

PPE Spring Courses 2010

008 (PHIL008) The Social Contract *Society Sector* (Tan)

LEC: TR 12-1 PM

REC: F 10-11 AM

F 11-12 NOON

This course examines the history and significance of social contract doctrine for modern social and political thought. In particular, the works of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, J.J. Rousseau, and John Rawls will be studied. We also study the utilitarian critique of social contract doctrine and the utilitarian views of David Hume, Adam Smith, J.S. Mill, and Karl Marx's criticism of liberal-democratic justice. This course is an introduction to many of the major figures in modern political philosophy.

036 (ECON 36) Law and Economics *Formal Reasoning* (Shachmurove)

Prerequisite(s): ECON 001 and 002. Credit cannot be received for both ECON 036 and 234.

LEC: MWF 11-12 NOON

The relationship of economic principles to law and the use of economic analysis to study legal problems. Topics will include: property rights and intellectual property; analysis of antitrust and economic analysis of legal decision making.

110 Introduction to Decision Theory *Formal Reasoning Course, Formal Reasoning & Analysis* (Sen) This is an LPS course.

LEC: T 6-9 PM

The course will provide an introduction to models of human decision making. One of the primary purposes of the course is to provide a set of basic tools that will help the student translate qualitative uncertainty into numbers. A substantial amount of the course will deal with the theory of rational choice in the presence of objective and subjective uncertainty. Rational choice under uncertainty is by far the most used theory of decision making, and its applications are widespread in economics, finance, political science, law, managerial decision making, the economics of health care, and artificial intelligence. The course will use examples heavily from each of these fields (and also fun “paradoxes” such as the Monty Hall Puzzle) in providing an introduction to the basic foundations of decision making. We will also look at the shortcomings of the theory: both from intuitive and empirical perspectives. Two alternative theories – Prospect Theory and decision making using the Dempster-Shafer rule will be discussed which address some of these concerns. No mathematical prerequisites are necessary beyond high school algebra and arithmetic.

153 (PSYC 153) Judgments and Decisions *College Quantitative Analysis Req.* (Baron)

LEC: MWF 11-12 NOON

Judgments, decisions under certainty and uncertainty, problem solving, logic, rationality, and moral thinking.

203 (PSYC 165) (formerly PPE 160) Behavioral Economics and Psychology (Dana)

LEC: TR 3-4:30 PM

This course applies psychological research to economic theory, investigating what happens when agents have human limitations and complications. The effects of limited cognitive capacities, willpower, and self-interest will be considered. The only pre-requisite is having taken Econ 1.

204 (PHIL 228) (formerly PPE 228) Philosophy of Social Science (Weisberg)

Prerequisite(s): Econ 1 and Phil 8

LEC: TR 10:30-11:30 AM

REC: F 10-11AM

F 11-12 NOON

F 12-1 PM

This course is about the foundations of contemporary social science. It focuses on the nature of social systems, the similarities and differences between social and natural sciences, the construction, analysis, and confirmation of social theories, and the nature of social explanations. Specific topics may include structuralism and functional explanation, methodological individualism, qualitative vs. quantitative social theorizing, positivist and radical critiques of the social sciences, rational choice, game theory, evolutionary modeling, and agent-based modeling. In addition, the course will examine questions about objectivity in the social sciences. As part of this course, students will be expected to construct and analyze simple computational models of social phenomena.

232 (ECON 232) Political Economy (Azzimonti)

Prerequisite(s): ECON 101; MATH 104 and MATH 114 or MATH 115.
ECON 103 is recommended.

LEC: TR 9-10:30 AM

This course examines the political and economic determinants of government policies. The course presents economic arguments for government action in the private economy. How government decides policies via simple majority voting, representative legislatures, and executive veto and agenda-setting politics will be studied. Applications include government spending and redistributive policies.

271 (PHIL 271) Global Justice (Tan)

SEM: TR 1:30-3 PM

This course is an introduction to some of the central problems in global justice. Some of the topics that we will examine include realism, human rights, sovereignty and intervention economic justice, and war and morality. We will look at questions such as: Is it coherent to talk about global justice, or is the global arena essentially a Hobbesian state of nature? In what sense are human rights universal? Is the idea of universal rights compatible with the political sovereignty of states? What is the basis of this duty? What is a just war? What is terrorism, and what are the moral limits in combating terrorism? Can a state engage in military intervention to defend human rights in a foreign country? Readings will be drawn from contemporary authors such as Rawls, Walzer, and Sen, as well as historical figures like Kant and Hobbes. This course examines some of the common problems in global justice. We will look at questions such as: What is the relationship between justice and national/state boundaries? Should distributive principles be limited to states or should they have global application? What is a just war? What is the difference between war and terrorism? Do states have the right (or even duty) to intervene in another state to protect basic human rights? What are human rights? Are they universal, or should they be limited by cultural considerations?

299 Independent Study *Permission needed from Department.*

Student arranges with a faculty member to pursue a program of reading and writing on a suitable topic.

301 Directed Honors Research *Permission needed from Department. Open only to senior majors in PPE.*

Student arranges with a faculty member to do an honors thesis on a suitable topic.

