

## **PHIL 456B: Equality**

Fall 2018

Prof. Tony Reeves

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**Office Hours:** 2:30 – 4:30 PM, Wednesday

I will be in my office and available during office hours, but you can make appointments to see me at other times. My preference is that we make appointments by email, and have substantive discussions face-to-face.

### **Course Description**

In politics, why should we care about equality? How should we care about equality? The course will examine recent philosophical work addressing these questions, and consider that work in light of some issues in contemporary political life. We will examine economic, racial, gender, and global inequalities with an aim of understanding the proper normative response to them.

### **Learning Objectives**

The student will:

- Be familiar with some of the recent philosophical and interdisciplinary work on the equality
- Develop and be capable of articulating cogent and defensible views on equality and legitimate governance
- Demonstrate an ability to write effectively, coherently, and analytically, and with a high degree of argumentative sophistication (C)
- Demonstrate an ability to revise and improve writing in both form and content (C)
- Develop an ability to read and critically consider difficult texts
- Improve ability to reason through and intelligently talk about complex issues
- Demonstrate an understanding of the human experience through the study of philosophy (H)

### **Readings**

Students are expected to show up to class prepared to discuss, and answer questions concerning, the assigned reading. This is a seminar, so there will be a focus on student to student and instructor to student dialogue. The class discussion will center on students addressing the issues raised by the texts. Successful participation in class, then, requires familiarity with the readings for the course.

The required texts are:

Elizabeth Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration*, paperback edition, Princeton UP (2013)  
Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract*, Cornell UP (1997)  
GA Cohen, *Why Not Socialism?*, Princeton UP (2009)

In addition to these texts, many of readings will be available on Blackboard (marked “[ER]” on the schedule of readings).

### **Requirements and Expectations**

**Statement from the Binghamton Faculty Senate Executive Committee** on expectations for a four credit course: “This course is a 4-credit course, which means that in addition to the scheduled meeting times, students are expected to do at least 9.5 hours of course-related work outside of class each week during the semester. This includes time spent completing assigned readings, participating in lab sessions, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, and other course-related tasks.”

The expectations for this seminar are in accordance with this statement.

### Grade Breakdown:

Participation	20%
Class Presentation	15%
Précis	25%
Paper	40%

Précis: Following the first week, each student must write a short précis each week for one of the class meetings (when there are two, you can choose which one). The exceptions are the third week, for which no précis is required, and the week in which a student gives a presentation. The précis should concisely summarize an argument from the assigned reading, and offer some form of independent reflective consideration of that argument. The précis should be no longer than three pages, and should typically be between one and two. Students have the discretion to choose an argument from any of the assigned reading for the week, but the summary should be considerate of the readings as a whole (i.e., it should be cognizant of the argument’s place/role in the readings). The reflective consideration can take the form of a criticism, analysis that moves beyond what is explicitly in the text, a comparison of views, noticing surprising/unexpected corollaries, indicating the importance of the argument for the overall position, and the like – i.e., strategies which move us to intelligently think through the argument. **In doing any of these, the précis should make an argument**, i.e., should attempt to defend your point of view with a line of reasoning. Submit the précis to me as a paper copy (double-sided preferred) at the start of the class for which the reading is assigned.

Presentation: Each student will be required to give an in class presentation of about 10 – 15 minutes, and to lead the discussion based on that presentation. The presentation can be seen as an extension of the précis assignment: the presenter will give a concise articulation of an argument in the readings, and offer critical consideration of the argument. These components should be adapted for the purposes of an effective public presentation, and the presenter should develop one or two discussion questions to initiate discussion.

Presentations can, but need not, be cooperative: up to two students can give a single presentation. In cooperative presentations, the presenters share a grade. There will be only one class presentation per class meeting. I will be in contact with presenters at least one day prior to their presentation, so that I can structure class to accommodate what the presenters choose to focus on. Presenters do not have to submit a précis during the week of their presentation.

Paper: Students will be required to write a 10 to 15 page paper. Students have the option of either developing their own topic or selecting one of the topics distributed by me. The writing of the paper will occur in stages, and students should expect to invest considerable effort over the course of several weeks into writing the paper.

*Stage One (Topic Selection)*: One week after possible topics have been distributed, hand in a piece of paper indicating which of the topics you are going to write on. If you are writing on your own topic, you should discuss it with me.

*Stage Two (Polished Draft)*: Three weeks after the assignment is distributed, you will hand in a polished ten to fifteen page draft of your paper. The better the draft, the more likely it is I will be able to provide you with comments that will assist you in producing a good final version. I will return this draft with comments. Failure to turn in a draft, or an inadequate one, will result in penalty on the final paper grade.

*Stage Three (Revision)*: After the draft is returned with comments, you will have several weeks to revise your paper.

In general, papers will be assessed on the basis of: (1) accuracy and completeness in portraying the material in question, and (2) the development of a well-reasoned, original assessment of that material.

Students are required to maintain a digital backup of all submitted work until the end of the semester. All drafts should be submitted to Turnitin on Blackboard.

Participation: Students will be assessed on their contributions in class. The grade will be based on the frequency with which students provide valuable verbal contributions to the class. Such contributions include informed responses to instructor questions, participation in classroom

discussions, raising relevant and cogent questions, participating during student presentations, (including responding to questions posed by presenters), and actively participating in group work. Attentively attending class is insufficient for a good participation grade.

**Course Policies**

Attendance: Attendance in class is mandatory. Students should arrive promptly at the beginning of class with the assigned reading for the day in hand. Students are permitted (3) unexcused absences without penalty. (An absence does not excuse a student from the week’s précis assignment.) Each additional unexcused absence will result in the student’s final grade being reduced by one-third a letter grade (e.g. a B becomes a B-).

