

Ohio State University
Philosophy, Politics, and Economics 3001
Economy, Polity, and Community
2:20-3:40 TTh Fall 2020

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Overview

This course examines three models of human nature, each of which captures something important about social and political life, and each of which has significant blind spots. The first model sees human beings as rational actors who seek to maximize the satisfaction of their preferences. The second model sees human beings as citizens with public responsibilities that orient them toward the pursuit of the common good. The third model sees human beings as members of communities that provide an identity and a set of values that enable them to navigate the social world. We use these models to explore two fundamental social and political questions: first, the question of what makes a society a “good” society, and second, the question of whether and to what extent a good society should rely on individualistic or collective processes – markets or politics – to organize its affairs.

Readings

All of the required readings have been posted on Carmen. Students are also encouraged to explore (and contribute to) the supplemental Data & Metrics page (go.osu.edu/ppedata) as we explore what makes for a “good” society.

Course requirements

Assignment	Due date	Weight
First essay (~1500 words)	Uploaded to Carmen by midnight on Monday, October 5	20%
Midterm exam	Thursday, October 8 (in class)	25%
Second essay (~1500 words)	Uploaded to Carmen by midnight on Monday, November 30	30%
Final exam	Monday, December 7, 4:00-5:45 pm	25%
Participation	Ongoing	Used to adjust final grade (see p. 3)

Policies and procedures

Academic misconduct. It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc>.

Health and safety requirements. All students, faculty and staff are required to comply with and stay up to date on all university safety and health guidance (<https://safeandhealthy.osu.edu>), which includes wearing a face mask in any indoor space and maintaining a safe physical distance at all times. Non-compliance will result in a warning first, and disciplinary actions will be taken for repeated offenses.

COVID process. The university strives to make all learning experiences as accessible as possible. In light of the current pandemic, students seeking to request COVID-related accommodations may do so through the university’s [request process](#), managed by Student Life Disability Services. If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on your disability (including mental health, chronic, or temporary medical conditions), please let us know immediately so that we can privately discuss options. To establish reasonable accommodations, we may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with us as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations so that they may be implemented in a timely fashion.

Mental health services. As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce a student’s ability to participate in daily activities. The Ohio State University offers services to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. If you or someone you know are suffering from any of the aforementioned conditions, you can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via the Office of Student Life’s Counseling and Consultation Service (CCS) by visiting ccs.osu.edu or calling [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766). CCS is located on the 4th Floor of the Younkin Success Center and 10th Floor of Lincoln Tower. You can reach an on call counselor when CCS is closed at [614-292-5766](tel:614-292-5766) and 24 hour emergency help is also available through the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK or at suicidepreventionlifeline.org.

Disabilities. Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 098 Baker Hall, 113 West 12th Avenue; telephone 614-292-3307; slds.osu.edu.

Grading and assessment

Grading scale. Final grades will be determined using the standard university conversion chart:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-79
D	60-66
E	0-60

Participation grade. Regular attendance, careful reading preparation, and active class participation are expected. Grades will be adjusted up or down by as much as three points on this basis.

Late work. Each student will be granted one extension on a paper of your choice, no questions asked, which entitles you to hand it in any time before noon on Friday following the due date with no penalty. There is no need to tell us in advance that you are taking the extension, and no other extensions will be granted. Late essays will be penalized one full grade. Essays will not be accepted more than one week after the extension date without our approval.

Note. In the event that the University moves to online instruction during the course of the semester, we will hold class via synchronous Zoom session at our regular meeting time. The Zoom sessions will be recorded for students who have trouble connecting or who want to review. Depending on the timing we may make adjustments to the readings and assignments as necessary.

Schedule of readings and assignments

I. What is the good society?

Aug 25-27 **Introductory**

Tuesday Robert L. Heilbroner, “The Economic Revolution”

Thursday Gary S. Becker, “The Economic Way of Looking at Behavior”
Albert O. Hirschman, “Against Parsimony”

Sept 1-3 **Freedom and choice**

Tuesday T. H. Green, “Liberal Legislation and Freedom of Contract”
Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (selections)

Thursday Milton & Rose Friedman, “The Power of the Market”
Danielle Allen, “The Road from Serfdom”

Sept 8-10 **Freedom and capabilities**

Tuesday Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (selections)
Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have a Dream”

Thursday Martha C. Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities* (selection; read from p. 31)
S. Charusheela, “Social Analysis and the Capabilities Approach”

Sept 15-17 **Social capital**

Tuesday Richard G. Wilkinson & Kate E. Pickett, “The Enemy Between Us”; or watch
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rgu5bR_ZU_Q, first 55 minutes)
Thomas Piketty & Emmanuel Saez, “Inequality in the Long Run”

Thursday Robert Putnam, “Bowling Alone”
Robert Putnam, “The Strange Disappearance of Civic America”

Sept 22-24 **Equality**

Tuesday Elizabeth Anderson, “What is the Point of Equality?”

Thursday Elizabeth Anderson, “What is the Point of Equality?” (continued)

Sept 29-Oct 1 **Inequality and Black Americans**

Tuesday Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Racisms* (excerpt)
Charles W. Mills, “Toward a Black Radical Liberalism”

Thursday Adolph Reed, Jr., “Marx, Race, and Neoliberalism”
Darrick Hamilton et. al., “An Economic Bill of Rights for the 21st Century”

Oct 5 (M) **FIRST ESSAY DUE AT MIDNIGHT**

October 6-8 **REVIEW and EXAM**

II. Markets, plans, and purposes

Oct 13-15 Markets and planning

Tuesday Adam Smith, “Of the Division of Labor”; “Of the Disposition to Admire the Rich”

Thursday Friedrich Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society”
Cass R. Sunstein, “The Knowledge Problem”

Oct 20-22 Paternalism

Tuesday Richard H. Thaler & Cass R. Sunstein, *Nudge* (selections)

Thursday Sarah Conly, *Against Autonomy*, chapter 1

Oct 27-Nov 5 Property

Tuesday John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chapter 5
John Stuart Mill, selected writings on property

Thursday Karl Marx, “Estranged Labour”; “The Power of Money in Bourgeois Society”

Tuesday Frederick Douglass, “Why Reconstruction Failed”
Cheryl Harris, “Whiteness as Property”

Thursday Bernard Boxill, “Black Reparations”
Darrick Hamilton, Glenn Loury, et. al., “The Pros and Cons of Reparations”
freakonomics.com/podcast/reparations-part-2 (listen or read transcript)

Nov 10-12 Markets in everything?

Tuesday Michael J. Sandel, *What Money Can't Buy* (selections)

Thursday Debra Satz, “Noxious Markets”

Nov 17-24 Private means to public purposes?

Tuesday Emma Saunders-Hastings, “Plutocratic Philanthropy”

Thursday Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government*, chapter 2
Oren Cass, “The Working Hypothesis”

Tuesday Philippe Van Parijs, “Basic Income”

Nov 30 (M) SECOND ESSAY DUE AT MIDNIGHT

Dec 1-3 REFLECTIONS and EXAM REVIEW

Dec 7 (M) FINAL EXAM, 4:00-5:45 pm