

PHI 4930: MORALITY & POLITICS
SPRING 2022

INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Jaime Ahlberg

Office Hours via Zoom: Mondays 1-3 (and by appointment)

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E-mail is the most efficient way to get in touch with me.

COURSE DETAILS

Time: MWF 11:45-12:35 (Period 5)

Location: MAT 0116

Announcements, assignments, and readings will be posted on the course webpage available through elearning.ufl.edu.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is the relationship between morality and politics? Some have argued that the two are fundamentally different enterprises. On such views, politics operates the actual world, which is hopelessly morally messy, while morality is confined to a domain of utopian thinking. Thus, while morality is about the good and the right, politics appropriately takes as its subjects power and influence, and whatever means necessary to pursue them. Others have argued that political actors and policy must be informed and constrained by the dictates of morality. On this line of thinking, political leaders should strive to be good and do right by their citizens first and foremost. Similarly, members of the polity should strive to embody civic virtues (e.g. honesty, cooperativeness, civility, respectfulness) and policy should be structured to enable a robust and good citizenry and respectful international relations. In this seminar we will explore a variety of philosophical approaches to understanding these and hybrid positions, focusing on the themes of political leadership, citizenship, and policy.

TEXTS

Required

1. All required readings will be available through the course website in Canvas

Recommended

2. A very useful online guide for writing philosophy papers is available here: <http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/writing.html>
3. A terrific guide to general writing rules is Strunk and White's *The Elements of Style*. The first edition is available online for free: <http://www.bartleby.com/141/>

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| 1. Participation | 10% |
| 2. Weekly Discussion Posts (10) | 30% |
| 3. Essay #1 (1500-1600 words) | 25% |
| 4. Essay #2 (2100-2400 words) | 35% |

Grading Scale

This course will employ the following grading scale:

A	4.0	94-100
A-	3.67	90-93
B+	3.33	87-89
B	3.0	84-86
B-	2.67	80-83
C+	2.33	77-79
C	2.0	74-76
C-	1.67	70-73
D+	1.33	67-69
D	1.0	64-66
D-	0.67	60-63
E	0.0	0-59

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students deepen their understanding of philosophical methods and texts, and learn how to utilize this knowledge to evaluate, develop, and communicate their own ideas.
2. Students demonstrate competence in the terminology, concepts, methodologies and theories used within moral and political philosophy. Assessment by essays and in discussion.
3. Students communicate knowledge, ideas, and reasoning clearly and effectively in written or oral forms appropriate to the discipline. Assessment by discussion posts, essays, and in discussion.
4. Students analyze information carefully and logically from multiple perspectives, using discipline specific methods, and develop reasoned solutions to problems. Assessment by discussion posts, essays, and in discussion.

COURSE POLICIES

Classroom Policies and Attendance

Regular attendance will be essential to your success in the course. At the beginning of class starting the week after drop/add, attendance will be taken. Each student will be permitted 3 absences, beyond which legitimate and documented excuses for absences will be required. Examples of circumstances in which absences are excused include: legal obligations, death of a family member, university sponsored activities, and severe illness. Each unexcused absence beyond 3 will incur a penalty of a 1 letter grade deduction in one's participation grade.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work are consistent with university policies specified at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

Participation

You must come to class on time and prepared. This means keeping current on the reading assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities, as discussed in class and announced on the course website. Students are expected to have all of the week's readings completed by Monday's lecture. The participation portion of your grade will depend on your contribution to class discussion, including the content of your contributions.

Discussion Posts

Every **Tuesday by noon**, students are expected to submit a discussion post to the course discussion board in Canvas. Class on Wednesday will be organized around responding to students' discussion questions and comments.

Discussion posts must be about the readings. They can raise questions or critical comments. There is no particular word count required for discussion posts, but posts should not exceed 100 words. Posts should be carefully edited for clarity and organization. Grades for discussion posts will reflect the relevance to the readings, quality of the contribution, and strength of the writing.

Over the course of the semester there will be 11 opportunities to submit a post. The lowest discussion post grade will be dropped, so only 10 discussion posts will count toward students' grade.

Essays

During the semester students will be required to write two essays. The first should be 1500-1600 words long (5-6 double-spaced pages), and the second 2100-2400 words long (7-8 double-spaced pages). Paper topics will be distributed two weeks prior to the due date, but students are also free to write on a topic of their choosing so long as it is approved by me in advance. All papers must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, 12 pt Times New Roman. You must include a word-count at the top of your first page. Please also include your name, the date you hand in the assignment, and title your essays. If it is difficult for you to choose a title, consider that a clue that you may need to focus your essay more.