Late Papers: Papers turned in late will be penalized one-third a letter grade per day of lateness.

Electronics: Without special permission, the use of electronic devices, including computers, is not permitted during class time.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will be dealt with harshly in accordance with Harpur College policies. The **Student Academic Honesty Code** can be found at:

[[http://www.binghamton.edu:8080/exist7/rest/lists2011-12/2\\_academic\\_policies\\_and\\_procedures\\_all\\_students/academicPoliciesAndProcedureAllStudents.xml](http://www.binghamton.edu:8080/exist7/rest/lists2011-12/2_academic_policies_and_procedures_all_students/academicPoliciesAndProcedureAllStudents.xml)]

**Schedule of Readings**

The following plan is subject to revision - I will inform the class of any changes as we go. Listed on the left are the dates of the class meetings, on the right are the readings that will be discussed on those dates. Readings with [ER] next to them are available on Blackboard.

Date:	Reading:
8/22	Introductory Class
8/27	1. Harry Frankfurt, “Equality as a Moral Ideal” <i>Ethics</i> (1987), 21-43 [ER]
8/29	1. Robert Nozick, <i>Anarchy, State, and Utopia</i> (1974) 149-164, 167-182 [ER]
9/3	No class (Labor Day)
9/5	1. John Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (revised edition), 3-30, 52-56, 102-105, 109-112 [ER] <b>Précis not required</b>

9/10	No class (Rosh Hashanah)
9/12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rawls, <i>Justice as Fairness</i> (2001), 50-52, 74-77, 97-104 [ER]</li> <li>2. Nozick, <i>Anarchy</i>, 182-204, 224-231 [ER]</li> </ol>
9/17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. G.A. Cohen, "Robert Nozick and Wilt Chamberlain: How Patterns Preserve Liberty" [ER]</li> </ol>
9/19	No class (Yom Kippur)
9/24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thomas Nagel, "Equality" <i>Mortal Questions</i> (1979), 106-127 [ER]</li> <li>2. Reread: Frankfurt, 34-37 [ER]</li> </ol>
9/26	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Philippe Van Parijs/Yannick Vanderborght, "Ethically Justified?: Free Riding Versus Fair Shairs" <i>Basic Income: A Radical Proposal</i> (2017), 99-132 [ER]</li> </ol>
10/1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ronald Dworkin, "Equality of Resources" <i>Sovereign Virtue</i> (2000), 65-92 [ER]</li> </ol>
10/3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. G.A. Cohen, <i>Why Not Socialism?</i> (2009)</li> </ol>
10/8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elizabeth Anderson, "What is the Point of Equality" <i>Ethics</i> (1999), 287-321 [ER]</li> </ol>
10/10	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Philip Pettit, "Social Justice" <i>On the People's Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy</i> (2012), 75-104 [ER]</li> </ol>
10/15	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Charles Mills, <i>The Racial Contract</i>, 1-62</li> </ol>
10/17	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mills, <i>The Racial Contract</i>, 62-133</li> </ol>
10/22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Elizabeth Anderson, <i>The Imperative of Integration</i> (2010), 1-43</li> <li>2. Richard Rothstein, "Own Your Own Home" <i>The Color of Law: A Forgotten of How Our Government Segregated America</i> (2017), 58-75 [ER]</li> </ol> <p><b>Paper Topics Distributed</b></p>
10/24	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anderson, <i>The Imperative of Integration</i>, 44-88</li> </ol>
10/29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anderson, <i>The Imperative of Integration</i>, 112-154</li> </ol> <p><b>Select Paper Topic</b></p>
10/31	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ta-Nahisi Coates, "The Case for Reparations" <i>The Atlantic</i> (2014) [ER]</li> <li>2. David Lyons, "Corrective Justice, Equal Opportunity, and the Legacy of Slavery and Jim Crow" in <i>Confronting Injustice</i> (2013), 85-111 [ER]</li> </ol>
11/5	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carole Pateman, "Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, and G.D.H. Cole: A Participatory Theory of Democracy" in <i>Participation and Democratic Theory</i> (1970) [ER]</li> </ol>
11/7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Thomas Christiano, "Equality" in <i>Rule of the Many</i> (1996), 47-87 [ER]</li> </ol>
11/12	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Susan Okin, "Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?" [ER]</li> <li>2. Okin, selections from <i>Justice, Gender, and the Family</i> (1989) [ER]</li> </ol> <p><b>Initial Paper Draft Due</b></p>
11/14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Catharine MacKinnon, selections from <i>Feminism Unmodified</i> [ER]</li> <li>2. MacKinnon, selections from <i>Toward a Feminist Theory of the State</i> [ER]</li> </ol>

11/19	1. Kate Manne, "Ameliorating Misogyny" <i>Down Girl: The Logic of Misogyny</i> (2017) [ER]
11/26	1. Joseph Carens, "Aliens and Citizens: The Case for Open Borders" <i>Review of Politics</i> (1987) 251-273 [ER]
11/28	1. Charles Beitz, <i>Political Theory and International Relations</i> (1979), 127-176 [ER] 2. Gillian Brock, selections from <i>Global Justice: A Cosmopolitan Account</i> (2009) [ER]
12/3	1. Selections from Thomas Nagel, "The Problem of Global Justice" <i>Philosophy &amp; Public Affairs</i> (2005) [ER]
12/5	1. Joshua Cohen and Charles Sabel, "Extra Rempublicam Nulla Justitia?" <i>Philosophy &amp; Public Affairs</i> (2006) 147-175 [ER]

**Final papers due (along with original submission and comments) in my office by 5 PM, Thursday December 13.**