

## **A. General Information**

You may be registered for this class as any of the following:

ECON 3810-003 (CRN 22347)                      POLS 3810-003 (CRN 21300)  
PHIL 3810-003 (CRN 20864)                      PHIL 3810H-006 (CRN 22543)  
PHIL 3720-003 (CRN 13550)

Class Meets: 1:00-2:15, Tuesdays and Thursdays in Classroom South 328

Prof. Cohen's Office: 25 Park Place, 16<sup>th</sup> floor, #1610

(404-413-6100; e-mail: [cohenaj@gsu.edu](mailto:cohenaj@gsu.edu))

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:30

Other times: Feel free to drop by, I may be in (or make an appointment).

Writing Consultant: Emily Tilton, [etilton1@student.gsu.edu](mailto:etilton1@student.gsu.edu).

## **B. Course Texts**

*Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*, edited by Jonathan Anomaly, Geoffrey Brennan, Michael Munger, and Geoff Sayre-McCord (Oxford University Press, 2016)  
Others on iCollege or with links

## **C. Course Description and Learning Outcomes**

Historically, Philosophy, Political Science, and Economics (PPE) were deeply connected. The father of modern economics, Adam Smith, was a philosopher concerned with moral and political thought. Political Science and Economics are now more quantitative than Political Philosophy, which has a focus on the conceptual and moral foundations of Political Science and Economics.

This is an interdisciplinary course that provides an overview of some core conceptual tools used to analyze issues at the intersection of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics. The course will help you improve your ability to think and write clearly, analytically, and critically. You will be encouraged to develop the skills and virtues of open and intellectually honest inquiry. These include the charitable interpretation of others' views; clarity and rigor in formulating, evaluating, and expressing beliefs; tolerance of complexity; and the willingness to suspend judgment until all sides of an issue have been examined. You will also be encouraged to clarify and critically analyze your own beliefs and values. Serving as the Gateway course for the PPE concentration in the BIS major, the topics covered include the moral status of markets, distributive justice, liberty and paternalism, and the use of economic models to understand the behavior of voters and policymakers.

Learning Outcomes: Students will learn the basic elements of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics, the way the three fields are deeply interrelated, and how PPE speaks to many different issues in contemporary society. Students will also learn to write in the style of academic PPE scholars.

## **D. Assessment Basics**

1. Your class grade will presumptively have 5 components:

- discussion questions (50 points total)
- 2 exams (125 points each)
- class participation (50 points)
- 1 term paper (150 points; draft required)

\*Please note that class participation  $\neq$  attendance. Indeed, as I value it highly, I reserve the right to add an additional 25 points to your grade for exceptional participation.

This is the grading scale:

490 <= A+	420 <= B+ < 440	360 <= C+ < 380	no D+ grade available
460 <= A < 490	400 <= B < 420	340 <= C < 360	280 <= D < 310
440 <= A- < 460	380 <= B- < 400	310 <= C- < 340	F < 280

I don't "curve" grades. If everyone deserves an A, everyone will get an A. More likely there will be a normal distribution of grades. Final grades will not be posted or given out over the phone or via email. Note: For those taking this class pass/fail, a "pass" requires at least 350 points earned.

2. Evaluation procedures in this course attempt to determine whether you understand and can explain the strengths and weaknesses of the viewpoints discussed as well as your own, developing, view. You will be required to do readings and perform written assignments that strengthen your skills at analyzing and synthesizing materials into coherent, carefully reasoned essays.

3. To do well in this class, you must keep up with the reading. Some of the reading is difficult; you should think of reading as an *active* process. You must work to understand the texts (see Kemerling, McLaughlin, & Pryor handouts on how to read). Lectures are (in part) meant to help guide you in understanding the texts, but cannot replace a good reading. (They may also include ideas not in the texts.) You should read the material twice before class and again after class. First, read the material quickly to get the general idea and to circle any words you don't understand. Then look up all the words you don't know and read the material again slowly. Third, after we cover the material in class, read it again, slowly. Likely, for the second and third readings, *if you are reading more than five pages an hour, you are not reading carefully enough.*

4. If you do the reading in the way just indicated, take good notes while doing it, and participate in class (ask questions if your reading notes don't match up with what I say in lectures!) and take good notes in class, you should do well. If you put 8 or 9 hours a week into this course (3 in class)—with 5 classes, that's a light workweek—your final studying before the tests should not be difficult—you'll have ample notes and will already have worked through the arguments.

