

POLI 110K: Liberty and Equality

Fall 2014

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1 Course Description

What is liberty? What is equality? How are these values manifest in our world? Why are they important? How are they related, if at all? These and related questions will focus our investigation in this course. To facilitate our inquiry, we will read some of the best contemporary political theory on these topics.

The main pedagogical objective of this course is to help you develop a set of skills that will enable you to formulate your own thoughts on these issues clearly and rigorously. These skills include: (1) The ability to summarize and synthesize what you read; (2) The ability to critically evaluate arguments; (3) The ability to communicate clearly and to construct compelling arguments; (4) The ability to collaborate with others to pursue mutual understanding. To this end, class sessions and assignments will focus primarily on analyzing and constructing arguments.

2 Course Texts

1. Anderson, Elizabeth, *The Imperative of Integration* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010)
2. Nozick, Robert, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (New York: Basic Books, 1974/2013)
3. Pettit, Philip, *Republicanism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997)
4. Rawls, John, *A Theory of Justice*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999)
5. Satz, Debra, *Why Some Things Should Not Be For Sale* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010)

3 Assignments

1. **The levels.** — A series of short papers. The first level is *reconstruction* (200–400 words); the second level is *reconstruction and synthesis* (400-600 words); the third level is *reconstruction, synthesis, and critique* (600–1000 words). (Check the course materials webpage for numerous examples of argument reconstructions.) A grading rubric is available at <http://www.dwiens.com/2014/08/21/the-levels/>.

Your levels score is the sum of your high score on each level:

$$\text{Levels score} = [\text{L1 high score}] + [\text{L2 high score}] + [\text{L3 high score}].$$

The highest possible score is 60. You will submit two attempts at level 1 (Wed Oct 15, Wed Oct 29), two attempts at level 2 (Wed Nov 12, Wed Nov 26) and one attempt at level 3 (Wed Dec 10). Submit each levels attempt by email (send to john.porten@gmail.com) by 18:00 on the due date. Please submit levels attempts as a PDF and include a word count.

For more details, see <http://www.dwiens.com/2014/08/21/the-levels/>.

2. **Final paper.** — The final paper is a longer version of the third level (1200-1750 words). I will distribute topic suggestions, but you are free to write on a topic of your choice. This assignment has a collaboration option — *you are allowed to write the paper together with one other student in the class*. The final paper is due Thurs Dec 18 at 18:00. A grading rubric and further details are available at <http://www.dwiens.com/2014/08/21/final-paper/>.

4 Grades

Your final grade is a function of four variables: your investment score (explained below); your levels score; your elective score; and x (to be explained in a minute). Here are the mathematical details:

$$\text{Total score} = \left(\frac{25}{100}\right) \times \text{investment score} + \left(\frac{25+x}{100}\right) \times \text{levels score} + \left(\frac{25+y}{100}\right) \times \text{paper score},$$

where $y = 25 - x$. What is x ? Basically, the investment score, levels score, and final paper score will be worth at least 25% of your final grade. But that's only 75%. The remaining 25% is given to your levels score or final paper score, whichever is highest.

Your final grade is a score out of 60 points. Letter grades have a tangible interpretation in terms of the extent to which you've consistently satisfied expectations for the course. Your letter grade is determined according to the table on the next page. (Let T be your total score.)

Late assignments. An assignment is late if it is submitted after the scheduled time. You lose 5 points at the start of every 24 hour period, starting with the due time, until you submit the assignment. **Assignments will no longer be accepted once those submitted on time have been graded and returned.**