475 Equality and Distributive Justice (Perry)

SEM: TR 1:30-3 PM

Our central concern in this course will be with the concept of equality as it figures in modern theories of distributive justice. We will also be considering the question of whether or not there is, as has sometimes been claimed, an unavoidable tension between the ideals of equality and liberty. We will begin with an overview of John Rawls' landmark theory of justice. We will then consider the various normative and conceptual forms that egalitarianism can assume, taking as our point of departure work by Derek Parfit, Amartya Sen, and Ronald Dworkin. Next we will read an excerpt from Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia*, which sets out the libertarian challenge to equality: Egalitarian and other patterned theories of distributive justice are, according to Nozick, incompatible with individual liberty. We will examine the so-called "luck-egalitarian" response to Nozick, focusing in particular on work by Dworkin and G.A. Cohen, and we will also consider critiques of luck-egalitarianism that have been advanced by Elizabeth Anderson and Samuel Scheffler. Finally, we will read excerpts from Cohen's book *Self-*

Ownership, Freedom and Equality, in which Cohen offers an internal critique of Nozick's libertarian challenge.

475 War and Morality (Meyer)

SEM: W 2-5 PM

This course examines some central moral issues associated with war in the 21st century. We will begin by considering the conditions, if any, which morally justify a nation in going to war in the first place (*jus ad bellum*). The arguments for and against pacifism, “realism” and just war theory will be explored.

We will then spend the rest of the semester considering the morality of the MEANS by which wars are fought (*jus in bello*). We will be interested, in particular, in the morality of means which cause the death of **noncombatants**. Our goal will be to specify under what conditions, if any, the killing of noncombatants in war is morally permissible? This will take us through discussions of the doctrine of double effect, intended vs. foreseen killing, terrorism and the relationship of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*.

Discussions of specific historical examples such as the Allied firebombing of German and Japanese cities in WW II, the Israeli-Hezbollah and Israeli-Hamas wars, the US wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the attack of the World Trade Center will be used for illustrative purposes.

475 Game Theory and Philosophy (Sillari)

SEM: R 3-6 PM

Game theory is a discipline of great importance. Besides its many applications in economics, it is widely and successfully used in a large variety of scientific fields. In political science, in biology, in the law and even in sports, game-theoretic analysis has a profound impact and significance. Game theory has also many natural applications in philosophy. Why does game theory matter for philosophy? We shall look at the central concepts in the theory of games and at a wide range of philosophical topics. While learning the basic notions of game theory, we shall use them to illuminate several philosophical questions and problems. Discussion in this seminar will include topics as the following: social norms and conventions, historical and contemporary accounts of the social contract, the evolution of justice and morality, as well as topics in philosophy of language and epistemology. The approach will emphasize various game-theoretic elements, depending on the philosophical topic under considerations. Equilibrium analysis, incomplete information, experimental and evolutionary analysis will be among the tools used for discussing the answer to questions as: why do we abide by social norms and conventions in our everyday life? What is needed to enforce a social contract? Why did justice and morality evolve?

475 Reasoning and Decision Making as Social Activities (Mercier)

SEM: R 1:30-4:30 PM

We can't deny that the social context has an influence on our behavior. The seminar will explore the idea that it has a larger impact that we usually care to admit. More specifically, we will see that abilities that are generally thought of as being very personal, such as reasoning and decision making, are in fact heavily influenced by the social context. To that end, this seminar will review some research in the fields of reasoning and decision making, as well as social psychology. This seminar should give students a broad understanding of the function of our reasoning and decision making abilities, of their strengths and weaknesses, and of their social nature.

475 Continental Political Philosophy (Maffettone) *Please note that this course does not run the whole semester and therefore has concentrated meeting times for its duration.*

DATES: 01/13/10 - 03/31/10

SEM: T 3-6PM AND R 3-4:30 PM

The opposition between analytical and continental philosophy can be considered together spurious and useful. It's spurious for several reasons, including the one that "continental" is a geographical term and "analytical" refers to a style of thinking. It's useful because in the English speaking world analytical philosophy is the rule and continental philosophy the exception, whereas often the opposite is true in continental Europe. The same can be said for what concerns "continental political philosophy". Within continental political philosophy, Nietzsche, Marx and Freud are –as we shall see- more popular than Rawls and John Stuart Mill, and of course vice-versa can be said for analytical political philosophy. This course aims to give a panorama of contemporary continental political philosophy, emphasizing some connections with analytical political philosophy. Some historical background is anyway given, and some authors (in particular Habermas) and ideas are discussed more than others.

476 (PSCI 418) Evolution, Politics and Computer Simulation (Lustick)

SEM: R 1:30-4:30 PM

In this course we shall explore how recent developments in evolutionary theory relate to larger questions raised by students of complexity and complex adaptive systems. We shall study how they together provide a basis for important critiques of standard approaches in political science and enable fascinating and powerful understandings of politics and political phenomena-- including national identity and identity change, state formation, revolution, globalization, and leadership. An important vehicle for the application of these insights for understanding politics is computer simulations featuring agent-based modeling. Students will use "PS-I," an agent based computer simulation platform, to develop their own models, conduct experiments, test hypotheses, or produce existence proofs in relation to popular theoretical positions in contemporary political science. No knowledge of computer programming is required.