

The University of Toronto
PHL 412 – Seminar in Political Philosophy:
The Political Philosophy of Education
Fall 2023
Syllabus

Schools play an important role in shaping the values and identities of students and in affecting their opportunities in life. It should come as no surprise, then, that they are often on the frontlines of political controversy. In this course, we will explore the intersection of political philosophy and education. Through readings of contemporary philosophers like Amy Gutmann, William Galston, Eamonn Callan, Harry Brighouse, and Meira Levinson, we will examine such issues as the proper aims of education, the extent to which public schools ought to be engaged in character formation, the teaching of controversial subjects (like sex, gender, and race), the just distribution of education, and the relationship between democracy and education.

INSTRUCTOR:	Andrew Franklin-Hall
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CONTACT:	andrew.franklin.hall@utoronto.ca
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LECTURES:	Wednesdays 9:10-12:00
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In-Person Classes: 614 Health Sciences Building – 155 College Street

OFFICE HOURS:	Thursday 11:00-1:00 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.

Email is the best way to contact the instructor or teaching assistants outside of class-time.

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

As a 400-level seminar, 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.

Learning Objectives

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

B. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

ASSIGNMENT	% OF FINAL MARK	DATE
Seminar Participation	15%	Weekly
Weekly Discussion Board Post	20%	10PM day before class
Short Paper 1	15%	Oct. 8
Short Paper 2 & Short Paper 3 <i>or</i> Long Paper	25% and 25% <i>or</i> 50%	Nov. 5 and Dec. 6 <i>or</i> Dec. 6

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 will negatively affect your final grade by 2% for each missed class. After four unexcused absences, your final grade will be penalized by one letter (e.g., if you would have otherwise earned a B, your final grade will be a C). After that, each additional absence will lower your grade by another step (e.g., C to C-)

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 10PM the night before class.

By 10 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

Everyone will write *one short paper* (no less than 1500 words; worth 15%) due Oct. 8.

After that, you have **a choice** between writing:

- *two additional short papers* (no less than 2000 words each; worth 15% and 20%), due **Nov. 5** and **Dec. 6**, or
- *one long paper* (no less than 4000 words; worth 35%).

There is no strict upper limit on the length of the papers, but concision is usually a virtue.

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

Short papers should be written in response to prompts that I will provide you and should generally focus solely on the assigned readings.

Long papers may take inspiration from the provided prompts but may also address a topic of your own choosing. The topic should be cleared with me no later than **Nov. 12**. 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 will be penalized by 2% per day late. The maximum late penalty is 20%.

- Extensions for Short Paper 1 will be provided only in exceptional circumstances.
- If you are writing Short Paper 2, you may request a one-week extension (this permits you to complete the assignment over the Reading Week). Longer extensions will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.
- You may request a one-week extension for Short Paper 3 or the Long Paper. Longer extensions will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

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 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/>

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

1	W - Sept. 13	<u>Parents, Schools, and the State</u> - Feinberg, "The Child's Right to an Open Future" - Gutmann, <i>Democratic Education</i>, Chapter 1
2	W - Sept. 20	<u>Democracy and Education</u> Gutmann, <i>Democratic Education</i>, Chapters 2-3
-	R - Sept. 21	<i>First day to select Credit/No Credit (CR/NCR) option</i>
3	W - Sept. 27	<u>Democratic Authority and the Distribution of Education</u> Gutmann, <i>Democratic Education</i>, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 (pp. 127-139, 148-171)
4	W - Oct. 4	<u>Civic Education and Cultural Diversity</u> - Macedo, "Liberal Civic Education and Religious Fundamentalism" - Galston, "Two Concepts of Liberalism," and <i>Liberal Purposes</i>, pp. 242-251
-	S - Oct. 8	***Short Paper 1 Due***
5	W - Oct. 11	<u>Teaching Pluralism and Patriotism</u> Callan, <i>Creating Citizens</i>, Chapters 2 and 5
6	W - Oct. 18	<u>Education for Autonomy</u> Brighouse, <i>School Choice and Social Justice</i>, chs. 4 & 5
7	W - Oct. 25	<u>Education and Equality</u> Brighouse, <i>School Choice and Social Justice</i>, chs. 6 & 7
8	W - Nov. 1	<u>Equality or Adequacy</u> - Satz, "Equality, Adequacy, and Education for Citizenship" - Reich, "Equality, Adequacy, and K-12 Education"
-	S - Nov. 5	***Short Paper 2 Due*** (n/a for those writing the Long Paper)
-	M - Nov. 6	<i>Last Day to Drop Course</i>
-	W - Nov. 8	<i>Reading Week</i>
-	S - Nov. 12	***Submit Paper Topics*** (for those writing the Long Paper only)

9	W - Nov. 15	<u>Teaching Controversial Issues</u> - Reid, Johnson, and Levinson, "Politics, Partisanship, and Pedagogy" (choose 3 of 6 commentaries to read) - Hand, "What Should We Teach as Controversial?" - Nocera, "Teaching Controversy in Moral Education"
10	W - Nov. 22	<u>Sex and Gender Education</u> - Easton, "LGBT-Inclusive Education in Liberal Pluralistic Societies" - Bialystok, "My Child, My Choice? Mandatory Curriculum, Sex, and the Conscience of Parents"
11	W - Nov. 29	<u>Teaching History</u> - Fullinwider, "Patriotic History" - Espinolda, "Why Historical Injustice Must be Taught in Schools" - Tamir, "Teachers in the Social Trenches"
12	W - Dec. 6	<u>Education and Civic Empowerment</u> Levinson, <i>No Citizen Left Behind</i>, Chapters 2-3
-	W - Dec. 6	***Short Paper 3 or Long Paper Due***
-	R - Dec. 7	<i>Last Day to Add or Remove a CR/NCR option</i>
-	R - Dec. 7	<i>Deadline to request Late Withdrawal (LWD)</i>