$T > 59$	A+	Fully met expectations in all phases of the course.
$59 \geq T > 54$	A	Fully met expectations in most phases of the course, mostly met expectations in the remaining phases.
$54 \geq T > 51$	A-	Fully met expectations in a few phases, mostly met expectations in all or most of the remaining phases.
$51 \geq T > 48$	B+	Fully met expectations in one phase and mostly or partly met expectations in the remaining phases; OR mostly met expectations in most phases but partly met expectations in the remaining phases.
$48 \geq T > 42$	B	Mostly met expectations in several phases, partly met expectations in the remaining phases.
$42 \geq T > 38$	B-	Mostly met expectations in one or two phases, partly met expectations in most phases.
$38 \geq T > 34$	C+	Partly met expectations in most phases, perhaps missed the point in one phase.
$34 \geq T > 28$	C	Partly met expectations in many phases, missed the point in one or two phases.
$28 \geq T > 24$	C-	Partly met expectations more often than not, but sometimes missed the point.
$24 \geq T > 16$	D	An even mix of partly meeting expectations and missing the point.
$16 \geq T > 12$	D-	Missed the point in most phases, perhaps partly met expectations in one or two phases.
$12 \geq T$	F	Missed the point throughout all phases (or didn't attempt the assignments).

5 Expectations

1. Personal Investment. Your success in this course depends on how much you invest in your own learning. Simply recording notes from lecture will not get you very far—there are no exams testing your ability to recall what was said during lecture. The only assignments are writing assignments that will exercise your ability to interpret and synthesize the assigned readings and develop your own critical analyses of these readings. Our meetings will not consist of lectures that exhaustively cover the details of the readings. Instead, our meetings will be “group training sessions”, where we will use individual and group exercises to develop our reading and writing skills. These will be opportunities for you to ask questions about the readings, to help you get clarity on passages that were confusing; this presupposes that you have read carefully enough to know which passages confused you. Our meetings will also be opportunities for you to try out your own ideas about the issues we'll discuss; this presupposes that you've done some thinking about the issues prior to arriving in class. The requirements are designed so that success in this course will require an average investment of 9–12 hours per week including class time (approx. 3–4 out-of-class hours for every in-class hour).

You will have opportunities to earn up to 60 points. Roughly, your investment score is determined as follows. Four opportunities will be in the form of writing workshops, worth 4 points each (Oct 23, Nov 6, Nov 20, Dec 4). You are expected to bring a draft of your next levels submission to these workshops. You will then discuss your draft with two other students. A grading rubric for workshop participation is available at <http://www.dwiens.com/2014/08/25/>

investment/.

Each non-workshop sessions starting October 21 presents an opportunity to earn 4 points. First, there will be a reading quiz posted on the board for the first five minutes of class (after which it will be erased). You can record you answer on a small note card and submit it for assessment. Correct answers are worth 2 points. Participation in class discussion is worth up to 3 points (although those who answer the reading quiz correctly can earn a maximum of 2 additional points during discussion). A grading rubric for discussion participation is available at <http://www.dwiens.com/2014/08/25/investment/>.

2. Technology I won't ban laptops, tablets, etc. in the classroom. However, except for the four writing workshops, use of technology is strongly discouraged—it typically creates distractions for other members of the class, which have negative effects on the classroom dynamic. If you take notes, I strongly encourage you to do so with old-fashioned pen and paper.

3. Respect for Others. Philosophy is a collaborative process and students learn philosophy best when they engage in that process. Such a participation-heavy environment requires that each of us gives others adequate space to participate, in addition to recognizing that we don't know everything. We must work to cultivate an environment in which people do not hesitate to ask “silly” questions, make mistakes, or disagree with others. We will disagree (sometimes vigorously) with each other and we will work through our disagreements in class. Respect doesn't require us to consider all *ideas* equally worthy of our attention. But respect does we require that each *member of the community* be considered equally worthy of our attention.

4. Out-of-Class Help. You are welcome to come to me for help with your assignments. However, there are some guidelines.

- (1) Please try to see me during office hours (I've scheduled these to be at times when I'm sure to be available). If these hours are not convenient, it is possible to set up an appointment at a mutually convenient time. To set up an appointment with me, an email providing 3 or 4 times that work for you. I will then select a time from those provided. (**Warning:** I'm generally not available to meet before 11:00.)
- (2) If you have a question or concern about the class, please search the syllabus or the course website for the answer. If there is no answer to be found, then approach me at the start or end of the next class session. If you need an answer right away, email may not be the best option. (If this is the case, you may have waited too long.)
- (3) I will not read drafts of submissions and tell you what I think needs improvement. If you would like help with a draft, you can tell me which aspects of the paper concern you and, together, we will figure out how to address your concerns.

