



Political Philosophy Course Descriptor

Course Title	Political Philosophy	Faculty	Philosophy
Course Code	NCHPH733	Course Leader	Dr David Mitchell
Credit Points	20	Teaching Period	Both
FHEQ Level	Level 7	Date Approved	June 2020
Compulsory/ Optional	Optional		
Pre-requisites	None		
Co-requisites	None		

COURSE SUMMARY

Authority, liberty, democracy, justice, the market: these are themes of huge interest to us not just as citizens but as philosophers too. Over the centuries, they have figured in many of the classics of the subject. In this course students go deeply into those five themes, in the company of some of the giants of the modern period in philosophy, as well as some outstanding contemporary authors.

COURSE AIMS

The aim of this course is to:

- Develop students' skills in the interpretation, analysis, and evaluation of classic texts in political philosophy.
- Promote students' ability to categorise, elaborate, and compare, the chief philosophical approaches to questions about topics such as authority, liberty, democracy, justice, and the market.
- Enable students to form and defend their own estimates of the merits of alternative positions on the traditional issues of political philosophy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

- K1d Demonstrate wide-ranging knowledge of, and recognition of systematic connections between key questions and debates in the history of political philosophy.
- K2d Engage sensitively, constructively and creatively with the texts and theories of a range of political philosophers of the modern period, with their diverse views on topics such as authority, liberty, democracy, justice, and the market.

SUBJECT-SPECIFIC SKILLS

- S1d Employ advanced philosophical devices to support, challenge, or adapt, key positions in the political philosophy literature.

TRANSFERABLE AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

- T1d Show self-direction in working independently, creatively, and to deadlines.
- T2d Organise and synthesise information, question assumptions, and engage with competing arguments.
- T3d Produce clear, sophisticated, and persuasive treatments of complex material.
- T3d Consistently apply an excellent level of technical proficiency in written English, using an advanced application of scholarly terminology, that demonstrates the ability to deal with complex issues both systematically and with sophistication.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching and learning strategies for this course will include:

- 30 hours of lectures
- Two one-hour one-to-one tutorials

Course information and supplementary materials are available on the College's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE).

Students are required to attend and participate in all timetabled sessions for this course. Students are also expected to manage their directed learning and independent study in support of the course.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

The study of philosophy cultivates skills that are employable across a range of sectors. These include the abilities to:

- Work independently, creatively, and to deadlines.
- Conduct research and explore relevant existing knowledge.
- Analyse, contextualise, and interpret complex ideas and materials.

- Synthesise and evaluate information against a backdrop of uncertainty.
- Solve problems through logical reasoning.
- Present findings and opinions in a clear, structured manner, whether orally or in writing.
- Engage in collaborative and constructive discussion.

ASSESSMENT

FORMATIVE

Students will be formatively assessed during the course by means of set assignments. These do not count towards the end of year results, but will provide students with developmental feedback, both written and oral.

SUMMATIVE

Assessment will be in one form:

AE:	Assessment Activity	Weighting (%)	Online submission	Duration	Length
1	Written assignment	100%	Yes	N/A	5000 words

The written assignment will be assessed in accordance with the assessment aims set out in the Programme Specification.

FEEDBACK

Students will receive feedback in a variety of ways, written and oral, within one-to-one tutorials, in discussion phases of lectures, and on formatively and summatively assessed assignments.

Students will also attend the formal meeting, Collections, in which they will receive constructive and developmental feedback on their performance.

Feedback is provided on summative assessment and is made available to the student either via email, the VLE or another appropriate method.

INDICATIVE READING

Note: Comprehensive and current reading lists for courses are produced annually in the Course Syllabus or other documentation provided to students; the indicative reading list provided below is used as part of the approval/modification process only.

BOOKS

Boucher, D., & P. Kelly (eds.), *Political Thinkers*, 3rd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017.

Dworkin, R., *Justice for Hedgehogs*. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2011.

Fraser, N., *Scales of Justice*. Cambridge: Polity, 2008.

Geuss, R., *History and Illusion in Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Goodin, R., P. Pettit & T. Pogge (eds.), *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*. Oxford: Blackwell, 2012.

Hampton, J., *Political Philosophy*. London: Taylor and Francis, 1996.

Hobbes, Th., *Leviathan*, ed. Tuck. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Kymlicka, W., *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*, 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Marx, K., *Selected Writings*, ed. McLellan, 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Mill, J.S., *On Liberty & Other Writings*, ed. Collini. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Miller, D., *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Okin, S. M., *Women in Western Political Thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979.

Redhead, B., (ed.), *Plato to Nato: Studies in Political Thought*. London: Penguin, 1984.

Rosen, M. & J. Wolff (eds.), *Political Thought*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Rousseau, J.-J., *The Social Contract & Other Later Political Writings*, ed. Gourevich. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Ryan, A., *On Politics*. London: Penguin, 2012.

Waldron, J., *Liberal Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.

Wolff, J., *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*, 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

INDICATIVE TOPICS

- Hobbes
 - Locke
 - Rousseau
 - Mill
 - Marx
 - Authority
 - Liberty
 - Democracy
 - Distributive Justice
 - The Market
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Title: NCHPH733 Political Philosophy Course Descriptor					
Approved by: Academic Board					
Location: Academic Handbook/Programme specifications and Handbooks/ Postgraduate Programme Specifications/MA Philosophy Programme Specification/Philosophy Course Descriptors					
Version number	Date approved	Date published	Owner	Proposed next review date	Modification (As per AQF4) & category number
2.0	January 2022	April 2022	Brian Ball	April 2025	Category 3: Changes to Course Learning Outcomes
1.0	June 2020	June 2020	Brian Ball	April 2025	