

# Syllabus

## PSCI 469, Ethics and Public Policy (Spring 2018)

- Meeting Times: TR 9:30-10:50
- Location: Mansfield Center Conference Room, MILB 454
- Instructor: Noel (Dane) Scott
- Office: Mansfield Center, MLIB 464
- Phone: 243-6632
- Email: [dane.scott@mso.umt.edu](mailto:dane.scott@mso.umt.edu)
- Office hours: Thursdays, 1:00-2:00

## Course Objectives

Students will demonstrate:

- An understanding of several approaches to moral reasoning and the basic concepts of important ethical traditions
- A familiarity with the major figures and ideas that shaped modern ethical theory
- The ability to identify and analyze ethical issues arising from a variety of public policies
- The ability to write a clearly organized and well supported argumentative essay

## Texts

- Michael Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?*
- Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*
- John Stewart Mills, *On Liberty*
- Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World*
- Additional readings will be linked and posted on the course Moodle page

## Requirements

- 20 points (20%), Participation and Attendance: Participation grades will be based on three factors: attendance, involvement in discussions, and random quizzes on readings and lectures.
- 40 points (40%) Essays 1 & 2 (20 pts/each): Students will demonstrate the ability to construct an argumentative essay. You will receive handouts on the requirements, grading, and due dates for the two essay assignments.
- 40 points (40%), Tests 1 & 2 (20 pts/each): The format will be short-answer and essay questions.

## Grading Scale:

93-100 = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77 - 79 = C+; 73 - 76 = C; 70 - 72 C-; 67 -69 = D+; 63 - 66 = D; 60 - 6 = D-; 0-59= F

## Late Work and Make-up Policies

- Make-up tests will only be allowed if the instructor is informed *prior* to the test.
- Late papers will be penalized 4 pts/day after the due date.

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments:

### Week 1

- 1/23: Course Introduction

- 1/25: Sandel, Chapter 1, “Do the Right Thing,” Plato, “The Ring of Gyges” (Moodle)

### Week 2

- 1/30: Plato, *Crito*, “The Allegory of the Cave” & “Ship of State Analogy” (Moodle)
- 2/1: Sandel, Chapter 2, “The Greatest Happiness Principle / Utilitarianism”

### Week 3

- 2/6: Ursula LeGuin, “The One’s Who Walk Away From Omelas” (Moodle)
- 2/8: Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty” (Moodle)
- 2/8: Essay #1, Assigned, Due 2/22

### Week 4

- 2/13: Sandel, Chapter 3, “Do We Own Ourselves / Libertarianism”
- 2/15: Mills, *On Liberty*

### Week 5

- 2/20: Mills, *On Liberty*
- 2/22: Sandel, Chapter 8, “Who Deserves What? / Aristotle”
- 2/22: Essay #1 Due

### Week 6

- 2/27: Sandel, Chapter 4, “Hired Help / Markets and Morals”
- 3/1: Sandel, Chapter 5, “What Matters is the Motive / Immanuel Kant” & Kant, “Perpetual Peace” (Moodle)

### Week 7

- 3/6: Sandel, Chapter 6, “The Case for Equity / John Rawls” &
- Vonnegut, “Harrison Bergeron” (Moodle)
- 3/8: Exam #1

### Week 8

- 3/13: Topic: Polarization, Reading: TBA
- 3/15: *On Being*, Krista Tippett, David Brooks and E.J. Dionne, *Sinfulness, Hopelessness and the Possibility of Politics*, Listen to Podcast or read transcript (linked on Moodle)

### Week 9

- 3/20: Topic & Reading, TBA
- 3/22: Topic & Reading, TBA

### Week 10

Spring Break

### Week 11

- 4/3: Martha Nussbaum, “Philosophy in the Service of Humanity” (Moodle)
- 4/5: Martha Nussbaum, “Capabilities, Entitlements, Rights: Supplementation and Critique” (Moodle)

### Week 12

- 4/10: Topic: Climate Change Policy, Reading TBA
- 4/12: Topic: Climate Change Policy, Reading TBA
- Essay #2, Assigned

### **Week 13**

- 4/17: Hans Jonas, *The Ethics of Responsibility* (selections on Moodle)
- 4/19: Huxley, *Brave New World*

### **Week 14**

- 4/24: Huxley, *Brave New World*
- 4/26: Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* I, II, III, & IV (Moodle)
- Essay #2, Due

### **Week 15**

- 5/1: Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* V, VI, & VII (Moodle)
- 5/6: Taylor, *Ethics of Authenticity* VIII, IX, & X (Moodle)

### **Exam #2**

5/8, 8:00-10:00AM

### **Academic Honesty**

Students must practice academic honesty and should be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available at [http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student\\_conduct.php](http://www.umt.edu/vpsa/policies/student_conduct.php).

Plagiarism: Blatant plagiarism will result in an automatic F on the assignment

### **Disabilities**

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction through collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you think you may have a disability adversely affecting your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406-243-2243.

### **Drop Policy, Grading Options, and Incompletes**

The 15<sup>th</sup> day of the semester is the last day to drop the class or change the grading option without an override form. For UM's policy on incompletes, see

[http://archive.umt.edu/catalog/14\\_15/academics/academic-policy-procedure.php](http://archive.umt.edu/catalog/14_15/academics/academic-policy-procedure.php)