

PH1010: Introduction to Philosophy: Values and Society  
Instructor: Duff Crerar, Ph.D  
Credit: 3 (UT) (3)  
Office: C216 Office Phone: 539-2828  
Home: 539-5787

OCT 22 1998

Description: This introduces you to some of the enduring problems of philosophy through the study and critical discussion of philosophical classics and contemporary thinkers. Themes such as relativism, the nature of justice, human rights, obligation, the social contract, euthanasia and abortion as well as utilitarianism and altruism will arise from discussion, and form the basis for two short essays and some brief assignments. There will also be a two-hour final examination (students will be informed of the type and range of questions in order to prepare in advance).

Texts:

Robert Wolff, About Philosophy, 7th ed. Prentice-Hall, 1998.  
James Gould, Classical Philosophical Questions, 9th ed. Prentice-Hall, 1998

Objectives: The course covers a few of the most important ideas, thinkers and sources in Western thought concerning ethics and also social and political philosophy. Students will improve their abilities to read and write critically, argue strongly and develop an interest in original and creative thought.

Outline	Topics	Readings
Week One (2, 4 September)	The midwife [NB: Assignment #1 due on 14 Sept]	(Wolff, 1-20)
Week Two (9 Sept.)	Spock's dilemma	(Wolff, 20-39)
Week Three (14 Sept.)	Ethics: Duty or Desire?	(Wolff, 40-68)
Week Four (21 Sept.)	Is there a balance?	(Wolff, 68-75)
Week Five (28 Sept.)	Ethics for Whom? [NB: Assignment #2 due on 4 Oct]	(Wolff, 76-87)
Week Six (4 Oct.)	The body battleground	(Wolff, 88-131)
Week Seven (14 Oct.)	Politics: Human Economies?	(Wolff, 132-147)
Week Eight (19 Oct.)	Quantitative and Qualitative Liberty	(Wolff, 147-157)
Week Nine (26 Oct.)	Forced to be free?	(Wolff, 157-183)
Week Ten (2 November)	Which way to the barricades? [NB: Assignment #3 due on 9 Nov]	(Wolff, 184-199)
Week Eleven (9 Nov.)	Art and Culture: Dangerous or Therapeutic?	(Wolff, 22-212)
Week Twelve (16 Nov.)	The Greeks debate: the geeks decide?	(Wolff, 210-253)
Week Thirteen (23 Nov.)	Can art set us free?	
Week Fourteen (30 Nov.)	The knots in the net. [NB: re-writes due on 30 Nov]	

Final: TBA

Assignments Explained:

Assignment 1: Write a brief evaluation of the chief ethical, political or artistic issue portrayed in a meaningful film you have seen recently.

Length: no more than 500 words.

Worth: 10%

Assignment 2: Using the form of a philosophy paper, adopt and defend a thesis on one of the following: censorship, abortion, or euthanasia.

Length: no more than 750 words.

Worth: 15%

Assignment 3: In a formal paper, develop and defend a thesis on the topic of rights in our society.

Length: no more than 1000 words.

Worth: 25%

Attendance and Participation:

Worth: 20%

Final: Length: 2 hours.

Worth: 30%

Assignment guidelines:

1. late penalties for first draft of any assignment: 20% per day.
2. One re-write of any assignment will be re-marked for each assignment. Re-writes are welcomed and encouraged.
3. Style matters. Sloppy writing betrays sloppy thinking. Clarity of writing and quality of argumentation will determine grade level.