one of the premises of the argument you reconstructed in part 2.</p> <p><b>Grading:</b> 5%, 10% and 15%. Graded: A-F</p>

<p>Primary: 3, 4 Secondary: 1, 2</p>	<p><b>Final Paper:</b> (~5 pages). Students will be asked to write a position paper on one of the three sections of the course. (the State, the Economy, and Applied Political Philosophy).</p> <p><b>Grading:</b> 35%. Graded A-F.</p>
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b. Sample Assessment and Rubric:

1. **Guidelines for Assignment:**

I plan to explain to my students that this assignment is focused on offering a clear and persuasive case for their position on a question of political philosophy. The summative assessment will start with a focus on applying the skills learned earlier in the quarter about philosophical argumentation in a clear and compelling manner (objective one, ‘Structure and Mechanics’). It will have a secondary focus on assessing political positions that the student may not accept (objective two, ‘Secondary Argumentation’). However, the primary focus will be on the student’s primary argument and the support for the position they aim to defend (objective 3, ‘Primary Argumentation’). I will distribute the rubric below along with these comments to students with a prompt like the one below when I assign them the Abstract and Outline:

**Position Paper Prompt:**

Please choose one of the prompts below, or one you have gotten me to approved and write a 4-5-page essay which clearly lays out your positive arguments for your claim as well as responds to the strongest objection to your position.

Sample Prompts, “The economy”:

- A. Explain how a Rawlsian might respond to Okin’s feminist criticism.
- B. Offer your strongest response to Nozick’s claim that taxation of labor is akin to slavery.
- C. In your paper offer your strongest objection to G.A Cohen’s claim from the camping trip analogy that socialism has normative preeminence.
- D. Develop a reply to Arneson’s Critique of Cohen.
- E. Offer an objection to Friedman’s defense of the shareholder model for ethical business.
- F. Explain why you think Elizabeth Anderson is wrong to assert that the modern workplace is itself a form of objectionable private government.

2. **Structure for Feedback**

**Position Paper Rubric:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Grade: \_\_\_\_\_

5 = Excellent; 4 = Good; 3 =Fair; 2 = Weak; 1 = Poor

Joshua Kissel – Teaching Portfolio

STRUCTURE OF COMPOSITION (~10%)

<u>An excellent paper:</u>	5	4	3	2	1	<u>A poor paper:</u>
Defines a sharp focus by clearly stating its major aim(s) (e.g., thesis), and remains focused on achieving its major aim(s)						Establishes no clear focus and/or is not focused on achieving its major aim(s)
Is well organized; the ordering of ideas “builds” toward achieving major aim(s)						Exhibits no “development”; ideas are presented in random order

PRIMARY ARGUMENTATION (~50%)

<u>An excellent paper:</u>	5	4	3	2	1	<u>A poor paper:</u>
Presents strong arguments in support of its central claims						Merely asserts opinions without offering any reasons to support them
Develops arguments in adequate depth and detail						Fails to develop arguments in adequate depth and detail

SECONDARY ARGUMENTATION (~30%)

<u>An excellent paper:</u>	5	4	3	2	1	<u>A poor paper:</u>
Develops relevant views or objections with accuracy and/or in adequate depth and detail						Fails to develop relevant views or objections with accuracy and/or in adequate depth and detail
Engages the strongest arguments of opposing viewpoints						Fails to engage, dismisses, or attacks a “straw man” version of opposing viewpoints
Adequately responds to objections to its central claims or arguments						Fails to adequately respond to objections to its central claims or arguments

MECHANICS (~10%)

<u>An excellent paper:</u>	5	4	3	2	1	<u>A poor paper:</u>
Errors, when they exist, to not make the argument difficult to follow.						Many errors exist which make the argument difficult to follow and prevent careful consideration of the various views.

Citations where needed and of a form sufficient to enable me to check the source material.						Sentences requiring citations are uncited and or citations point to whole chapters, sections, or books, in ways which make checking the information difficult.
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SCORE = STRUCTURE TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_ + PRIMARY ARGUMENTATION TOTAL (x 5) \_\_\_\_\_ + SECONDARY ARGUMENTATION TOTAL (x 2) \_\_\_\_\_ + MECHANICS \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ /100

CONSTRUCTIVE COMMENTS AND TASKS FOR NEXT TIME:

c. Sample Lesson Plan:

**Lesson Plan for a Day on “Rawls and the Veil of Ignorance”**

**5. Outline of Lesson:**

Topic: Distribution and the Economy

Activity: This class revolves around playing a game where students select the organizing distributional principle of a society which best serves their clients, individuals they know nothing about.

