

Fall 2023
Philosophy, Politics, and Economics
PHIL/PPEL 2240
Tuesday and Thursday 1:00-2:15pm
Olscamp 115

Instructor: Jeff Carroll

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Office: Shatzel 308

Office Hours: By appointment (Just email me. I'm always happy to meet.)

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?

Tu 08/22	Introduction & Syllabus Day
Th 08/24	Geoffrey Brennan and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord, “PPE as an Intellectual Enterprise” from <i>The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics</i>

UNIT I: Basic Concepts

Tu 08/29	Why private property at all? Russell Hardin, “Tragedy of the Commons”
Th 08/31	How do we appropriate property? John Locke, Selection from <i>Two Treatises</i>
Tu 09/05	What constraints are there on appropriating property? David Schmidtz, “The Institution of Property”
Th 09/07	What are transaction costs? Ronald Coase, “The Problem of Social Cost”
Tu 09/12	What are opportunity costs? Bastiat, “What is Seen and What is Unseen,” Steven Rhoads, “Opportunity Cost”
Th 09/14	What is the division of labor? Adam Smith, Selections from <i>The Wealth of Nations</i>
Tu 09/19	What is market failure? David Friedman, “Market Failures” http://www.daviddfriedman.com/Academic/Price_Theory/PThy_Chapter_18/PThy_Chap_18.html
Th 09/21	What is rent-seeking? Michael Munger, “Rent-Seek and You Will Find”

<https://www.econlib.org/library/Columns/y2006/Mungerrentseeking.html>

Tu 09/26 Review for Exam

Th 09/28 **EXAM 1**

UNIT II: Capitalism and Socialism

Tu 10/03 Introduction: Halliday & Thrasher, *The Ethics of Capitalism*, Chapter 1
“Introduction”

Th 10/05 Peter Boettke, “Capitalism” from *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics* Marx’s Critique of Capitalism: Marx, “Alienation: Estranged Labor”

Tu 10/10 **NO CLASS – FALL BREAK**

Th 10/12 Samuel Arnold, “Socialisms” from *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*

Tu 10/17 Marx’s Solution: Marx, Sections 1 and 2 of *Communist Manifesto*

Th 10/19 Why Not Socialism: G.A. Cohen, Chapters 1 and 2 of *Why Not Socialism?*

Tu 10/24 Cohen’s Socialist Ideal: Chapters 1 and 2 of Jason Brennan, *Why Not Capitalism?*

Th 10/26 Matt Zwolinski, “The Advantages of Markets” from *The Routledge Handbook of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics*

Tu 10/31 **EXAM 2**

Th 11/02 **NO CLASS**

UNIT 3: Political and Moral Issues

Tu 11/07 Markets and Animal Ethics: Begin watching *Okja*

Th 11/09 Markets and Animal Ethics: Finish watching *Okja*

Tu 11/14 Sex: Lori Watson, “Why Sex Work Isn’t Work”

Th 11/16 Drugs: Michael Huemer, “America’s Unjust Drug War”

Tu 11/21 Voting: Geoffrey Brennan and Loren Lomasky, “Is There a Duty to Vote?”

Th 11/23 **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Tu 11/28 CLASS DECIDES TOPIC

Th 11/30 Review for Final Exam

FINAL EXAM (EXAM 3): Monday, Dec 4th, 11:30-2:00 pm

University Policy Statements:

Student Conduct

A community exists on the basis of shared values and principles. At BGSU, students, recognized student organizations, and student groups are expected to uphold and abide by certain standards of conduct. You should familiarize yourself with the Codes, which create a set of expectations for student conduct, ensure a fair process for determining responsibility when student behavior may have deviated from those expectations, and provide appropriate sanctions when a student and/or student organization has violated the Code(s).

- Students who violate faculty expectations as outlined in the syllabus may be subject to conduct action.
- If you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 419-372-2843 or odos@bgsu.edu.
- View the [Student Handbook](#).
- Learn more about and view the [Code of Academic Conduct](#).
- Learn more about and view the [Code of Student Conduct](#).

Title IX

Bowling Green State University (BGSU) is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all students that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment. Sexual misconduct and relationship violence in any form are antithetical to the university's mission and core values, violate university policies, and may also violate federal and state law. Faculty members are considered "Mandatory Reporters" and are required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and relationship violence to the Title IX Coordinator. If you or someone you know has been impacted by sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, please visit the [Title IX webpage](#) to access information about university support and resources.

Accessibility Services

[Accessibility Services](#) provides equal access and reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities attending BGSU. Students wishing to discuss their eligibility for such

accommodations are encouraged to contact the office at phone: 419-372-8495, fax: 419-372-8496, or email: access@bgsu.edu.

Religious Accommodations

[Throughout the semester, if questions arise related to the application of the Religious Accommodations policy, please reach out to the Office of the Provost at Provost@bgsu.edu.]

In addition to participation/attendance/absence policies already listed, you may have up to three (3) excused absences each academic semester, without penalty, to take time off for reasons of faith or religious or spiritual belief system or to participate in organized activities conducted under the auspices of a religious denomination, church, or other religious or spiritual organization. You are required to notify me in writing of specific dates requested for excused absences and/or alternative accommodation no later than fourteen (14) calendar days after the first day of instruction for this course. After necessary notification, you should consult with me to determine an appropriate alternative opportunity that will be provided to help you complete your academic responsibilities for the course. These requests will remain confidential. The Office of Registration & Records maintains a list of [accommodated religious holidays](#). Please note that this list is not exhaustive of all holidays. For more information about the [Student Religious Accommodations policy](#), you may contact the Dean of Students at odos@bgsu.edu or 419-372-2843.

Freedom of Expression

Bowling Green State University, as a public institution, is committed to freedom of expression and the rights protected by the First Amendment. First Amendment rights have implications inside the classroom as well. Review the [Office of the Dean of Students page regarding Freedom of Expression](#) at Bowling Green State University for more information including the policy. To report concerns please visit the [See It. Hear It. Report It.](#) page.

Student Veteran-friendly Campus

BGSU educators recognize student veterans' rights when entering and exiting the university system. If you are a student veteran, please communicate with your instructor so reasonable accommodations can be made for absence when drilling or being called to active duty. Refer to the [Veterans](#) page.

University Closure

In most cases, the University will not close for winter conditions unless the Sheriff's Department from the county in which your campus is located declares a Level 3 emergency. Once the decision is made to delay, cancel or close, individuals will be notified through AlertBG, email, the BGSU homepage, BGSU social media channels and the news media (see the [Emergency Cancellation Delay and Closing Policy and Procedures](#) document for a list of radio and television stations).

Non-Discrimination in Employment and Education

Bowling Green State University is committed to maintaining an employment and educational environment that is free from unlawful discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. The University prohibits discrimination and harassment on the basis of protected class. Retaliation against any person for asserting their legal rights to be free from discrimination or harassment, for reporting discrimination or harassment, or for participating in activities is strictly prohibited. You may review BGSU's Non-Discrimination in Employment and Education policy for more information. To report concerns, please visit the See It. Hear It. Report It. page.