**Phil 330, Social Political Philosophy, 3 credits**
**Term 1 2023-24**

| Instructor: | Course: |
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| Matthew S. Bedke | Phil 330 |
| matt.bedke@ubc.ca | 3 credits, lecture |
| Office: Buchanan Block E, room 361 | Meets MWF 11-noon |
| Office Hrs: Tuesdays, 10-11am or by appointment | Chem 126 |

**Required Learning Materials**
A Theory of Justice [ToJ], by John Rawls
Various readings available online or through UBC Library Online Course Reserves

**Course Description and Aims**
This will be a survey course in social and political philosophy that focuses on contemporary debates about justice, fairness, freedom, and the good of community. Those debates all begin with John Rawls' A Theory of Justice. Rawls defends an account of what justice is in general and the two principles that a society must satisfy in order to be just. He also broaches the project of institutional design—that is, the design of legal, economic, social, and political institutions capable of satisfying the two principles of justice. The second half of the course surveys a number of critical responses and alternatives to Rawlsian theory set out by libertarian (Nozick), Marxist (Cohen), utilitarian (Murphy), republican (Thomas), feminist (Okin and Edenberg), and critical race (Mills and Shelby) theorists.

Here are some of the questions we will tackle: Should we have an egalitarian political system? If so, in what resepct(s) are we or should we be equal? Is the taxation of your money a violation of your rights of ownership? Do societies that emphasize individual freedom lose some aspects of community that make life good?

The aim in this course is not only to familiarize you with some profound questions about the basic rules to live by, and the most thoughtful attempts to answer those questions, but also to hone your thinking and writing skills. I want you to think clearly, avoid confusion, recognize and pick apart bad arguments, and build good arguments.

**Learning Outcomes**
After completing this course, students will
- have a broad appreciation of the questions and concerns surrounding justice as a first virtue of social institutions (as Rawls put it).
- be able to explain philosophical texts and positions accurately, to identify and apply philosophical research methods consistently, to articulate and defend precise philosophical positions, and to anticipate and rebut objections to those positions.
- Acquire the content, synthesize it, summarize it, analyze it, criticize it, and communicate it.

**Learning Activities**
Students are expected to do the readings in advance, attend class, stay focused and undistracted during the lecture portions of the class, and to actively participate in classroom discussions. Students are also required to submit all assignments on time.

**Assessments of Learning**
Given the accessibility of AI chatbots, assessment of student learning is undergoing a transition. Other than having an in-class written final exam in short essay format, I have not yet decided how to do assessments for this course. Students will be consulted about this issue in the first few classes.

If you will permit some editorializing, I think AI chatbots can facilitate the acquisition of information and summarize it in a concise manner. It does not provide the learner with much depth of understanding and it does not (yet) help the learner develop their own abilities to analyze and criticize material. Doing philosophy well requires one to think for themselves, and this is something I want class assessments to do.

Class participation and attendance are mandatory.

I will not accept late work except with a valid excuse from Arts Advising. Any request to re-grade work must be submitted in writing, detailing reasons for awarding a higher grade and indicating the new grade being requested.

Relationship between percentages and letter grades:

| 90-100% A+ | 85-89% A | 80-84% A- |
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| 76-79% B+ | 72-75% B | 68-71% B- |
| 64-67% C+ | 60-63% C | 55-59% C- |
| 50-54% D | 0-49% F | |

A Range: Exceptional Performance. Mastery of the subject matter; strong evidence of original thinking; good organization in written work; impressive capacity to analyze; insightful critical evaluations.

B Range: Competent Performance. Evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues.

C Range: Adequate Performance. Understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work; not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour.

D Range: Problematic Performance. Some incomplete understanding of the subject matter; limited evidence of critical and analytical skills; lack of original thinking.

F Range: Inadequate Performance. Little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; little or no evidence of critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.

**University Policies**
UBC provides resources to support student learning and to maintain healthy lifestyles but recognizes that sometimes crises arise and so there are additional resources to access including those for survivors of sexual violence. UBC values respect for the person and ideas of all members of the academic community. Harassment and discrimination are not tolerated nor is suppression of academic freedom. UBC provides appropriate accommodation for students with disabilities and for religious observances. UBC values academic honesty and students are expected to acknowledge the ideas generated by others and to uphold the highest academic standards in all of their actions.
Details of the policies and how to access support are available on **the UBC Senate website**.

