

The University of Toronto
PHL 2222 – MA Proseminar:
The Political Philosophy of the Family
Fall 2024
Syllabus

In the wake of women's equality, the sexual revolution, the liberalization of divorce law, the recognition of same-sex marriage, and the expansion of state authority over education and children's welfare, the family has changed dramatically over the last 150 years. Nevertheless, it remains the social institution with the primary responsibility for the care of children, while marital relationships (or something very like them) still structure many people's personal lives. In this course, we will examine the moral and legal status of the family, with particular focus on distributive justice, parental rights, and marriage (or whatever might replace it). Readings will include texts by Elizabeth Brake, Harry Brighouse and Adam Swift, Clare Chambers, Matthew Clayton, Anca Gheaus, Joseph Millum, Susan Moller Okin, and John Rawls.

INSTRUCTOR:	Andrew Franklin-Hall
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CONTACT:	andrew.franklin.hall@utoronto.ca
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LECTURES:	Wed. 9:10-12:00
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JHB 418

OFFICE HOURS:	JHB 428 - Thursdays 11:00-12:00 or by appointment
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A. General Information

Email Communication

I will communicate with you using Quercus. It is your responsibility to check your messages regularly.

You may contact me via Quercus or email.

I will try to respond to your emails promptly. If you do not receive a response within 48 hours, send me a reminder email!

Readings

Links to all the reading are available on the Quercus site associated with our course. If you have difficulty accessing a reading, please contact me.

You should do all readings prior to class.

Seminar Structure

The purpose of this course is to give you an opportunity to discuss in depth the assigned readings and the issues they raise. The class, therefore, will be discussion-based and will feature minimal formal lecturing.

This means that you are expected to have done the reading prior to class and to be prepared to actively participate in class discussion.

To structure our conversation and help you anticipate the issues that I think most important, I will be distributing a list of discussion questions for each class a week in advance. You should feel free, of course, to raise other issues as well.

B. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ASSIGNMENT	% OF FINAL MARK	DATE
Seminar Participation	10%	Weekly
Weekly Discussion Board Post	10%	9PM day before class
Short Paper <i>2000-2500 words</i>	30%	Oct. 27
Long Paper <i>4000-6000 words</i>	50%	Dec. 16

Participation

To earn an A- (80%) for participation, you should generally have at least one thing to say in every class session. (This is just a rule of thumb. If you regularly participate but just don't feel like speaking during one class, this will not negatively impact your grade.) To earn an A (or A+) for this portion of the grade, you should participate more than that.

If you find that you are having difficulty speaking in class, despite being prepared, please speak with me as soon as possible so that we can find a solution. Do not wait until the end of term.

Absence Policy

As this is a discussion-based course, you are not really *doing* the course if you are frequently absent, even if you complete the written assignments. More than one unexcused absence may negatively affect the participation component of your grade.

If you are having health/mental-health problems or significant personal issues that are making it difficult for you to come to class, please speak with me as soon as possible. Do not wait until the end of the semester to explain why you have missed half of the classes.

Weekly Discussion Board Posts

Ten weekly responses of 300 words to discussion questions posted by 9PM the night before class.

By 9 PM the night before class, you should post a response (of not less than 300 words) to one of the discussion questions that I have made available. (If you find that you don't have enough to say about one question, you may also respond to a second).

You should post **ten** times over the semester (no more than once per week). Since there are twelve classes, this means that you can miss two without penalty. You may not earn extra credit for completing more than ten.

You will receive 85% for your post, as long as it seems like a good-faith effort to respond to the question. Higher marks will occasionally be given to exceptionally good posts (which does not mean exceptionally long!). Lower marks will be given to posts that are below par.

Papers

You will write two papers:

- *Short paper* (2000-2500 words; worth 30%).
- *Long paper* (4000-6000 words; worth 50%).

You will submit your papers electronically to the Assignment Function on the Quercus Page.

The *short paper* should be written in response to prompts that I will provide you and should generally focus solely on the assigned readings.

The *long paper* should address a topic of your own choosing related to the class. The topic should be cleared with me by **Nov. 8**. If you are writing a long paper, you may want to do some additional research, and I can help direct you to some additional literature.

Late Assignments and Extensions

No extensions will be provided for discussion board posts. Late posts will be accepted for half-credit up to 24 hours after the deadline.

Late papers, without an extension, will be penalized by 2% per day.

C. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

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.

Using ChatGPT or other generative AI tools in the composition of an assignment, or part of an assignment, is considered the use of an unauthorized aid and is forbidden. This includes turning in an edited version of something generated by ChatGPT (e.g., rephrasing a generated document into your own words.)

Plagiarism and other breaches of academic integrity will be dealt with severely and may result in both failing the course and having the incident 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/>

Plagiarism Detection Tool

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://teaching.utoronto.ca/>).

If you do not wish for your essay to be submitted to the plagiarism detection tool, then you must notify the instructor and you will be provided with an alternate way of submitting your work.

Accessibility

Students who need special accommodation for disabilities or their particular learning style should contact me 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/>

D. SCHEDULE

SYLLABUS		
		RAWLS ON THE FAMILY
1	9/11	- Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> , selections
2	9/18	- Okin, <i>Justice, Gender, and the Family</i> , selections - Muñoz-Dardé, “Rawls, Justice in the Family and Justice of the Family”
3	9/25	- Rawls, “The Idea of Public Reason Revisited”
		THE FAMILY AND DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE
4	10/2	- Brighouse and Swift, “Legitimate Parental Partiality” - Engster, “Equal Opportunity and the Family: Levelling Up the Brighouse-Swift Thesis”
5	10/9	- Casal and Williams, “Rights, Equality, and Procreation” - Olsaretti, “Are Children a Public Good?”
		PARENTAL RIGHTS
6	10/16	- Brighouse and Swift, “Parents Rights and the Value of the Family” - Moschella, “Natural Law, Parental Rights, and Education Policy”
7	10/23	- Clayton, “Parents and Public Reason” - Franklin-Hall, “What Parents May Teach Their Children”
8	11/6	- Gheaus, “The Best Available Parent” - Altman, “Why Parents’ Interests Matter
9	11/13	- Brake, “Fatherhood and Child Support” - Millum, “How Do We Acquire Parental Rights?” - Millum, “How Do We Acquire Parental Responsibilities?”
		THE POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF MARRIAGE
10	11/20	- George and Bradley, “Marriage and the Liberal Imagination” - Wedgwood, “The Fundamental Case for Same-Sex Marriage” - Card, “Against Marriage and Motherhood”
11	11/27	- Brake, <i>Minimizing Marriage</i> , chs. 6-7
12	12/4	- Chambers, <i>Against Marriage</i> , chs. 4-6