

SPRING 2023

Senior Capstone

PHIL 4400/PPEL 4800

Monday/Wednesday/Friday 1:30-2:20pm

Hayes Hall 118

Instructor: Jeff Carroll

Email: jcarro@bgsu.edu

Office: Shatzel 308

Office Hours: Monday 12:15-1:15 pm, and by appointment

Course Description: This course serves as the culmination of your University-training in PPEL and/or Philosophy. It is writing- and participation-intensive. The aim of the course is to help students expand and fine-tune the core skills of their major. The primary way we will be doing it is through an independent research project.

Course Outcomes:

1. Students will learn how to develop and complete an extended research project.
2. Students will enhance their public-speaking abilities by presenting their research to the class.
3. Students will sharpen their critical thinking skills by offering objections to the work of other students.

Required Texts:

All readings provided on Canvas.

Grading:

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

Final Project/Paper: 30%

Ted Talk: 5%

Presentation: 15%

Paper Swap 1: 10%

Paper Swap 2: 10%

Participation: 20%

Final Exam: 10%

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):

1/09 Introduction & Syllabus Day

1/11 Brainstorming Topics and Preliminary Paper Project Ideas

1/13 Robert E. Goodin, “How to Write Analytical Political Theory” in *Methods in Analytical Political Theory*, ed. Adrian Blau, Chapter 2

1/16 NO CLASS – MLK, JR DAY

1/18 G.A. Cohen, “How to Do Political Philosophy” in *The Currency of Egalitarian Justice and Other Essays*, ed. Michael Otsuka

1/20 James Buchanan, “Public Choice: Politics without Romance” & Mike Munger, “Unicorn Governance”: <https://fee.org/articles/unicorn-governance/>

1/23 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 1 – “Why, When, and How Did the World Become Rich?”

1/25 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 2 – “Did Some Societies Win the Geography Lottery?”

1/27 Watch Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Episode 1: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i885hopsw6E>

1/30 Watch Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Episode 2: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dCBod2jFFyQ>

2/01 Watch Jared Diamond’s *Guns, Germs, and Steel*, Episode 3: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJ9espgY-Po>

- 2/03 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 3 – “Is It All Just Institutions?”
- 2/06 Watch James Robinson’s *Why Nations Fail?*, video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jsZDIBU36n0>
- 2/08 **Paper Planning Worksheet**
- 2/10 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 4 – “Did Culture Make Some Rich and Others Poor?”
- 2/13 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 5 – “Fewer Babies?”
- 2/15 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 6 – “Was It Just a Matter of Colonization and Exploitation?”
- 2/17 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 7 – “Why Did Northwest Europe Become Rich First?”
- 2/20 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 8 – “Britain’s Industrial Revolution”
- 2/22 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 9 – “The Rise of the Modern Economy”
- 2/24 Mark Koyama and Jared Rubin, *How the World Became Rich – The Historical Origins of Economic Growth*, Chapter 10 – “Industrialization and the World It Created”
- 2/27 **Ted Talks**
- 3/01 **Ted Talks**
- 3/03 **NO CLASS – Paper Swap 1**
- 3/06 **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**
- 3/08 **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**
- 3/10 **NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK**
- 3/13 Bryan Caplan, “The Myth of the Rational Voter” for Cato Institute
- 3/15 Ilya Somin, “Foot Voting, Political Ignorance, and Constitutional Design”
- 3/17 Jason Brennan, “How Real Democracy Really Works” in *Debating Democracy*
- 3/20 Helene Landemore, “The Argument for Democracy” in *Debating Democracy*
- 3/22 **NO CLASS – WRITING DAY**

3/24 **NO CLASS – WRITING DAY**

3/27 Helene Landemore, “If Democracy is Such a Smart Regime, Why are Democracies Doing So Poorly at the Moment and How Can We Fix Them?” in *Debating Democracy*

3/29 Henry Farrell, Hugo Mercier, and Melissa Schwartzberg, “Analytical Democratic Theory: A Microfoundational Approach”

3/31 **PPEL WORKSHOP**

4/03 ***Paper Swap 2***

4/05 *Presentations*

4/07 *Presentations*

4/10 *Presentations*

4/12 *Presentations*

4/14 *Presentations*

4/17 **NO CLASS – WRITING DAY**

4/19 **NO CLASS – WRITING DAY**

4/21 **NO CLASS – WRITING DAY**

Final Exam Period (Wednesday, April 26th 3:00-5:30 pm): Final Exam

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/>)