

Department: Philosophy

Course number: PHIL 217W

Title: Social and Political Philosophy

Credits: 3

Contact Person: John Troyer

Catalog Copy: PHIL 217W. Social and Political Philosophy.

Either semester. Three credits. Prerequisite: At least one of PHIL 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107; ENGL 105 or 110 or 111 or 250. Open to sophomores or higher.

PHIL 217. Social and Political Philosophy

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Conceptual, ontological, and normative issues in political life and thought; political obligation; collective responsibility; justice; liberty; equality; community; the nature of rights; the nature of law; the justification of punishment; related doctrines of classic and contemporary theorists such as Plato, Rousseau, John Rawls.

W Criteria : 1) The best way to understand and appreciate a philosophical problem is to engage with it, and one of the best ways to engage with it is to work on a reflective, clear and carefully organized piece of writing on the topic. Essays and papers in which the students work through issues in this manner are essential to any philosophy course, including the _W_ courses. In PHIL 217W the writing assignments would ordinarily consist of three essays of five pages each, all redrafted for content, clarity and organization. The papers collectively count for 75% of the course grade. **STUDENT CANNOT PASS THE COURSE WITHOUT PASSING THE W COMPONENT**, and will be notified on the syllabus of this requirement.

2) The professor will devote part of at least one lecture to explaining how to write a philosophy paper: how to pick a topic, how to structure the paper, how to make one's prose clear.

3) Students are required to hand in drafts before the final due date for each assignment. The professor either discusses the draft with the student in an individual conference or provides written comments as necessary, as the student prefers, concerning content, clarity, and style.

4) Due dates are given for drafts of papers to allow time for comments or conferences and for the student to revise accordingly.

Role of Grad Students: Graduate students are not expected to be involved in the teaching of this course.