5. **Attendance and Participation**: You will get the most out of this class if you push yourself and are willing to take intellectual risks and make mistakes. Try to be involved in class discussion and always feel free to come to raise questions or make comments about the material or class discussion. Regular attendance is expected, required, and to your benefit, but is *only* a prerequisite to participation.

6. If you miss any 3 classes in a row (including the first 3) I will drop or withdraw you from the class. Otherwise, you are allowed **six unexcused absences** with no penalty imposed. Any additional unexcused absences cost you 50 points from your semester total.

7. If you **miss either exam or fail to turn in a draft paper or a final paper** without prior arrangement with me or clear evidence of an actual emergency, you forfeit 50 points from your semester total—in addition to the value of the exam or assignment.

\*\*\*\*NOTE: "Prior arrangement" may include substituting some non-standard project for one of the presumptive projects that are assessed. Feel free to propose anything—I may say no, but I would like to see some variation. (See E3 below)

8. All written work must be typed and properly formatted with double spacing, 1 inch margins all around, and standard academic font and font size. Standard font and font size are 12 pt Times or Palatino, 10 pt Courier, Tahoma, or Geneva). Enlarging margins, spaces, or fonts fools no one.

9. Note that the last day to be withdrawn or withdraw yourself with a W is Feb 27; after that, all withdrawals are WFs. (You can only have 6 Ws total—additional W are automatically WFs).

10. Handouts will be distributed via iCollege or via email (your *official GSU* email address).

## **E. Other General Factors**

1. Advise me early if you have a documented disability that needs to be accommodated.
2. **Electronic Devices:** No computers, tablets, cell phones, smart phones, or other electronic devices may be used in the classroom without the professor's prior agreement. If you carry such a device, turn it off before class begins and stow it away. Each occurrence of one of your devices making a sound or being used during class costs you **10 points** from your semester total. If *my* phone rings in class, everyone in attendance gets 10 points *added* to their semester total. This is for your benefit; allowing yourself to be distracted in class detracts from your ability to learn. Evidence clearly indicates we do not multitask as well as we think we do. (Recent evidence even suggests that seeing others multi-task lowers one's own productivity). Evidence also indicates that students do better when they take notes by hand rather than digitally. See also G1->3 below.
3. As noted in D7 above, I am open to—indeed, would encourage some use of non-standard projects. These can be done individually or in small groups (of no more than three students). Obviously, the project must be related to PPE and, more specifically, the course material. To do a non-standard project, you must submit a proposal at least 3 weeks in advance of the deadline you propose and then a one page progress report 10 days later. A non-standard project must conclude with a “Project Summary” paper (as short as one-two pages) detailing what you learned and what conclusions you came to.
4. (a) On occasion, I may ask a colleague to read over an assignment you submit to help me assess it.  
(b) If I think one of your submitted assignments can be instructive, either as an example of *what to do* or as an example of *what not to do*, I may use it for instructional purposes in the future. (Your name would be removed.)
5. Should software be available that would require electronic submission of assignments to check for plagiarism, I may decide to use it. This may mean that your submitted work would be stored in a database (whether by the university or a third party) for comparison with other papers (not for other people's use as assignments or publications).
6. Violations of the academic dishonesty rules—see the University's Policy on Academic Honesty—are grounds for receiving an “F” in the course. All of your work must be in accordance with those rules. The policy, as well as the Department of Philosophy's General Syllabus Statement, is part of this syllabus and is attached (last 2 pages).
7. This syllabus provides a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. On such occasions, I will make an announcement in class and via email. Though I will try to provide at least a week's notice of such changes, I expect you to check your *official GA State* email at least every other day.
8. All grade disputes must be submitted via e-mail and must include a full explanation for the disagreement about the grade.

