



CAMOSUN COLLEGE
School of Arts & Science
Department of Humanities

PHIL-236-001
Social & Political Philosophy
Winter 2020

COURSE OUTLINE

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

Please note: This outline will not be kept indefinitely. It is recommended students keep this outline for their records, especially to assist in transfer credit to post-secondary institutions.

1. Instructor Information

(a) Instructor	<u>Megan Shelstad</u>
(b) Office hours	<u>Wednesdays and Fridays: 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.</u>
(c) Location	<u>Young 312</u>
(d) Phone	<u>3951</u> Alternative: _____
(e) E-mail	<u>shelstad@camosun.bc.ca</u>

2. Intended Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course a 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

Text: Cahn, S. 2011. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*. 2e or 3e OUP. (USED, at bookstore)

4. Course Content and Schedule

Lectures: Wednesdays (Young 300) and Fridays (Young 201) 9:30 – 10:20 a.m.

Seminars: Group A: Wednesdays 10:30 – 11:20 a.m. Young 300

Group B: Fridays 10:30 – 11:20 a.m. Young 201

5. Basis of Student Assessment (Weighting)

- (a) **Assignments: 20%** - 10 seminar homework (approx. 500 words, typed, single-spaced)
Hard copy due at beginning of seminar. Don't leave printing too late.
- (b) **Quizzes: 10%** - 6 quizzes (**best 5**, 1 "free" one, **no make-ups**)
- (c) **Exams: 15%** - midterm test #1
15% - midterm test #2
30% - final essay test
- (d) **Other: 10%** - Seminar attendance/participation

6. Grading System

Standard Grading System (GPA)

Competency Based Grading System

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

The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, The Dictionary of Philosophy, youtube: 3 minute philosophy

8. College Supports, Services and Policies



Immediate, Urgent, or Emergency Support

If you or someone you know requires immediate, urgent, or emergency support (e.g. illness, injury, thoughts of suicide, sexual assault, etc.), **SEEK HELP**. Resource contacts @ <http://camosun.ca/about/mental-health/emergency.html> or <http://camosun.ca/services/sexual-violence/get-support.html#urgent>

College Services

Camosun offers a variety of health and academic support services, including counselling, dental, disability resource centre, help centre, learning skills, sexual violence support & education, library, and writing centre. For more information on each of these services, visit the **STUDENT SERVICES** link on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/>

College Policies

Camosun strives to provide clear, transparent, and easily accessible policies that exemplify the college's commitment to life-changing learning. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the content of College policies. Policies are available on the College website at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/>. Education and academic policies include, but are not limited to, Academic Progress, Admission, Course Withdrawals, Standards for Awarding Credentials, Involuntary Health and Safety Leave of Absence, Prior Learning Assessment, Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal, Sexual Violence and Misconduct, Student Ancillary Fees, Student Appeals, Student Conduct, and Student Penalties and Fines.

A. GRADING SYSTEMS <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html>

The following two grading systems are used at CamosunCollege:

1. 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		1
0-49	F	Minimum level has not been achieved.	0

2. Competency Based Grading System (Non GPA)

This grading system is based on satisfactory acquisition of defined skills or successful completion of the course learning outcomes

Grade	Description
COM	The student has met the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.
DST	The student has met and exceeded, above and beyond expectation, the goals, criteria, or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.
NC	The student has not met the goals, criteria or competencies established for this course, practicum or field placement.

B. 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 at <http://camosun.ca/about/policies/index.html> 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 are designed to have an anticipated enrollment that extends beyond one term. No more than two IP grades will be assigned for the same course.
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.

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 what they say.

You should employ all the usual rules of grammar, spelling, etc. as well as using an appropriate method of citation (any will do) for any quotes you may use. Try to keep it to no more than one page, single-spaced (approximately 500 words).

The following is a template you should use when analyzing arguments. Please use the 4 points format. You may be required to answer additional questions as well. Check the reading schedule.

1 mark for 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 they good reasons? Why? Are they relevant to the conclusion? How? 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 may 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."*****

Philosophy 236 – 001 READING SCHEDULE (to be done BEFORE class)

*****BRING TEXTBOOKS TO CLASS – schedule subject to change if needed*****

Quizzes usually will be held on FRIDAYS

HOMEWORK IS DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF SEMINAR

*****Phil 236 is not a D2L class*****

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

Camosun.ca/learn/school/business/current-students/documents/ClassroomTechnologyUse.pdf

Missing classes: if you miss a class for any 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. Check your reading schedule.

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.

NO EMAILED/LATE HOMEWORK ACCEPTED.

Week 1: Lecture: (Jan. 8) – Introduction, (Jan. 10) – Plato, Socratic method

Seminar: *survey on democracy*

Week 2: Lecture: (Jan. 15) – *The Republic* Bk. I, (Jan. 17) – Bk. 1 cont'd. *QUIZ 1*** (end of class)**

Seminar: *"Gyges' Ring" (The Republic, Book II)*

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE (course outline homework instructions)

Week 3: Lecture: (Jan. 22) – *The Republic* Bk. II, (Jan. 24) – Bk. III, *QUIZ 2*** (end of class)**

Seminar: *"Obama and the 'Noble Lie'," Victor Hanson, www.nationalreview.com*

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 4: Lecture: (Jan. 29) – *The Republic* Bk. IV, (Jan. 31) – *The Republic* Bk. V

Seminar: "Post-truth politics: A short look at a long history," Norman Abjorensen, www.insidestory.org.au

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE

Week 5: Lecture: (Feb. 5) – *****MIDTERM TEST #1***** (Feb. 7) – Introduction to Aristotle

Seminar: "Need a new self-help guru? Try Aristotle" John Kaag, 2019, www.nytimes.com

Week 6: Lecture: (Feb. 12) – *Nicomachean Ethics* Bk. I, (Feb. 14) – *Politics* Bk. II

Seminar: "A Hollowing Middle Class," Peggy Hollinger, www.oecdobserver.org

Week 7: *FAMILY DAY & STUDY WEEK – FEB. 17 – 21 NO CLASSES*****

Please take some time in the break for the Week 8 seminar homework.

Week 8: Lecture: (Feb. 26) – *Politics* Bk. III, (Feb. 28) – *Video: Aristotle's critique of Plato*, ****QUIZ 3**** (while you watch)

Seminar: *Four ranked choices for the rest of the term; follow these steps.*

1. Choose eight authors that might interest you from the table of contents of our textbook.
2. Read at least the first couple of paragraphs from the editor's introduction to each author.
3. Based on what you've read, narrow down your list of authors to four.
4. Find a word or phrase that seems to represent the ideas of each author.
5. Write a short paragraph explaining why you chose this author. Be as specific as possible.
6. Rank them (1 is your top choice) according to your preferences.
7. Be prepared to discuss your choices in seminar.

*** Find out about authors who are unfamiliar to you; don't just choose someone of whom you've heard. Our new reading list for the rest of the term will be based on your choices. **Make sure your input counts.**

Week 9: Lecture: (Mar. 4) – *Politics* Bk. IV, (Mar. 6) – *****MIDTERM TEST #2*****

Seminar: *To be announced. (TBA)*

USE ARGUMENT ANALYSIS TEMPLATE