5. Email. I am trying to minimize the amount of time I spend corresponding by email. Accordingly, I will only reply to emails requesting an appointment to meet with me. I will not answer emails concerning administrative matters, nor will I offer advice on assignments over email. If

you have administrative or assignment questions, you are welcome to meet with me outside class or to approach me at the start or end of a class session.

6. Grade Disputes. I am willing to re-examine assignment grades with you if you feel your work deserves a better grade. There are two steps to this process:

- (1) You must wait 24 hours after the assignment as been returned before you approach me.
- (2) You must approach me with a written justification for your complaint (a single paragraph is fine). In this, you must outline why you think your work deserves a better grade and where the discrepancy lies between your work and the assigned grade. **Warning:** If you challenge a grade, I reserve the right to reset the grade *as I see fit*. Opening a grade dispute means a re-examination of the assignment. Thus, your grade will not necessarily improve and may even go down.

7. Plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Accordingly, it will be treated seriously. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in any form. Any case of plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Integrity Office.

Plagiarism will be defined as follows:

Plagiarism is representing someone else's ideas, words, statements or other works as one's own without proper acknowledgment or citation. Examples of plagiarism include:

- Copying word for word or lifting phrases or a special term from a source or reference — whether oral, printed, or on the Internet — without proper attribution.
- Paraphrasing, that is, using another person's written words or ideas, albeit in one's own words, as if they were one's own thought.
- Borrowing facts, statistics, or other illustrative material without proper reference, unless the information is common knowledge, in common public use.

8. Accommodations. If you feel that you need an accommodation for any sort of disability or for religious reasons, please discuss this with me as early as possible (after class, in office hours, or by email).

6 Schedule

Subject to revision as appropriate.

Tip. The number of pages assigned per class varies. Take note of the number of assigned pages per week and manage your reading accordingly. Pace yourself. Read a little (12–15 pages) every day; don't try to cram 40–50 pages in a single reading session.

Date	Reading
2 Oct	Rawls, secs. 1–3, 5–6, 10 (approx. 28 pages)
7 Oct	Rawls, secs. 4, 8–9, 20 (approx. 18 pages)
9 Oct	Rawls, secs. 11–15, 17, 32, 39 (approx. 47 pages)
14 Oct	Rawls, secs. 21, 22, 24, 25 (to the list on p. 126), 26 (to p. 133), 29, 82 (approx. 31 pages)
15 Oct	First levels submission due at 18:00
16 Oct	No class (out of town)
21 Oct	Nozick, chs. 1 & 3 (skip “Constraints and Animals”, pp. 35–42; “Underdetermination”, pp. 45–47) (approx. 25 pages)
23 Oct	First writing workshop Nozick, chs. 2 & 4 (approx. 50 pages)
28 Oct	Nozick, ch. 5 (approx. 32 pages)
29 Oct	Second levels submission due at 18:00
30 Oct	Nozick, ch. 7 (sec. 1) (approx. 34 pages)
4 Nov	Satz, chs. 1 & 2 (approx. 44 pages)
6 Nov	Second writing workshop Satz, ch. 3 (approx. 28 pages)
11 Nov	Satz, chs. 4 & 6 (approx. 41 pages)
12 Nov	Third levels submission due at 18:00
13 Nov	Pettit, ch. 1 (secs. 1, 2, 4, 5), ch. 2 (secs. 1 & 2) (approx. 42 pages)
18 Nov	Pettit, chs. 3 & 4 (approx. 46 pages)
20 Nov	Third writing workshop Pettit, ch. 5 (sec. 2), ch. 6 (approx. 58 pages)
25 Nov	Pettit, ch. 8 (approx. 30 pages)
26 Nov	Fourth levels submission due at 18:00
27 Nov	No class (Thanksgiving)
2 Dec	Anderson, ch. 1 (secs. 1.3–1.5), chs. 2 & 3 (approx. 58 pages)
4 Dec	Fourth writing workshop Anderson, ch. 4 (approx. 22 pages)
9 Dec	Anderson, ch. 5 (approx. 23 pages)
10 Dec	Fifth levels submission due at 18:00
11 Dec	Anderson, chs. 6, 7, 9 (approx. 55 pages)