## **F. Assessment Specifics**

1. You will hand in (at least) 10 sets of **discussion questions** throughout the semester. These must be turned in via email—not attachments—by midnight the night before the class wherein we are scheduled to discuss the material you consider. Each set should be no more than a page in total and consist of 2 or 3 questions about a reading. Start each question with an actual question, simply stated, and follow that with some thoughts to either clarify the question or to suggest an answer. *The simply stated questions you provide may go on the study guides for the exams.* Note that you choose which texts to submit the questions for, but you should space them out over the semester while not letting the possible readings run out before you've completed them. **For each set less than 10 you do, you lose 10 points from your semester total.** This means that although these are worth only 50 points total, they can cost you

up to 150 points if you don't do them. Assuming you do 10 sets, I expect you to get 40 to 50 points total. "B" quality work would get you 40.

2. **Exams** will be closed-book (no books, notes or study aids will be permitted). There will be 5-10 short essay questions from a study guide I will provide beforehand. The last exam may be at the University assigned time of Tuesday, April 24, at 10:45 a.m. Plan accordingly! Make-up exams are permitted only when planned with me in advance (see E7 above!) or in cases of genuine emergencies (as determined by the professor) documented by legitimate authorities (not mom or dad). Examples of emergencies are cases where you are in the hospital having non-elective surgery and cases of car accidents for which you supply a police report; car, bus, and train problems *are not* emergencies.

4. You will write at least one draft (*not* rough) of **your paper**. I am always happy to discuss the arguments you are working with and outlines of papers as you develop them. The final version must be 6 to 8 pages long (see D8). I do not expect you to use any sources other than those listed on this syllabus. Name the files *YourLastNameDraft.doc* (or *.docx* or *.rtf*) and *YourLastNamePaper.doc*.

5. For Honors students only: Your final paper should be 10-12 pages and you must use at least one academic piece written since 1970 and not listed on this syllabus. You must provide the complete citation in Chicago or MLA style format (*not* APA).

6. All paper drafts must be submitted via email, as *.doc*, *.docx*, or *.rtf* attachments only. The deadlines will be provided in class or via email. The deadlines must be met so that we can budget our time to provide you feedback. Given that, you will receive a **10 point** penalty for every day the paper is late up to 5 days (including weekends). They count as received when they appear in my email box.

7. We may engage in a peer-review process where you give your paper to another student for evaluation using the grading matrix. If we do, you will have several days to rework the paper.

8. When you revise a paper in response to feedback from the professor or WAC consultant, you must make substantive revisions. These are changes that affect the *substance* or content of your argument—not merely the form. They do not include the rewriting of problematic sentences; spelling, grammar, and the like, are about *form*, not substance. (One typical revision I consider non-substantive: changing phrases like "all X are Y" to "many [or most or some or whatever] X are Y" in response to a comment that "this is too strong.") Of course, when you make substantive changes you may also make formal (i.e., non-substantive) changes.

9. You are expected to carefully proofread your papers. Before writing a paper you are advised to read Jim Pryor's "Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper" and my Paper Tips (both on iCollege). The latter especially are meant to provide guidance for what is expected and should be helpful.

10. Plagiarism is stealing. It occurs when an author uses the words or ideas of others as if they were her own original thoughts. This may be unintentional. It can be avoided by always acknowledging one's debt to others by citing the exact source of a quotation or paraphrase. ANY time you include an idea that was previously articulated by someone else, whether they be a famous philosopher, an on-line source, a friend, or anyone else, you are morally and legally obligated to give them credit. Doing so is a matter of fairness and is expected in academic writing. Plagiarism is such a serious violation of academic honesty, that the penalty for it is usually at least an "F" for the course.

### **G. Some things all of us, but especially college students, should keep in mind.**

1. When you enter a meeting of any kind, you should sit near the other people present. In college classes, you should sit toward the front of the room. Similarly, you should be on time and not do things that distract others—having private conversations with classmates, noisily eating or drinking, using a cell phone *for any purpose* without the agreement of all present, noisily coming in late or leaving early. Doing

these things shows a lack of respect for others.