For each of the two essays we will hold in-class workshop days in order to discuss drafts. You will read your classmates' drafts and offer feedback, and receive feedback from your classmates on your draft in turn. On peer review days, you must come to class with two hard copies of completed drafts of your essay. Drafts will not be graded. However, failure to bring two hard copies, and/or failure to participate in the workshop process, will automatically result in a 10% deduction in the grade of your essay.

Each paper is to be uploaded onto the course's e-learning site in Canvas. You can log in and find the course web page here: elearning.ufl.edu. The papers will be graded electronically, and returned to you electronically. I will consider allowing you to turn in a paper late without penalty only if you have a valid and/or documented reason for doing so. If you turn in a paper

without a valid and/or documented reason, 1/3 of a letter grade will be deducted for each day it is late (including weekend days!). We will discuss the paper topics and requirements more as the course progresses, and the due dates listed on the Reading and Assignment Schedule should be considered provisional.

OTHER POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Academic Honesty

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor. Plagiarism on any assignment will automatically result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

Canvas e-Learning Environment

This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." To login to the e-Learning site for this course, go to <https://elearning.ufl.edu/>, click the **e-Learning in Canvas** button, and on the next page enter your Gatorlink username and password. You can then access the course e-Learning environment by selecting PHM 3202 from the **Courses** pull-down menu at the top of the page. If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537. Do not contact the course instructor regarding computer issues.

Online Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course based on 10 criteria. These evaluations are conducted online at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester. Students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate

documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575

University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies

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Spring 2022

Tentative Lecture Reading and Assignment Schedule

Please come to class on Monday having completed all of the readings listed for that week.

Date	Assignment
Week 1 1/5 1/7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introductions 2. In-class Exercise
Week 2 1/10 1/12 1/14	<p style="text-align: center;">Part I: Political Leadership</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" 2. Bernard Williams, "Politics and Moral Character"
Week 3 1/19 1/21	<p style="color: red;">No class 1/17: Martin Luther King Jr. Day—Discussion Posts Due on Thursday</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michael Walzer, "Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands" 2. Thomas Nagel, "Ruthlessness in Public Life"
Week 4 1/24 1/26 1/28	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Michael Stocker, "Dirty Hands and Ordinary Life" 2. Jaime Ahlberg, "Nonideal Politicians or Nonideal Circumstances? Rethinking Dirty Hands"
Week 5 1/31 2/2 2/4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. William Galston, "Value Pluralism and Political Means" 4. Dennis Thompson, "Democratic Dirty Hands"
Week 6 2/7 2/9 2/11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop Essays on 2/7 2. Peer Review Essays on 2/9 3. In-class exercise on 2/11 <p style="text-align: center;">Hard Copy Draft of Essay #1 Due IN CLASS Wednesday, 2/9 Essay # 1 Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, 2/13</p>
Week 7 2/14 2/16 2/18	<p style="text-align: center;">Part II: Political Obligation</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A. John Simmons, "Obligations" 2. Dennis Thompson, "Introduction" to <i>Political Ethics and Public Office</i>
Week 8 2/21 2/23 2/25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selections from Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Week 9 2/28 3/2 3/4	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selections from John Rawls, H.L.A. Hart, and Robert Nozick

Week 10 3/7-3/11	No Classes: Spring Break
Week 11 3/14 3/16 3/18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Plato's <i>Crito</i> 2. A. John Simmons, "Gratitude"
Week 12 3/21 3/23 3/25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Selections from John Rawls 2. Tommie Shelby, "Justice, Deviance, and the Dark Ghetto"
Week 13 3/28 3/30 4/1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anabelle Lever, "Must we Vote for the Common Good?" 2. J.B. Delston, "Public Reason and its Limits: The Role of Truth in Politics"
Week 14 4/4 4/6 4/8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Patrick Taylor Smith, "Why Bad Votes Can Nonetheless be Cast and Why Bad Voters May Cast Them" 2. Marcus Arvan, "The Rationality of Voting and Duties of Elected Officials"
Week 15 4/11 4/13 4/15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Workshop Paper Ideas on 4/11 2. Peer Review on 4/13 3. In-class exercise on 4/15 <p style="text-align: center;">Hard Copy Draft of Essay #2 Due IN CLASS Wednesday, 4/13 Essay # 2 Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, 4/17</p>
Week 16 4/18 4/20	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Wrap-up