

The University of Western Ontario
Department of Philosophy
Phil 2083G: Terrorism
Winter 2018

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Robb
Office: Stevenson Hall, room 4126
Office Hours: Tuesday, 1:30 – 3:30 p.m.

Class Hours: Tuesdays 9:30 – 11:30 and
Thursdays, 10:30 – 11:30 a.m.
Talbot College, room 341
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Description:

Since 9/11 and the resulting declaration by multiple governments of a global ‘war on terrorism’, articulating the conceptual features of ‘terrorism’ has taken on a greater sense of urgency. Scholars engaged in this project share a belief that their analyses of terrorism will provide a means of determining whether a particular action qualifies as an act of terrorism, what it is that makes an act of terrorism morally wrong, and whether there are any circumstances in which those actions can be morally justified. Not surprisingly, the readings we engage during this course focus primarily on answering those three questions, i.e., what is terrorism, what makes terrorism wrong, and are there any circumstances in which it can be justified?

Materials:

Igor Primoratz, *Terrorism: The Philosophical Issues* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005).
Additional Readings Available on OWL

Objectives:

The primary goal of this course is to help students identify, and distinguish between, good and bad arguments (i.e., to think critically). The means by which that goal will be fulfilled is by asking students to assess the arguments presented in the course readings, and to support their assessments with good reasons in their essays.

The secondary goal of this course is to familiarize students with the dominant positions defended by philosophers seeking to understand the concept of ‘terrorism’. The means by which that goal will be fulfilled will be to assess student comprehension on the mid-year and final exams.

Method of Evaluation:

10% - Attendance/Participation
15% - Mid-Term Exam
50% - two 1000 – 1250 word essays (worth 25% each)
25% - Final Exam

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 (i.e., Wednesday April 11th, 2018)**, at which point a grade of 0 will be automatically entered (following Senate guidelines set out on page 117 of the UWO 2017-18 Academic Calendar).

Policy on accommodation for medical illness of work worth 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.

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

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.