

PH9E3-30 Topics in Moral and Political Philosophy

22/23

Department

Philosophy

Level

Taught Postgraduate Level

Module leader

Nadine Elzein

Credit value

30

Module duration

10 weeks

Assessment

100% coursework

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

PH9E3 Topics in Moral and Political Philosophy

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The module will offer a critical engagement with key debates in moral and political philosophy. We will address a number of questions relating to moral psychology and meta-ethics as well as examining a range of issues relating to responsibility, retribution and freedom, the moral authority of the law, and the fair distribution of property. We will ask what constitutes the basis of moral obligations and moral responsibility and how the authority of the state is supposed to connect individuals and actions.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Illustrative Syllabus

Week 1. Self-interest & Motivation:

Week 2. Duty & the Problem of Moral Motivation:

Week 3. Mind-Dependence, Subjectivism & Non-Cognitivism:

Week 4. Moral Truth & Objectivity:

Week 5. Free Will & Moral Responsibility:

Week 6. Reading Week:

Week 7. Crime, Punishment & Retribution:

Week 8. Political Obligation & the Authority of the Law:

Week 9. Positive & Negative Liberty:

Week 10. Property Rights & Distribution:

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- By the end of the module the student should have a systematic understanding and knowledge of key contemporary debates in moral and political philosophy, and the major methodological and conceptual issues at stake in them.
- By the end of the module the student should be able to participate in debate on an important set of issues in contemporary moral and political philosophy, and to articulate arguments and criticisms in an insightful, original, and productive way
- By the end of the module the student should be able to analyse and critically evaluate different theories and arguments presented in current research, and come to an independent assessment of their relative merits; to be able to critically evaluate different methodological approaches in these debates.

Indicative reading list

R. P. Wolff, *In Defense of Anarchism* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970; 2d ed. 1998).

A. John Simmons, *Justification and Legitimacy: Essays on Rights and Obligations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

A. John Simmons, *Moral Principles and Political Obligations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979).

Joseph Raz, *Ethics in the Public Domain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

Joseph Raz, *The Morality of Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986).

George Klosko, *The Principle of Fairness and Political Obligation*, (Savage, Md: Rowman and Littlefield, 2d ed. 2004).

F. G. Miller and A. Wertheimer (eds), *The Ethics of Consent* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Frances Kamm, *Intricate Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

Brian Feltham and John Cottingham (eds.), *Partiality and Impartiality: Morality, Special Relationships and the Wider World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

G. Dworkin, *The Theory and Practice of Autonomy* (New York, Cambridge University Press, 1988).

John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*. Revised Edition (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

John Rawls Political Liberalism (New York: Columbia University Press, 1996, 2d ed. 2005).
Robert Nozick, Anarchy, State, and Utopia (New York: Basic Books, 1974).
Ronald Dworkin, Sovereign Virtue: The Theory and Practice of Equality (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2002).
Gerald Gaus 2011, The Order of Public Reason, New York: Cambridge University Press.
Jonathan Quong, Liberalism without Perfection, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
David Estlund, Democratic Authority (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008).
Thomas Christiano, The Constitution of Democracy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).
Fabienne Peter, Democratic Legitimacy (New York: Routledge, 2008).

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

TBC

Transferable skills

TBC

Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (3%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (3%)
Private study	282 hours (94%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group A3

	Weighting	Study time
7500 word essay	100%	

Feedback on assessment

Feedback on essays will be provided on the coversheet for the essay, addressing standard areas of evaluation and individual content.

Availability

Courses

This module is Option list A for:

- TPHA-V7PN Postgraduate Taught Philosophy and the Arts
 - Year 1 of V7PN Philosophy and the Arts
 - Year 2 of V7PN Philosophy and the Arts