

The University of Toronto
PHL 365 – Topics in Political Philosophy
“The Political Philosophy of Immigration”
Winter 2026
Syllabus

Immigration is one of the most urgent and polarizing issues in contemporary politics around the world. And yet it is also an issue that received little attention in the history of political philosophy – despite the fact that it raises foundational questions about the nature of states. In this class, we will read authors including Michael Walzer, Joseph Carens, David Miller, Arash Abizadeh, Ryan Pevnick, and Sarah Song to examine some of the following questions: Is there a right to immigrate? How much discretion do states have to control immigration and to select criteria for admission? Who should count as a refugee, and what obligations do states have to admit them? What rights do legal and illegal immigrants have? And what responsibilities do new immigrants have to integrate into their new societies?

INSTRUCTOR:	Andrew Franklin-Hall
CONTACT:	andrew.franklin.hall@utoronto.ca
LECTURES:	Wednesdays 9:10-12:00 SU 444
OFFICE HOURS:	Thursdays 2:30-3:30 Jackman Humanities Building 428

Email

The best way to communicate with me outside of class is via email. If I do not answer your email within 48 hours, feel free to send me a reminder.

Learning Objectives

- Understand some of the major issues and approaches in the political philosophy of immigration.
- Develop skills in analyzing, criticizing, and constructing philosophical arguments.
- Hone advanced academic writing skills.

Texts

Links to electronic versions of most texts will be available on the Quercus page. However, Joseph Carens, *The Ethics of Immigration* (Oxford 2013) is not available electronically and is available for purchase in the UofT bookstore.

If you prefer physical books and would like to order your own copies, we will be reading multiple chapters of the following:

- David Miller, *Strangers in Our Midst* (Harvard 2016) – 5 chapters
- Ryan Pevnick, *Immigration and the Constraints of Justice* (Cambridge 2012) – 2 chapters
- Sarah Song, *Immigration and Democracy* (Oxford, 2018) – 2 chapters

Assessment

ASSIGNMENT	DESCRIPTION	DUE DATE	% OF FINAL MARK
Quiz 1	Short Answer	January 28	15%
Quiz 2	Short Answer	February 25	15%
Paper	1500-1800 words	Sunday, Mar. 8	30%
Oral Examination of Paper	15 min. interview about paper	Mar. 16-20	
Written Final Exam	Short answer & essay	TBA (Exam Period)	25%
Class Participation	Attendance and Participation	--	15%

Quizzes and Final Exam

There will be two short in-class quizzes during the semester and one in-person final exam during the examination period.

The quizzes will be composed of short-answer questions. The final exam will likely feature short-answer questions and short essays. (You will be notified of any changes to format in advance.)

If you miss a quiz due to illness or some other valid reason, the quiz may be made up.

All material on the exams will be covered in class discussion. This does not mean that you don't need to do the readings to do well, but the topics covered on the exams will not surprise you if you have been paying attention in class.

Paper

Your paper will be a response to one of several assigned essay topics. These topics will be distributed at least one month prior to the due date along with some guidelines on writing the paper.

Late papers will be penalized by 2% per day late. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances: illness, personal emergency, accessibility reasons, etc.

You will submit your paper electronically to Quercus.

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (<https://uoft.me/pdt-faq>).

Oral Examination of Paper

The week of March 16-20, you will schedule a 15-minute interview with me in which I will ask you questions about your paper. The purpose of this interview is to help clarify anything I found unclear in reading the paper, see how deep your understanding of the course material is, and (of course) confirm that you are actually the author of the paper.

The grading of the paper and the oral examination is combined with the total package worth 30% of your final mark.

Class Attendance and Participation

Participation will be graded on the basis of attentiveness and regular, thoughtful discussion that demonstrates engagement with the assigned texts. (There is such a thing as too much participation: try to avoid dominating discussions.) Routine, informed participation will generally earn around 12 or 13 points—14 and 15 points are reserved for exceptional contributions to class over the semester.

