



COURSE OUTLINE

The course description is online @ <http://camosun.ca/learn/calendar/current/web/phil.html>

W Please note: the College electronically stores this outline for five (5) years only.
It is **strongly recommended** you keep a copy of this outline with your academic records.
You will need this outline for any future application/s for transfer credit/s to other colleges/universities.

1. Instructor Information

(a)	Instructor:	Megan Shelstad		
(b)	Office Hours:	Mondays 12: 30 – 2:15 p.m. and Wednesdays 1:30 – 2:15 p.m.		
(c)	Location:	Young 312		
(d)	Phone:	370-3950	Alternative Phone:	
(e)	Email:	shelstad@camosun.bc.ca		

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course the student will be able to:

1. Summarize and evaluate central problems in Western political philosophy.
2. Critically examine classical and contemporary solutions to these problems.
3. Compare between various philosophical/political positions and describe the history of political philosophy in general.
4. Take a philosophical/political position and support that position with good reasons (evidence).
5. Explain the relevance of political philosophy to contemporary social problems concerning beliefs and values, knowledge and justification.
6. Describe and critically assess specific cases and alternative solutions to contemporary social/political problems.

3. Required Materials

- (a) Texts: Cahn, S. 2015. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*. 3e. OUP. (available in the bookstore)

4. Course Content and Schedule

Lectures: **Mondays** 2:30 – 4:20 p.m. **Young 316**

Seminars: Group A: **Wednesdays** 2:30 – 3:20 p.m. **Young 303C**
Group B: **Wednesdays** 3:30 – 4:20 p.m. **Young 303C**

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

- (a) Assignments: 30% - 10 weekly homework (out of 13 possibilities, approx. 250 words, typed)
- (b) Quizzes: 10% - 6 quizzes (best 5, 1 "free" one, **no make-ups**)
- (c) Exams: 25% - midterm test
25% - final essay test
- (d) Other: 10% - seminar attendance and participation

6. Grading System

(No changes are to be made to this section unless the Approved Course Description has been forwarded through the Education Council of Camosun College for approval.)

Standard Grading System (GPA)

Percentage	Grade	Description	Grade Point Equivalency
90-100	A+		9
85-89	A		8
80-84	A-		7
77-79	B+		6
73-76	B		5
70-72	B-		4
65-69	C+		3
60-64	C		2
50-59	D	Minimum level of achievement for which credit is granted; a course with a "D" grade cannot be used as a prerequisite.	1
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0

Temporary Grades

Temporary grades are assigned for specific circumstances and will convert to a final grade according to the grading scheme being used in the course. See Grading Policy E-1.5 at camosun.ca for information on conversion to final grades, and for additional information on student record and transcript notations.

Temporary Grade	Description
I	<i>Incomplete:</i> A temporary grade assigned when the requirements of a course have not yet been completed due to hardship or extenuating circumstances, such as illness or death in the family.
IP	<i>In progress:</i> A temporary grade assigned for courses that, due to design may require a further enrollment in the same course. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course. (For these courses a final grade will be assigned to either the 3 rd course attempt or at the point of course completion.)
CW	<i>Compulsory Withdrawal:</i> A temporary grade assigned by a Dean when an instructor, after documenting the prescriptive strategies applied and consulting with peers, deems that a student is unsafe to self or others and must be removed from the lab, practicum, worksite, or field placement.

7. Recommended Materials or Services to Assist Students to Succeed Throughout the Course

LEARNING SUPPORT AND SERVICES FOR STUDENTS

There are a variety of services available for students to assist them throughout their learning. This information is available in the College calendar, at Student Services, or the College web site at camosun.ca.

STUDENT CONDUCT POLICY

There is a Student Conduct Policy **which includes plagiarism**. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of this policy. The policy is available in each School Administration Office, at Student Services, and the College web site in the Policy Section.

Philosophy 236 reading schedule (to be done before class)

****materials for seminars can be found in our textbook or online****

Week 1: (Jan. 5, 7) – Introduction (Monday)

Seminar: (Wednesday) "Rediscovering the Right Agenda," June 2003, Stephen Harper
Also: watch or read Peter Mansbridge's year end interview with Harper on cbc.ca

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE (homework instructions on reverse of this sheet)

Week 2: (Jan. 12, 14) – Plato: *The Republic*, Book I

Seminar: "Gyges' Ring" (Book II, p. 53)

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 3: (Jan. 19, 21) – **QUIZ 1**** (on Book I, Monday, beginning of class), Book II

Seminar: "Ignoble Liars: Leo Strauss, George Bush, and the Philosophy of Mass Deception" (Harper's Magazine, June 2004)

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 4: (Jan. 26, 28) – Book III, **QUIZ 2**** (on Book II and III, Monday, end of class)

Seminar: "Harper, Bush Share Roots in Controversial Philosophy" (theyee.ca, Nov. 2005) and "Obama and the 'Noble Lie'" (nationalreview.com, June 2009)

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE (and compare/contrast the 2 authors' arguments)

Week 5: (Feb. 2, 4) -- Books IV and V

*Seminar: Video: Aristotle's critique of Plato's Republic (**QUIZ 3**** while you watch)*

Week 6: (Feb. 11) -- *Seminar: Come with your list of 4 ranked choices for the rest of term (read the editor introductions and we'll discuss).*

****FAMILY DAY FEB. 9 and READING BREAK FEB. 12-13 college closed****

Week 7: (Feb. 16, 18) -- Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I and *Politics* Book II

Seminar: "A Hollowing Middle Class" (oecdobserver.org, Peggy Hollinger, 2011)

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 8: (Feb. 23, 25) -- *Politics* Books III and IV

Seminar: test review

Week 9: (Mar. 2, 4) -- **MIDTERM TEST**** (Monday)

SEMINAR DISCUSSIONS AND HOMEWORK (30%)

In seminar periods we will be analyzing and discussing various current issues in politics and ethics that are connected in some way to the classical readings in social and political philosophy contained in our textbook. These sometimes present cases which offer examples of various situations that have happened (or not, as in "thought experiments"). Others present arguments. The authors often offer claims (conclusions) for which they provide reasons (premises) and evidence for why we should be convinced of the likely truth of their claims.

You should employ all the usual rules of grammar, spelling, etc. as well as using an appropriate method of citation for any quotes you may use.

The following is a template you can use when analyzing arguments. Occasionally you are required to answer additional questions as well. Check the reading schedule. You also get 1 mark for attendance and participation as well as 3 marks for your written work.

TEMPLATE FOR ARGUMENT ANALYSIS (summary and evaluation)

1. What is the author's main point(s)? What are they claiming and trying to convince you of? Be specific.
2. What main reasons (premises) does the author offer in support of the main point? Are these good reasons? Why? Are these reasons relevant to the author's conclusion? Be specific when answering these questions.
3. What evidence is offered in support of those reasons (premises)? Is the evidence good? Why? Is the evidence relevant to the author's reasons and/or conclusion? Be specific when answering these questions.
4. Does the author's argument(s) depend on specific principles? What are they (again, be specific)? Principles (including ethical principles) are general guidelines for behavior, what we should, or should not, do.
5. Does the author's argument(s) depend on any key beliefs or assumptions? Assumptions are claims or beliefs for which we do not offer reasons or evidence but they can provide a place to begin. Are these assumptions warranted or unwarranted? Explain why (again, be specific)?
6. What objections can you think of to the author's claims or arguments? Are they good objections? Are they relevant? Did they already address them in the article in a convincing way?