**Academic Integrity and Responsibility**
As a member of this class, you are responsible for contributing to the course objectives through your participation in class activities and your work on essays, exams, and other projects. In the process of coming into your own as an independent, responsible participant in the academic community, you are encouraged to seek advice, clarification, and guidance in your learning from your instructor and/or Teaching Assistant. If you decide to seek help beyond the resources of this course, you are responsible for ensuring that this help does not lead you to submit others' work as your own. If an outside tutor or other person helps you, show this policy to your tutor or helper: make sure you both understand the limits of this person's permissible contribution. If you are uncertain, consult your instructor or TA.

Academic communities depend on their members' honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings which appear in their work. Like any other member of the academic community, you will be held responsible for the accurate representation of your sources: the means by which you produced the work you are submitting. If you are found to have misrepresented your sources and to have submitted others' work as your own, penalties will follow. At the least, you will receive a zero for the assignment. Your case may be forwarded to the Head of the department. The Head will report your case to the Dean's Office, where the report will remain on file. The Head may decide, in consultation with your instructor, that a greater penalty is called for, and will forward your case to the Dean's Office. After an interview in the Dean's Office, your case may be forwarded to the President's Advisory Committee on Academic Misconduct. Following a hearing in which you will be asked to account for your actions, the President may apply penalties including zero for the assignment; zero for the course; suspension from the university for a period ranging from 4 to 24 months; a notation on your permanent record. The penalty may be a combination of these.

Like any academic author submitting work for review and evaluation, you are guaranteeing that the work you submit for this course has not already been submitted for credit in another course. Your submitting work from another course, without your instructor's prior agreement, may result in penalties such as those applied to the misrepresentation of sources.

You are expected to adhere to UBC's policies concerning academic honesty and standards. In

particular, do not plagiarize. An excerpt about plagiarism and a link to the UBC policy on academic misconduct is provided below.

*Plagiarism, which is intellectual theft, occurs where an individual submits or presents the oral or written work of another person as his or her own. Scholarship quite properly rests upon examining and referring to the thoughts and writings of others. However, when another person's words (i.e. phrases, sentences, or paragraphs), ideas, or entire works are used, the author must be acknowledged in the text, in footnotes, in endnotes, or in another accepted form of academic citation. Where direct quotations are made, they must be clearly delineated (for example, within quotation marks or separately indented). Failure to provide proper attribution is plagiarism because it represents someone else's work as one's own. Plagiarism should not occur in submitted drafts or final works. A student who seeks assistance from a tutor or other scholastic aids must ensure that the work submitted is the student's own. Students are responsible for ensuring that any work submitted does not constitute plagiarism. Students who are in any doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism should consult their instructor before handing in any assignments*

**Learning Resources**
Some learning resources are available on the Canvas website, such as links to helpful information about writing philosophy papers. I also want to bring your attention to the Philosophy Essay Clinic: https://philosophy.ubc.ca/undergraduate/philosophy-essay-clinic/

**Copyright**
All materials of this course (any handouts, lecture slides, assessments, course readings, etc.) are the intellectual property of the Course Instructor or licensed to be used in this course by the copyright owner. Redistribution of these materials by any means without permission of the copyright holder(s) constitutes a breach of copyright and may lead to academic discipline. Note: recording of the course is not permitted.

**Reading Schedule**
Please do the assigned readings before class and come prepared to discuss them. **The schedule is subject to change**.

