

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY
Philosophy 2810F: Global Justice and Human Rights
Course Outline Summer 2016

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Robb
Office: Stevenson Hall, room 4126
Office Hours: 3 – 4 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays

Class times: Tuesdays and Thursdays
12:30 – 3:00 p.m.
Room: P&AB 150
E-mail: rrobb@uwo.ca
Course content: OWLSakai

OBJECTIVES

This course seeks to achieve two goals. The first, and most important, is to help students identify and distinguish between good and bad arguments. Assessing the quality of arguments is the most fundamental skill a philosopher must possess, a skill which when developed allows philosophers to critically engage the many disparate views they encounter in their daily lives, and helps them become less prone to error when making arguments of their own. Students will improve their ability to determine what it is that makes the set of reasons that support the conclusions of one argument more compelling than those presented in competing arguments, and to articulate those assessments in the writing assignments for the course.

The second goal of this course is to explore the ways in which the aforementioned philosophical skill (identifying and producing good arguments) has been applied by scholars to the relationship between citizens and the State. The arguments surveyed include attempts to answer the following questions: What are ‘human rights,’ what ‘human rights’ exist, and in what way do they limit State action? What is ‘justice’, what is the relationship between justice and human rights, and can these two concepts be made applicable in a global setting characterized by diversity? Does a respect for human rights and global justice require wealthy nations contribute to alleviating poverty? Under what circumstances is war permissible?

MATERIALS

The Global Justice Reader, Thom Brooks ed. (Wiley Publishing, 2008), available at the UWO Bookstore and on-line.

REQUIREMENTS

1. Participation – 10%.
3. Two 1250 – 1500 word essays, worth 30% each for a total of 60%.
4. Final exam – 30%, to be scheduled at a time and place determined by the registrar during the summer 2016 final exam period.

Late penalty policy:

Each paper will be subject to a **5% penalty on the first day** that it is late, and a further **1% penalty for each subsequent day** it is late (including each day of the weekend) **until the last day of the semester**, at which point a grade of 0 will be automatically entered (following Senate

guidelines set out on page 117 of the UWO 2015-16 Academic Calendar).

Students are directed to view the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness
(<https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>).

Policy on accommodation for medical illness of work worth less than 10% of the total course grade:

Medical documentation will be required; such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean's office and not to the instructor. It will be the Dean's office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

Policy on 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 the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

Support Services:

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.

Statement on Use of Plagiarism Software:

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>).

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices:

The use of electronic devices will not be permitted for the final exam in this course.

Additional Links:

Registrarial Services (<http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>)
Student Support Services (<http://westernusc.ca/services/>)

Audit:

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

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://www.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.