1. Preliminary Remarks, 15 Minutes: I will start the class with a 10 minute explanation of some ideas that will be important for the activity as well as laying out the context. (For example, explaining the difference between ‘maximin’ and ‘equality’).
2. Small Group, 30 minutes: I then have students break into groups of 3 or 4 and spend 20 minutes deciding how to structure society for their clients. Students select a note taker who writes their final choice as well as a one paragraph justification for it. All students put their names on this document.
3. Class Discussion, 35 minutes: I quickly tally the votes and then use the last 20 minutes to have a class wide discussion about why students made the choices they did for their clients.

Assessment: The document groups hand in is one source for assessing students after the class is over. However, I spend the small group period wandering around the room and so try to get an informal sense of how students are doing in the course. However, for additional focus on the lecture I will ask students to do an additional response (like a WRR) justifying their group’s position. In this way, this lesson encourages students in the direction of my 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> course objectives.

**Reproduction of Handout:**

Citation for the Rawls’ Original Position Game: <http://crookedtimber.org/2004/03/18/game-on-rawlss-second-principle/>

### **The Distribution and the Veil of Ignorance**

Adapted from Harry Brighouse (UW-Madison)

You are bargaining on behalf of your client in an Original Position. You have to come up with a principle of distributive justice which your client will be able to live under satisfactorily. You know nothing of your client's talents, abilities, gender, religious views, sexual orientation etc., except that you do know that she or he is not disabled. Fortunately, the other people in your group are in exactly the same situation. You will have to think about how you will justify your choice to your client when you find out who he or she is. Note: a prior OP has already agreed that basic liberties—freedom of conscience, religion, expression, association, and the rights to participate in public and political life, as well as the liberties associated with the psychological and physical integrity of the person — must be guaranteed to all, so you need not worry about violations of people's basic liberty-rights.

You have six principles from which to choose. Remember that these principles will govern your client's entire life, and he/she will not be able to escape.

1. Laissez Faire: Markets will operate without government intervention, except to protect private property (including intellectual property through patenting and copyrighting legislation) and to place modest limits on the emergence of oligopolistic and monopolistic markets.
2. Equality of Resources: People will have roughly equal resources available to them over their full lives.
3. Sufficiency: Everyone will have a 'basic needs' safety net guaranteed. Above that level, markets will determine rewards, except as the democratically elected legislature chooses to constrain them. (If you select this principle, be prepared to explain what count as basic needs and why).
4. Maximin: Inequalities of resources will be arranged so that the least advantaged will be better off than they would be under any other arrangement.
5. Equality of Welfare: Resources will be distributed so that everyone is more or less equally happy.
6. You may, if you choose, formulate a compromise between these principles, or formulate an entirely different principle. If so, it must be precise, and you must be prepared to defend it.

d. Student Evaluation Plan:

#### **Evaluation Timeline:**

**Early:** Keep, Quit, Start, and Modify

**Middle:** Faculty (or teaching and learning center staff) observe full lecture. Meets after to give comments.

**Middle:** Keep, Quit, Start, and Modify

**Late:** Faculty (or teaching and learning center staff) observe full lecture. Meets after to give comments.

**Final:**

**A)** Likert Scale supplemented with Qualitative questions (e.g., My learning enhanced by... and hindered by...).

**B)** Students fill out institutional evaluations (e.g., such as CTECs.)

**Throughout term:** I will mention in my first class and syllabus that I welcome teaching feedback at any point in the term and will note that I am willing to consider this extra teaching evaluation when I decide on participation grades for students.

e. Sample Evaluation:

**Keep, Quit, Start, And Modify:**

With regard to the readings, assignments (e.g., your first paper and weekly reading responses), as well as my lecture, please answer each of the following questions:

1. What would you like to continue in the course? Why?
2. What would you like to see quit in the course? Why?
3. What would you like to see start in the course? Why?
4. What would you like to see modified in the course? Why?
5. What do you think *I* could do to improve the instruction for you?
6. What do you think *you* could do to improve your own learning in the course?