2. Sometimes you can't avoid being late or have a good reason to leave early. Of course, neither should happen frequently and, if either does happen, you should be quiet about it (so sit by a door), seeking to create as little disturbance as possible. Your quiet departure or tardiness will not offend us; if they happen with frequency or with disturbances they will.

3. Respecting someone does not require respecting his or her views. While everyone has a right to her or his opinion, that opinion may be wrong. While we should assume that everyone at GSU is intelligent and worthy of our respect, we should not be surprised to find that sometimes they hold *views* we cannot respect (we can still respect *the person*). There are good reasons why people—including very smart people—sometimes hold false views. (There are people—some far smarter than me—that think I hold false views.)

4. I highly value honest and unimpaired, but respectful (and hopefully friendly), dialogue. You should not pretend to think I am (or anyone else you respect, is) right when you don't; I will extend you the same courtesy. To do otherwise, I think, is to fail to show respect. If you don't indicate your disagreement, it would seem that you think your interlocutor is *not worth* correcting—i.e., that you do not respect her. As I come to the class assuming you are worthy of respect, I will indicate when something you say is questionable, leaves you committed to something I reject, or even that you are simply wrong (but feel free to challenge me!). I expect you to do the same (and I may challenge you!). I expect this sort of respectful behavior of all in the class. It is my hope that this will allow for a maximally tolerant, open, and honest, discussion.

5. There are issues where no one view can (thus far) be deemed correct; I will not pretend otherwise, but may indicate why a particular view is wrong. Even if no one view can be deemed “the right view” about a topic, normally, some views can be shown to be wrong. See Appendix A to my Paper Tips.

6. Ignoring feedback is a bad idea as it reduces your chances of success and insults the person providing the feedback. Your paper will likely suffer if you ignore useful feedback from Emily or I. The point in our feedback is to help you become a better academic writer—which can help you earn a better grade.

7. Any time you email someone, you should have a greeting and a closing. Emails to me can begin with a very simple greeting (such as “Dr. Cohen-”) and end with a simple closing (such as “-YourName, YourClass”). These should be on their own lines. If you are attaching something to an email (like a paper), you should tell the recipient (in this case, me) what it is in the body of the email.

8. \*\*\*Staying in this class amounts to consent to everything on this syllabus.\*\*\*

## **H. Schedule**

Throughout, if you think we need more time on a particular reading or topic, please **say so**. We'll try to announce any changes, but if we don't, you're expected to have read the material (twice) before we discuss it (see D3).

**NOTE:** As per E6, dates are subject to change.

### I. Week 1 (January 9-11): Rational Choice

Gary Becker, The Economic Way of Looking at Behavior (*PPE*, p. 37 ff)

David Gauthier, Rationality: Maximization Constrained (*PPE*, p. 56 ff)

Gregory Kavka, The Toxin Puzzle (*PPE*, p. 70 ff)

### II. Weeks 2 and 3 (January 16-25): Game Theory

Simon Blackburn, Game Theory & Rational Choice (*PPE*, 78 ff)

Thomas Schelling, Dynamic Models of Segregation (*PPE*, p. 89 ff)  
 Gerry Mackie, Ending Foot Binding and Infibulation (*PPE*, p. 97 ff)  
 \*\*\*GUEST 1/25 Chris Surprenant, Policing and Punishment (reading TBA)

### III. Week 4 (Jan 30 & Feb 1): Property

John Locke, Of Property (*PPE*, p. 131 ff), \*\*\*GUEST??  
 David Hume, Of Justice and Property (*PPE*, p. 133 ff)  
 Karl Marx, "Primitive Accumulation" (*PPE*, p. 141 ff)  
 David Schmidtz, The Institution of Property (*PPE*, p. 147 ff)  
 Planet Money podcast: How Private Property Transformed China ([click here](#))

