

**WESTERN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Undergraduate Course Outline 2018-19**

Philosophy 2062G: Power, Privilege, and Oppression

Winter Term

Class Times: M 10:30-11:30, W 10:30-12:30

Class Location: AHB 2B-04

Instructor: Gillian Barker

Office Hours: WIRB 7058, Times TBA

519-661-2111 x87747

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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 informal assignments for small-group work in class. Two papers will be assigned (one about midterm, one close to the end of term), and there will be a final exam. Participation will include both classroom discussion and online discussion. These elements will be weighted as follows:

Paper I:	15%
Paper II:	30%
Informal Writing	15%
Final Exam	30%
Participation:	10%

AUDIT

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

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY 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://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.

ACCOMMODATION

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams, participation components and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Academic Counselling office of their home Faculty and provide documentation. Academic accommodation cannot be granted by the instructor or department. Documentation shall be submitted, as soon as possible, to the Office of the Dean of the student's Faculty of registration, together with a request for relief specifying the nature of the accommodation being requested.

The UWO Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness and further information regarding this policy can be found at

http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf.

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

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

PLAGIARISM CHECKING

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>.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Registrarial Services <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>

Student Support Services <https://student.uwo.ca/psp/heprdweb/?cmd=login>

Services provided by the USC <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

Student Development Centre <http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/>

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. Immediate help in the event of a crisis can be had by phoning 519.661.3030 (during class hours) or 519.433.2023 after class hours and on weekends.