

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
ARTS AND HUMANITIES
Undergraduate Course Outline 2017-2018
Philosophy 2062F: Power, Oppression, and Privilege

Fall Term 2017-2018
M 10:30-11:30, W 10:30-12:30
B&GS1056

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Debates about power, oppression, and privilege have taken centre stage in recent political discussions at every level. This course aims to provide tools for thinking clearly about these provocative and emotionally-charged issues as they pertain to our current social and political landscape, and to its historical roots. The course will explore background philosophical concepts such as utilitarianism and deontology, essentialism and social construction, atomism and holism, agent-based and structural explanations, inequality and justice, and will draw on these to examine how the key notions of oppression, privilege, and intersectionality have been articulated and developed over the past few decades. The course will include an examination of recent work in social psychology on implicit bias, stereotype threat, and the social effects of inequality, in order to assess their implications for the prospects for social change.

OBJECTIVES

This course has five main objectives.

- To acquaint students with the core philosophical concepts relevant to understanding power, oppression, and privilege.
- To provide students with a deeper appreciation of the intellectual work that has sought to illuminate the moral dimensions of social and political conflict.
- To help students understand the importance of philosophical analysis and dispassionate and secular argument to the resolution of social and political problems.
- To help students develop the ability to read thoughtfully and write clearly and effectively about complex philosophical issues.
- To give students practice in applying their academic knowledge and skills to real-world problems in discussion with other students and in writing.

TEXTS

All readings are available online through OWL.

REQUIREMENTS

Classes will combine lecture, group work, and class discussion, with an emphasis on student participation. Students will write three short reading responses throughout the semester, and will also write three further short informal pieces for small-group work in class. Two papers will be assigned (one about midterm, one close to the end of term). Participation will include both classroom discussion and online discussion. These elements will be weighted as follows:

Paper I:	15%
Paper II:	30%
Learning Cells	15%
Reading Responses	15%
Participation:	20%
Attendance	5%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week One (Sept 11-13): **Introduction and Philosophical Orientation**

Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas”

Week Two (Sept 18-20): **Oppression / Natural and Social Kinds**

Young, “The Five Faces of Oppression”

Week Three (Sept 25-27): **Structural Oppression / Levels of Explanation**

Haslanger, “Oppressions, Racial and Other”

Week Four (Oct 2-4): **Social Identity Groups / Contextuality and Social Construction**

Weber, “A Framework for Understanding Race, Class, Gender, and Sexuality”

Study Break

Week Five (Oct 16-18): **Implicit Bias and Stereotype Threat**

Staats, “Implicit Bias: State of the Science 2014”

Mather, “The inescapable mental residue of *Homo categoricus*”

Steele, “A Threat in the Air”

Stroessner and Good, “Stereotype Threat: An Overview”

First Essay Assignment distributed Oct. 18

Week Six (Oct 23-25): Social and Epistemic Privilege

Rothman, “The Origins of ‘Privilege’”
 McIntosh, “White Privilege and Male Privilege”
 Bovy, “Why ‘Checking Your Privilege’ Doesn’t Work”

Learning Cell 1 – Oct. 25

Week Seven (Oct 30-Nov 1): Intersectionality

Crenshaw, “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex”
 Tatum, “The Complexity of Identity”
 Smith, “Heteropatriarchy and the Three Pillars of White Supremacy”
 Chang and Culp, “After Intersectionality”

First Essay Due Nov. 1

Week Eight (Nov 6-8): Cultural Appropriation

Lutz, “Cultural Appropriation as a Process of Displacing Peoples and History”
 Matthes, “Cultural Appropriation Without Cultural Essentialism?”
 Pham, “Fashion’s Cultural Appropriation Debate – Pointless”
 Jago, “On Cultural Appropriation, Canadians Are Hypocrites”

Second Essay Assignment Distributed Nov. 6

Learning Cell 2 – Nov. 8

Week Nine (Nov 13-15): Incarceration

Alexander, *The New Jim Crow* (excerpts)
 Morris, “Race, Gender, and the School to Prison Pipeline”
 MacDonald, “Canada’s Prisons Are the ‘New Residential Schools’”

Week Ten (Nov 20-22): Colonialism and Decolonization

Waziyatawin: “Colonialism on the Ground”
 Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is not a Metaphor”

Learning Cell 3 – Nov. 22

Week Eleven (Nov 27-29): Steps Toward Social Progress

Three Platforms:
 Black Panthers, Movement for Black Lives, Women’s March on Washington

Barker, Beyond Biofatalism (excerpts)
 Choudhury, *Deep Diversity* (Introduction)
 Tseghay, "It's not just in our heads: What 'Deep Diversity' gets wrong
 about racism"

Second Essay Due Nov. 29

Week Twelve (Dec 4): Closing Reflections

No new reading

Guidelines

1. Submission of essays

Please submit your assignments electronically. Do not submit a paper copy.

In order to submit your assignment, visit the OWL site for this course. On the left-hand navigation menu you will find the assignment tool. Click on this tool and you will find the assignment guidelines and basic instructions for submitting your assignment. To submit your assignment upload it and click on the submit button at the bottom of the page. A corrected version of your paper will be returned to you through the OWL site.

2. Turnitin.com

All required papers will be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted will be included as course documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

3. Extensions

Exceptions to the above work submission dates may be granted only as a result of petition to the Academic Counselor of the student's faculty. **Instructors have no authority to waive this requirement, and any unofficial arrangements they make with students will not be respected by the administration.** All course work (with the exception of final examinations) must be submitted by the last day of classes.

Academic policies on examinations, appeals, absences due to illness, etc. may be found in the 2017-2018 Academic Calendar. For further information, contact the Philosophy Undergraduate Counselor (Professor Devin Henry), your Faculty's Academic Counselor or the Ombudsperson.

4. Late essays and penalties

An essay will be considered late if it is handed in after the due date without a prearranged extension (or after the extended date, in the case of an extension). Late essays will be penalized at the rate of **two** percentage points per day late. No coursework can be accepted after the final day of classes without authorization from the Dean's Office or your Faculty's Academic Counselor.

5. Plagiarism

Plagiarism is a form of cheating. Plagiarism is unacknowledged copying or paraphrasing of the words or ideas of another person. In general, anyone who learns something from a source (other than course lectures or general background knowledge any student of the course could reasonably be expected to have) and then presents that knowledge as their own discovery is considered to have plagiarized, even if the words used to express the ideas are not exactly the same.

Examples of plagiarism include: misrepresenting co-authored or group work as individually done, cutting and pasting copied or paraphrased work by others in with your own work, paraphrasing or otherwise altering the order of words or phrases and/or substituting words or phrases of similar meaning without acknowledgement that you are doing so, aiding and abetting such offences, among others.

Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a MAJOR academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

6. Prerequisites

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no fee adjustment. These decisions cannot be appealed.

7. Auditing

Students wishing to audit the course should consult with the instructor prior to or during the first week of classes.

GENERAL POLICIES

The **Department of Philosophy Policies** which govern the conduct, standards, and expectations for student participation in Philosophy courses is available in the Undergraduate section of the Department of Philosophy website at <http://www.uwo.ca/philosophy/undergraduate/policies.html>. It is your responsibility to understand the policies set out by the Senate and the Department of Philosophy, and thus ignorance of these policies cannot be used as grounds of appeal.

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwoom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Students are directed to view the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness (<http://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>).

Policy on Academic Offences

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.”

Statement on Use of Plagiarism Software

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).”

Additional Links

- Registrarial Services (<http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>)
- Student Support Services (<http://westernusc.ca/services/>)