### IV. Weeks 5 & 6 (February 6-15): Markets

\*\*\*Trader Game, with FEE 2/6  
 Adam Smith, Of the Division of Labor (*PPE*, p. 164 ff)  
 Friedrich Hayek, The Use of Knowledge in Society (*PPE*, p. 172 ff)  
 Leonard Read, I, Pencil (*PPE*, p. 178 ff)  
 Charles Lindblom, The Market as Prison (on iCollege)  
 Tyler Cowen, Public Goods (*PPE*, p. 197 ff)  
 Jonathan Anomaly, Public Goods and Government Action (*PPE*, p. 199 ff)  
 David Friedman, Market Failures (*PPE*, p. 214 ff)  
 James Bailey and Diana Thomas, Regulating Away Competition (iCollege)

## **FIRST EXAM**

### V. Weeks 7 & 8 (February 20-March 1): Distributive Justice

J. S. Mill, Utilitarianism (*PPE*, p. 287 ff)  
 John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (*PPE*, p. 294 ff)  
 Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State and Utopia (*PPE*, p. 317 ff)  
 Gerald Cohen, Patterns Preserving Liberty (*PPE*, p. 345 ff)

### VI. Weeks 9 & 10 (March 6-22): Public Choice Theory and Voting

James Buchanan, Politics without Romance (*PPE*, p. 431 ff [*not* 452 ff])  
 Anthony Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (*PPE*, p. 436 ff)  
 Michael Huemer, Why People are Irrational about Politics (*PPE*, p. 456 ff)  
 Geoff Brennan and Loren Lomasky, Is There a Duty to Vote? (*PPE*, p. 470 ff [*not* 499 ff])  
 Jason Brennan, Polluting the Polls: When Citizens Should Not Vote (*PPE*, p. 487 ff)  
 \*\*NOTE: Spring Break March 12-16

### VII. Week 11 (March 27-29): Liberty and Paternalism

J. S. Mill, On Liberty (*PPE*, p. 516 ff)  
 Gerald Dworkin, Paternalism (*PPE*, p. 526 ff)  
 Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein (*PPE*, p. 537 ff)

### VIII. Weeks 12 & 13 (April 3-12): Markets on the Margin (do you prefer sweatshops & price gouging?)

Martha Nussbaum, Taking Money for Bodily Services (*PPE*, p. 556 ff)  
 David Friedman, Sex, Marriage, and Babies (*PPE*, p. 572 ff)  
 Michael Huemer, America's Unjust Drug War (*PPE*, p. 583 ff)  
 Peter DeMarneffe, Against the Legalization of Drugs (*PPE*, p. 591 ff)  
 Jeffrey Miron, The Economics of Drug Legalization and Prohibition (*PPE*, p. 600 ff)  
 Arthur Caplan, Organ Transplantation (*PPE*, p. 610 ff)  
 Gerald Dworkin, Of Markets and Morals: The Case for Organ Sales (*PPE*, p. 614 ff)

### IX. Week 14 (April 17-19) Catch up and Wrap up

## Department of Philosophy

### General Syllabus Statement Spring 2018

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- This syllabus provides a general plan for the course. Deviations may be necessary.
- The last day to **withdraw** from a course with the possibility of receiving a W is **Tuesday, February 27**. A student may be awarded a grade of "W" no more than 6 times in their careers at Georgia State. After 6 Ws, a withdrawal is recorded as a WF on the student's record. A WF counts as an F in a GPA.
- The customary penalty for any violation of the academic honesty rules is an "F" in the course, which cannot be replaced by repeating the course. See selections from the University Policy on Academic Honesty on the reverse of this sheet. **Copying or using any material from the internet without citation is a violation of the academic honesty rules.**
- Students who wish to request accommodation for a disability must do so by registering with the Office of Disability Services in Suite 230 of the Student Center. Students may only be accommodated upon issuance by the Office of Disability Services of a signed Accommodation Plan and are responsible for providing a copy of that plan as soon as possible to instructors of all classes in which an accommodation is sought.
- Students are responsible for confirming that they are attending the course section for which they are registered. Failure to do so may result in an F for the course.
- By University policy and to respect the confidentiality of all students, **final grades** may not be posted or given out over the phone. To see your grades, use PAWS.
- Your constructive assessment of this course plays an indispensable role in shaping education at Georgia State University. Upon completing the course, please take the time to fill out the online course evaluation.