More than one unexcused absence will reduce your tutorial grade by one point per additional absence. **More than five unexcused absences will result in a failing grade for the class.**

Sample Participation Grades	
Unless otherwise noted, assume that these students had excellent attendance (no more than one unexcused absence).	
One of the two most engaged students in class. Clearly demonstrates familiarity with the week's readings. Makes thoughtful comments. Good at listening to his classmates. Respectful toward those he disagrees with.	15
Very active participant in class discussions. Less engaged than a couple of classmates, but still among the five most active in her class.	14
Highly engaged most of the semester, but quiet for a couple of classes.	13
Moderately engaged for most of the semester, but occasionally has more to say. Has clearly done the readings.	13
On average, says maybe one thing per class – seldom more. Demonstrates some knowledge of the week's readings.	12
Highly engaged but can dominate discussions and go off-topic.	12
Perfect attendance. Only speaks during small-group discussions (never in front of the whole class).	11
Rather engaged in class discussions but does not generally seem familiar with the week's readings.	11
Attentive but silent.	10
Invariably present but basically checked out. Seems more interested in phone than class discussion.	9
Moderately engaged in about five classes, but misses seven of them.	6
Never says a word. Misses seven classes.	3
Never shows up.	0

(No) Extra Credit and (No) Rebalancing of grades

No extra credit is available. I will also not be rebalancing grades in case you missed an assignment or did poorly on one.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Unless otherwise instructed, you are advised not to do outside research for the papers. That said, any text taken verbatim from other sources must be quoted and cited. Similarly, paraphrases and the borrowing of ideas from other sources should also be cited. Plagiarism will be dealt with severely and may result in both failing the course and having the incident permanently recorded on your academic transcript. You may talk with other students about your papers, but you must do the actual writing yourself. You are encouraged to have friends or writing tutors read over your work to proofread and give you feedback.

For information on the University's policy concerning academic integrity and advice about how to avoid committing plagiarism, go to:

<https://www.academicintegrity.utoronto.ca/perils-and-pitfalls/>

The submission of assignments using text or ideas generated by AI is considered the use of an unauthorized aid and a breach of academic integrity. Their use in this course will not be tolerated.

Accessibility

Students who need special accommodation for disabilities or their particular learning style should contact the instructor by email as soon as possible. Students with disabilities are also strongly encouraged to avail themselves of the services provided by the campus the Accessibility Service Office, including the provision of note-takers, transcribers, and sign-language interpreters. For more information, visit the Accessibility Services website at:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>

PROVISTIONAL COURSE SCHEDULE

Updates will be posted on Quercus.

1	Jan. 7	Walzer, "Membership"
PART I: THE RIGHT TO EXCLUDE		
2	Jan. 14	Carens, Ethics.of.Immigration, ch. 11; Abizadeh, "Democratic Theory and Border Coercion"
3	Jan. 21	Wellman, "Immigration and the Freedom of Association" Miller, Strangers.in.Our.Midst, chs. 2-3
4	Jan. 28	Quiz 1 Miller, National.Responsibility.and.Global.Justice, ch. 8 Miller, Strangers.in.Our.Midst?ch. 4
5	Jan. 30	Carens, The.Ethics.of.Immigration, ch. 12
6	Feb. 4	Pevnick, Immigration.and.the.Constraints.of.Justice?ch. 2 Song, Immigration.and.Democracy, ch. 4
PART II: TOPICS IN IMMIGRATION POLICY		
7	Feb. 11	<u>Refugees</u> Shacknove, "Who is a Refugee?" Miller, Strangers.in.Our.Midst, ch. 5
8	Feb. 25	Quiz 2 <u>Ordinary Admissions I</u> Borjas, "We Wanted Workers: Unraveling the Immigration Narrative" [Video] Carens, The.Ethics.of.Immigration, ch. 6
9	Mar. 4	<u>Ordinary Admissions II</u> Miller, Strangers.in.Our.Midst, ch. 6 Ferracioli, "Family Migration Schemes and Liberal Neutrality"
--	Su. – Mar. 8	Paper Due
10	Mar. 11	<u>Integration and the Rights of Non-Citizens I</u>

		Carens, The.Ethics.of.Immigration, chs. 4, 7, 8
--	Mar. 16-20	Oral Examination of Paper
11	Mar. 18	<u>Integration and the Rights of Non-Citizens II</u> Pevnick, Immigration.and.the.Constraints.of.Justice, ch. 7 Song, Immigration.and.Democracy, ch. 10
12	Mar. 25	<u>Integration and the Rights of Non-Citizens II</u> Miller, On.Nationality, ch. 5 Miller, Strangers.in.Our.Midst, ch. 8
--	TBA (Exam Period)	Final Exam