



COURSE OUTLINE

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

⚡ 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:	Monday and Wednesday 1: 00 – 2:00 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) Text: Cahn, S. 2011. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*. 2e.OUP. (**USED**, available in bookstore)

4. Course Content and Schedule

Lectures: **Monday** 2:00 – 3:50 p.m. (break about halfway) **Young 317**

Seminars: **Group A: Wednesday** 2:00 – 2:50 p.m. **Young 201**

Group B: Wednesday 3:00 – 3:50 p.m. **Young 201**

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

- (a) Assignments: 20% - 10 weekly homework (out of 12 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
10% - Pecha Kucha presentation

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

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.

Remember to turn OFF your cell phone for class and put it away. Laptops, ipads, etc. may be used for note taking only.

Missing classes: if you miss a class due to illness or some other reason, it is not necessary to notify me unless a test (not a quiz) is missed. It is the student's responsibility to find out from another student what was covered.

Policy on missed tests (not quizzes): make-up tests will be permitted only in cases of illness or personal crisis. Documentation is required.

Disruptive behaviour, such as carrying on conversations when the instructor or others are speaking, is a sign of disrespect and is not acceptable in class.

Philosophy 236 reading schedule (to be done before class)

QUIZZES WILL BE WRITTEN ON MONDAYS (usually)

TYPED seminar homework DUE AT START OF SEMINAR WEDNESDAY

NO EMAILED/LATE HOMEWORK ACCEPTED; materials for seminars online or in textbook.

Week 1: (Jan. 9, 11) – Mon. Introduction, choosing Pecha Kucha presentation topics

Seminar (Wed.): "America has never been so ripe for tyranny." A. Sullivan, *nymag.com*

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

Distinguished speaker series, Munk School of Global Affairs, Wed. Jan. 11: "The 2016 U.S. Election: Polarization, Partisanship, and Populism," Jocelyn Kiley (Pew Research Center), Chris Achen (Princeton), Andrew Coyne (National Post) 6:00 – 7:30 pm.

Week 2: (Jan. 16, 18) – Mon. Plato: *The Republic*, Book I

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

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Distinguished speaker series, Munk School of Global Affairs, Thurs. Jan. 19: "The Crisis of Postnationalism" Ghia Nodia (Ilia Chavchavadze State University, Georgia) 4:00 – 6:00 pm.

Week 3: (Jan. 23, 25) – Mon. ****QUIZ 1**** (on Book I, Monday, beginning of class), Book II

Seminar (Wed.): "Dear Socrates" (*hoi polloi*), philosophynow.org/issues/77/Dear_Socrates

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 4: (Jan. 30, Feb. 1) – Mon. Book III, ****QUIZ 2**** (on Book II & III, Monday, end of class)

Seminar (Wed.): "Obama and the 'Noble Lie'" (nationalreview.com)

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 5: (Feb. 6, 8) – Mon. Books IV and V

Seminar (Wed.): Four ranked choices for the rest of term (see instructions below).

****Please survey the contents of the textbook, reading some of the editorial content that comes before each author. You don't have to read all the background or lists of the author's other publications, but do read enough to make 4 selections and explain why you chose this author. Be as specific as possible. Find out about some author's you may not be familiar with; don't just choose someone you've heard of. Rank them (1 is your top choice) and be prepared to discuss, even defend, your choices in seminar.

Week 6: ***FAMILY DAY & STUDY WEEK – FEB. 13 – 17 NO CLASSES***

Week 7: (Feb. 20, 22) -- **Mon.** Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I and *Politics* Book II

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

Week 8: (Feb. 27, Mar.1) -- **Mon.** *Politics* Books III and IV

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

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 9: (Mar. 6, 8) -- **Mon.** ***MIDTERM TEST***

Seminar (Wed.): "Populism on the march, why the West is in trouble" Fared Zakaria, dhanaanmedia.com

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

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 (approximately 250 words).

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.

1 mark for attendance/participation, 2 marks for written work (satisfactory or excellent).

TEMPLATE FOR ARGUMENT ANALYSIS (summary and evaluation)

1. What is the author's main point(s)/thesis? What are they claiming and trying to convince you of? Be specific. Use declarative sentences. Find a quote where the author says this.

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; find appropriate quotes.

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: find appropriate quotes. Most of our seminar selections will be essays so evidence will likely be in the form of examples, cases, illustrations. Don't expect someone to insert statistics or experimental research into an essay although they could refer to it.

4. Your evaluation: Does the author's argument(s) depend on any key beliefs or assumptions? Are these assumptions warranted or unwarranted? Explain. What objections can you think of to the author's claims or arguments? Are they good objections? Are they relevant? Did the author already address them in the article in a convincing way? What part(s) do you agree with, if any? Explain. What else does the article make you think of? At all times use the "PRINCIPLE of CHARITY."