

# *Syllabus: Social & Political Philosophy*

PHIL 303, Spring 2003  
TR 10:00-11:45  
Office Hours: MW 1:00-3:00; and by appointment

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In this class, we will study the works of four major thinkers in the history of social and political philosophy. Rather than surveying the immense body of literature developed over the past three thousand years, this approach will give us an array of insights that we can apply to contemporary politics, society, and culture. Some topics will be: justifications of the state, the role of reason in considerations of political authority, the ideal society, anarchism and political critique, and social contract theory.

## **TEXTS**

- Michel Foucault, *Madness & Civilization*. New York: Vintage.
- Plato, *Republic*. Indianapolis: Hackett.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract & Discourses*. New York: Everyman.
- Emma Goldman, *Red Emma Speaks*. Amherst, NY: Humanity.

## **READING CALENDAR**

### **Week One: January 28 & 30**

- Introduction

### **Week Two: February 4 & 6**

- Plato, *Republic*

### **Week Three: February 11 & 13**

- Plato, *Republic*

### **Week Four: February 18 & 20**

- Plato, *Republic*

### **Week Five: February 25 & 27**

- Plato, *Republic*

### **Week Six: March 4 & 6**

- Goldman, *Red Emma Speaks*

### **Week Seven: March 11 & 13**

- Goldman, *Red Emma Speaks*

### **Week Eight: March 18 & 20**

- **Spring Recess: No Class**

### **Week Nine: March 25 & 27**

- Goldman, *Red Emma Speaks*

### **Week Ten: April 1 & 3**

- Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

### **Week Eleven: April 8 & 10**

- Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

### **Week Twelve: April 15 & 17**

- Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

### **Week Thirteen: April 22 & 24**

- Rousseau, *The Social Contract*

### **Week Fourteen: April 29 & May 1**

- Foucault, *Madness & Civilization*

### **Week Fifteen: May 6 & 8**

- Foucault, *Madness & Civilization*

### **Week Sixteen: May 13 & 15**

- Foucault, *Madness & Civilization*

## **ASSIGNMENTS**

- **Essays (2 at 25 points each).** Two (typed) essays of 2000 words will be due during the semester, on “Madness and the Republic” and “Anarchism and the Social Contract.”
- **Book Review (25 points).** Each student will read one additional text of their choosing (subject to the approval of the Instructor) on one of the figures or topics covered in class, and write a 3000-word essay on the book or topic.
- **Reading Study Guides (25 points).** Each student will complete 10 Reading Study Guides over the course of the semester, handed out in advance by the Instructor.
- **Attendance... is voluntary.** In the event that you miss class but do not wish it to count against you, you may provide a 500-word summary of the reading material for that day, due the following class without exception. If you miss class and do not write a summary, your final grade may be lowered ½ grade each time.

## ***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION***

- ***Participation... is essential to a fun, invigorating, and intellectually challenging class.*** Furthermore, in-class participation will be evaluated at the end of the quarter by the Instructor and used to determine borderline grades.
- ***Reading assignments... will be presented one or two classes in advance.*** Generally, we will work our way through as much of each text as we are able in the time available, and thus with little or no difficulty you will be able to remain a chapter or so ahead of the class. It is recommended that you both take reading notes of your own and also review the material that will be discussed on any given day just prior to and after class for fullest comprehension.
- Gender-neutral writing in philosophy is the accepted practice recommended by the American Philosophical Association. The words “man” and “mankind” do not refer to humanity; phrases such as “everyone has a right to his own property” contain a faulty pronoun reference (substitute ‘abortion’ for ‘property’ to see why). Appropriate language use includes, for example: “humanity”, “humankind”, “her/his”, “his or her”, etc. When quoting writers who utilize non-inclusive language, leave their words in the original. Gender specific language is, of course, appropriate when referring to a gender class such as “men” or “women.” Contact the instructor if you have additional questions. I strongly encourage you to read *Guidelines for Non-Sexist Use of Language* by Virginia L. Warren, originally published in the *Proceedings and Addresses of the American Philosophical Association* in February 1986 (Vol. 59, Number 3, pp. 471-482; it can be found at the APA web site <<http://www.apa.udel.edu/apa/publications/texts/nonsexist.html>>.
- From the *Catalog*: “The University expects students to be honest in their academic work. Academic dishonesty is viewed as an ethical issue and a violation of the principles of justice and personal responsibility inherent in the University’s ideals as expressed in its Statement of Mission and Goals. In particular, students must refrain from plagiarism [the misuse of published or unpublished works of another by claiming them as one’s own], cheating and collusion in connection with examinations and must acknowledge fully all sources and all assistance received in work submitted to the faculty for evaluation. In the event of academic dishonesty in class assignments or examinations, the instructor will normally assign an “F” with no possibility of making up the grade by means of additional work. In serious cases the instructor will normally assign an “F” for the course and will notify the Academic Honesty Committee. Specific information on the policy and procedures regarding Academic Honesty are available in the Offices of the Deans and Vice President for Academic Affairs and in the Policies section of this catalog.”
- I encourage all students concerned about their writing ability to contact the Writing Center in Cowell Hall, Room 227 (422-6713). Additional inquiries and training regarding study habits may be directed to the Learning Center (422-6715).
- Students with demonstrated disabilities are encouraged to speak with me as soon as possible in order to identify any ways in which your disability may be accommodated, and to contact Disability Related Services, University Center, Room 310 (422-2613).
- Students experiencing any kinds of personal and/or academic difficulties are encouraged to utilize the free services of the Counseling Center, located on the ground floor of Gillson Hall (422-6352), which can assist you with interpersonal relationship problems, family difficulties, depression, stress, sexual concerns, substance abuse, time management, self-esteem, eating problems, anxiety, and acquaintance rape. Individual, couples, and group counseling are available, as well as referrals for longer-term counseling or a more specialized approach.
- After Census Day (February 14), students who withdraw from class will receive a “W” on their transcript. If you expect to withdraw from the class, I encourage you to decide prior to that date. February 14 is also the last day to change to or from the Pass/Fail option. The final date for all withdrawals is April 11.
- ***Learning Outcomes:*** By the end of the semester you will be able to: *Read, interpret and explain* some major figures in classical and contemporary political philosophy; *identify* currents of political thought including anarchism, theories of democracy, and the notion of an ideal state; *explain* the relevance of theories of political organization to current events.