

Fall 2022  
Philosophy, Politics, and Economics  
PHIL/PPEL 2240  
Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 1:30-2:20pm  
University Hall 111

Instructor: Jeff Carroll

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30 – 3:30 pm, and by appointment

**Course Description:** Many of today's most pressing issues—from immigration, to environmental pollution, to global poverty—have moral, political, economic, and legal dimensions. The discipline of PPEL helps to approach such problems and their solutions from different perspectives. This course serves as a gateway to seeing how these disciplines can help one another in solving complex and difficult problems in society and with its institutions. In the first third of the course, we will familiarize ourselves with basic economic concepts. In the second third of the course, we will begin asking some ethical questions about wealth creation and economic systems. We will lay out the basics of capitalism and socialism and some arguments that have been given for and against them. Next, we will address some concrete moral issues related to markets, economics, politics and law.

**Course Outcomes:**

1. Students will acquire proficiency with basic economic and moral concepts.
2. Students will learn new ways of approaching and answering difficult ethical questions through course readings, and class lectures and discussions.
3. Students will sharpen their critical thinking skills and improve their prose through class participation and course exams.

**Required Texts:**

*All readings provided online.*

**Grading:**

*Here is how your grade in the course will be determined:*

First Exam: 25%

Second Exam: 25%

Third Exam: 25%

Participation: 25%

*Here is how letter grades will be assigned:*

90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
-59	E

**Course Schedule (readings are to be done in preparation for the day noted on the left):**

What is PPE?

M 08/22	Introduction & Syllabus Day
W 08/24	Geoffrey Brennan and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, "PPE as an Intellectual Enterprise" from <i>The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics</i>
F 08/26	Alan Hamlin, "The PPE enterprise: A substantive research programme"
M 08/29	Geoffrey Brennan, "PPE: An institutional view"
W 08/31	Hartmut Kliemt, "The PPE enterprise: Common Hobbesian roots and perspectives"

UNIT I: Basic Concepts

F 09/02	Why private property at all? Russell Hardin, "Tragedy of the Commons"
M 09/05	<b>NO CLASS – Labor Day</b>
W 09/07	How do we appropriate property? John Locke, Selections from <i>Two Treatises</i>
F 09/09	What constraints are there on appropriating property? David Schmidtz, "The Institution of Property"
M 09/12	What are transaction costs? Ronald Coase, "The Problem of Social Cost"
W 09/14	What are opportunity costs? Bastiat, "What is Seen and What is Unseen," Steven Rhoads, "Opportunity Cost"

- F 09/16 What is the division of labor? Adam Smith, Selections from *The Wealth of Nations*
- M 09/19 Is trade efficient? Paul Krugman, “What Do Undergrads Need to Know About Trade?”
- W 09/21 What is market failure? David Friedman, “Market Failures”  
[http://www.daviddfriedman.com/Academic/Price\\_Theory/PThy\\_Chapter\\_18/PThy\\_Chap\\_18.html](http://www.daviddfriedman.com/Academic/Price_Theory/PThy_Chapter_18/PThy_Chap_18.html)
- F 09/23 What is rent-seeking? Michael Munger, “Rent-Seek and You Will Find”  
<https://www.econlib.org/library/Columns/y2006/Mungerrentseeking.html>
- M 09/26 **EXAM 1**

## UNIT II: Capitalism and Socialism

- W 09/28 Introduction: Halliday & Thrasher, *The Ethics of Capitalism*, Chapter 1 “Introduction”
- F 09/30 Peter Boettke, “Capitalism” from *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*
- M 10/03 Samuel Arnold, “Socialisms” from *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*
- W 10/05 Marx’s Critique of Capitalism: Marx, “Alienation: Estranged Labor”
- F 10/07 Marx’s Solution: Marx, Sections 1 and 2 of *Communist Manifesto*
- M 10/10 **NO CLASS – FALL BREAK**
- W 10/12 Why Not Socialism: G.A. Cohen, Chapters 1 and 2 of *Why Not Socialism?*
- F 10/14 Feasibility and socialism, Chapters 3 and 4 of *Why Not Socialism?*
- M 10/17 Cohen’s Socialist Ideal: Chapters 1 and 2 of Jason Brennan, *Why Not Capitalism?*
- W 10/19 Cohen’s Socialist Ideal: Chapters 3 and 4 of Jason Brennan, *Why Not Capitalism?*
- F 10/21 Central Planning and Knowledge: Hayek, “The Use of Knowledge in Society”
- M 10/24 Matt Zwolinski, “The Advantages of Markets” from *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*

- W 10/26 Start Larry Temkin and Jason Brennan's debate "Capitalism: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovQ6oqB-ci4>
- F 10/28 Finish Larry Temkin and Jason Brennan's debate "Capitalism: The Good, The Bad, and The Ugly" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ovQ6oqB-ci4>
- M 10/31 **EXAM 2**
- W 11/02 **NO CLASS!**
- F 11/04 **NO CLASS!**

### UNIT 3: Political and Moral Issues

- M 11/07 Markets and Animal Ethics: Begin watching *Okja*
- W 11/09 Markets and Animal Ethics: Finish watching *Okja*
- F 11/11 **NO CLASS – VETERANS DAY**
- M 11/14 Equality?: Kurt Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergeron"
- W 11/16 Sex: Lori Watson, "Why Sex Work Isn't Work"
- F 11/18 Drugs: Michael Huemer, "America's Unjust Drug War"
- M 11/21 Voting: Geoffrey Brennan and Loren Lomasky, "Is There a Duty to Vote?"
- W 11/23 **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**
- F 11/25 **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**
- M 11/28 CLASS DECIDES TOPIC
- W 11/30 CLASS DECIDES TOPIC
- F 12/02 Review for Final Exam

**FINAL EXAM (EXAM 3): Tuesday, Dec 6<sup>th</sup>, 3:00-5:30 pm**

***Codes of Conduct and Academic Honesty Policy:*** The instructor and students in this course will adhere to the University's general Codes of Conduct defined in the *BGSU Student Handbook*. The Code of Academic Conduct (Academic Honesty Policy) requires that students do not engage in academic dishonesty. For details, refer to:

- *BGSU Student Handbook* (<http://bgsu.edu/downloads/sa/file15768.pdf>)
- *The Academic Charter, B.II.H*  
(<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/facsenate/page471.html>)
- Student Discipline Programs  
(<http://bgsu.edu/offices/sa/studentdiscipline/index.html>)

***Disability Policy:*** In accordance with the University policy, if the student has a documented disability and requires accommodations to obtain equal access in this course, he or she should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester and make this need known. Students with disabilities must verify their eligibility through the Office of Disability Services for Students, 413 South Hall, 419-372-8495.  
(<http://www.bgsu.edu/offices/sa/disability/>)