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**Subscribe to one of our department listservs for current information and events:**

1. Undergraduate Students: <http://philosophy.gsu.edu/undergraduate/listserv>
  2. Graduate Students: <http://philosophy.gsu.edu/graduate/listserv>
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**For more information on the philosophy program visit:**

<http://philosophy.gsu.edu>

## **Policy on Academic Honesty, from the GSU Catalog**

As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The university assumes as a basic and minimum standard of conduct in academic matters that students be honest and that they submit for credit only the products of their own efforts. Both the ideals of scholarship and the need for fairness require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit. They also require that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable or unethical conduct related to their academic work.

The university's policy on academic honesty is published in the *Faculty Handbook* and *On Campus: The Student Handbook* and is available to all members of the university community. The policy represents a core value of the university, and all members of the university community are responsible for abiding by its tenets. Lack of knowledge of this policy is not an acceptable defense to any charge of academic dishonesty. All members of the academic community—students, faculty, and staff—are expected to report violations of these standards of academic conduct to the appropriate authorities. The procedures for such reporting are on file in the offices of the deans of each college, the office of the dean of students, and the office of the provost.

### **Definitions and Examples**

The examples and definitions given below are intended to clarify the standards by which academic honesty and academically honorable conduct are to be judged. The list is merely illustrative of the kinds of infractions that may occur, and it is not intended to be exhaustive. Moreover, the definitions and examples suggest conditions under which unacceptable behavior of the indicated types normally occurs; however, there may be unusual cases that fall outside these conditions that also will be judged unacceptable by the academic community.

**Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is presenting another person's work as one's own. Plagiarism includes any para-phrasing or summarizing of the works of another person without acknowledgment, including the submitting of another student's work as one's own. Plagiarism frequently involves a failure to acknowledge in the text, notes, or footnotes the quotation of the paragraphs, sentences, or even a few phrases written or spoken by someone else. The submission of research or completed papers or projects by someone else is plagiarism, as is the unacknowledged use of research sources gathered by someone else when that use is specifically forbidden by the faculty member. Failure to indicate the extent and nature of one's reliance on other sources is also a form of plagiarism. Any work, in whole or in part, taken from the Internet or other computer-based resource without properly referencing the source (for example, the URL) is considered plagiarism. A complete reference is required in order that all parties may locate and view the original source. Finally, there may be forms of plagiarism that are unique to an individual discipline or course, examples of which should be provided in advance by the faculty member. The student is responsible for understanding the legitimate use of sources, the appropriate ways of acknowledging academic, scholarly or creative indebtedness, and the consequences of violating this responsibility.

**Multiple Submissions:** It is a violation of academic honesty to submit substantial portions of the same work for credit more than once without the explicit consent of the faculty member(s) to whom the material is submitted for additional credit. In cases in which there is a natural development of research or knowledge in a sequence of courses, use of prior work may be desirable, even required; however the student is responsible for indicating in writing, as a part of such use, that the current work submitted for credit is cumulative in nature.

**Cheating on Examinations:** Cheating on examinations involves giving or receiving unauthorized help before, during, or after an examination. Examples of unauthorized help include the use of notes, computer-based resources, texts, or "crib sheets" during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member), or sharing information with another student during an examination (unless specifically approved by the faculty member). Other examples include intentionally allowing another student to view one's own examination and collaboration before or after an examination if such collaboration is specifically forbidden by the faculty member.

**Unauthorized Collaboration:** Submission for academic credit of a work product, or a part thereof, represented as its being one's own effort, which has been developed in substantial collaboration with another person or source or with a computer-based resource is a violation of academic honesty. It is also a violation of academic honesty knowingly to provide such assistance. Collaborative work specifically authorized by a faculty member is allowed.

**Falsification:** It is a violation of academic honesty to misrepresent material or fabricate information in an academic exercise, assignment or proceeding (e.g., false or misleading citation of sources, falsification of the results of experiments or computer data, false or misleading information in an academic context in order to gain an unfair advantage).