| Week | Weekday | Date | Topic | Readings Discussed |
|------|---------|------|-------|--------------------|
| 1 | Wednesday | 6-Sep-23 | Intro to Course | |
| | Friday | 8-Sep-23 | Rawls on the Nature and Foundation of Justice | ToJ Ch. 1 |
| 2 | Monday | 11-Sep-23 | | cont |

| | Wednesday | 13-Sep-23 | | cont |
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| | Friday | 15-Sep-23 | Two Principles of Justice | ToJ Ch. 2 |
| 3 | Monday | 18-Sep-23 | | cont |
| | Wednesday | 20-Sep-23 | | cont |
| | Friday | 22-Sep-23 | The Original Position | ToJ Ch. 3 |
| 4 | Monday | 25-Sep-23 | | cont |
| | Wednesday | 27-Sep-23 | | cont |
| | Friday | 29-Sep-23 | Questions about Equal Liberty | ToJ Ch. 4 to p. 194 |
| 5 | **Monday** | **2-Oct-23** | **Statutory holiday in lieu of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. University closed.** | |
| | Wednesday | 4-Oct-23 | | cont |
| | Friday | 6-Oct-23 | The Nature of Goodness as Rationality | Ch. 7 to p. 380 |
| 6 | **Monday** | **9-Oct-23** | **Thanksgiving Day. University closed.** | |
| | Wednesday | 11-Oct-23 | | cont |
| | **Thursday** | **12-Oct-23** | **(Makeup For Monday) Stability: The Sense of** | ToJ Ch. 8 to p. 420 |

| | | | Justice | |
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| | Friday | 13-Oct-23 | | cont |
| 7 | Monday | 16-Oct-23 | Stability: The Good of Justice | ToJ Ch. 9, secs. 78, 79, 85, 86 and 87 |
| | Wednesday | 18-Oct-23 | | cont |
| | Friday | 20-Oct-23 | The Libertarian Critique | Robert Nozick, (1974) Anarchy State and Utopia, Basic Books, ch. 7: 149-164 and 183-204. |
| 8 | Monday | 23-Oct-23 | | Samuel Freeman (2018) "Illiberal Libertarianism" in Liberalism and Distributive Justice, Oxford University Press, 62-89. |
| | Wednesday | 25-Oct-23 | | cont |
| | Friday | 27-Oct-23 | Dworkin's Egalitarian Alternative | Dworkin, R. What is equality? Part 1: Equality of welfare. Philosophy and Public Affairs (1981). |
| 9 | Monday | 30-Oct-23 | | Dworkin, R. What is equality? Part 2: Equality of resources. Philosophy and Public Affairs (1981). |
| | Wednesday | 1-Nov-23 | | cont |
| | Friday | 3-Nov-23 | The Neo-Marxist Critique | G.A. Cohen (2008), Rescuing Justice and Equality, Harvard University Press, 27-80. |
| 10 | Monday | 6-Nov-23 | | cont |
| | Wednesday | 8-Nov-23 | | Alan Thomas (2016) The Republic of Equals, ch. 3, 68-94: "G.A. Cohen's Neo-Marxist Critique of Rawls." |
| | Friday | 10-Nov-23 | | cont |
| **11** | **Monday** | **13-Nov** | **midterm break** | |

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| | **Wednesday** | **15-Nov-23** | **midterm break** | |
| | **Friday** | **17-Nov-23** | **midterm break?** | |
| 12 | Monday | 20-Nov-23 | Ideologies | Charles Mills (2005) "'Ideal Theory' as Ideology", Hypatia 20: 165-84. |
| | Wednesday | 22-Nov-23 | | Tommie Shelby (2003) Ideology, Racism and Critical Theory", Philosophical Forum 34: 153-188 |
| | Friday | 24-Nov-23 | | cont |
| 13 | Monday | 27-Nov-23 | Race and Justice | Tommie Shelby (2004), "Race and Social Justice: Rawlsian Considerations," Fordham Law Review 72: 1697–1714. |
| | Wednesday | 29-Nov-23 | | Charles W. Mills (2013), "Retrieving Rawls for Racial Justice? A Critique of Tommie Shelby," Critical Philosophy of Race 1: 1–27. |
| | Friday | 1-Dec-23 | | Tommie Shelby (2013) "Racial Realities and Corrective Justice: A Reply to Charles Mills," Critical Philosophy of Race, 1: 145-162. |
| 14 | Monday | 4-Dec-23 | Gender and Justice | Susan Okin (1989) "Justice and Gender: An Unfinished Debate", Fordham Law Review 72: 1537-67. |
| | Wednesday | 6-Dec-23 | | Elizabeth Edenberg (2021) "Gender Justice, Rawls and the Common Good" in John Rawls and the Common Good, edited by Roberto Luppi, Routledge. |