

CEL 350 Philosophy, Politics & Economics

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Office Location: Creativity Commons 466E

Office Hours: T,Th 1-2:30 pm or by appointment (incl. via [Zoom](#))

CEL 350—34665

Spring 2022

STAUFFER COMM ARTS A13

T,Th: 3:00pm-4:15pm

Course description

The tradition of combining the study of Philosophy, Politics, and Economics (PPE) originates at Oxford University. It aims to provide an interdisciplinary foundation for students to become active participants, as citizens and leaders, in a liberal democratic society that faces an uncertain future. It provides familiarity with core conceptual tools provided by philosophy, politics and economics, and an appreciation for the foundation they provide together to address social and political uncertainties we face today as well as in the future. Reliance on any one disciplinary set of tools and skills is useful, but the real challenges of any liberal democracy are met by neither technocratic nor bureaucratic solutions. They require an awareness of the relevance of ethics, politics and economics, as well as an appreciation for the limitations of each and the necessity of thinking through their interactions.

In this class you will be responsible for reading, writing, and discussing PPE based on a common set of readings and to teach the class about a book in an area of applied PPE of special interest to you.

Thematic questions

1. How do social systems work? What roles do human action and design, evolution and prices play in developing or improving beneficial social orders?
2. How do we evaluate the relative goodness of various approaches to coordinating human activity and solving social problems? When should we rely on the market, on voluntary association, or on government to address problems? Why?
3. Under what institutional conditions is there a harmony between individual interests and the interests of society? When there is conflict, is there a just way to resolve that conflict?
4. What, if anything, legitimizes the institutions of property? Of government?

Learning objectives

1. To develop understanding of how market and governmental systems work using conceptual tools and perspectives provided by philosophy, politics and economics
2. To develop understanding of fundamental concepts that might help us evaluate the relative merits of different institutional frameworks to address social problems, especially in a commercial society and liberal democracy
3. To develop skills in active, analytical reading
4. To develop dialogue skills of speaking, listening, and reasoning together with others
5. To develop writing skills

Questions about Class Structure & Policy

I will respond to questions about the course only if the student refers to the relevant section of the syllabus and why it does not answer his or her question. This will help promote student independence and responsibility, help me improve the syllabus, when appropriate, and economize on my time.

Grade Policy

Other than university mandated exceptions, there are **no makeup or partial credit** assignments (see University Policy on Absences below).

Late work will lose one letter grade for each day it is late.

Discussion launch notes.....	25%
Essays.....	25%
Attendance & In-class Participation.....	25%
Applied PPE Book Project.....	10%
<u>Final exam</u>	<u>15%</u>
Total.....	100%

Launch Notes - 25% For each class, you must prepare a set of *brief* notes for each set of class readings. You will be called on to answer the following questions and must be ready to answer them for each text assigned to be considered prepared for class:

1. What is the author's central question of the text?
 - a. Is there explicit text giving a concise statement of this question? What is it?
2. What is the author's conclusion or thesis? (Answer to the main question.)
 - a. Is there an explicit sentence capturing this? What is it?
3. What is the big picture structure of the argument?
4. Are there any central terms/concepts that the author uses that are key to the argument?
5. What was most interesting to you? why?
6. What questions do you have for discussion?

Write your central question for discussion on the board.

You will turn in your launch notes on a weekly basis.

Unit Exams – 25% You will write an in-class exam at the end of each unit based on the content of that unit.

Attendance & In-class Participation - 25% Part of your grade will consist of my assessment of the quality of your participation in class activities. This quality will be judged by, but **not** be limited to, the following:

PRESENT & PREPARED: The student is present throughout the class, has copies of the readings and launch notes in physical form in hand. Student has done all the reading carefully, comes to class ready to discuss the texts and to explore the material together (is ready to explain OR has specific questions about which parts of the text he or she did not understand). The level of understanding of the texts demonstrated over the semester, therefore, will factor into the final participation grade. Voicing proper questions when the text is difficult substitutes for understanding to a large degree. Students who are finding the text difficult to read are encouraged to come to office hours for additional help. Coming to office hours for additional engagement will help your participation grade.

ACTIVE & ATTENTIVE: The student is attentive to the conversation, does not use phone or computer during class, is active and proactive. He or she noticeably, frequently, and consistently does the following: maintains a posture of respect and alertness, tries to understand the text and others, volunteers to read aloud, asks questions, volunteers his or her hypotheses about what the text means, actively listens to others, helps peers, is courteous, receives feedback and criticism humbly and respectfully, agrees or disagrees with others with reason and sensitivity, presents ideas in plain language, supports claims with reasons and textual evidence. Student demonstrates the elements of the evolving rubric generated during in-class debriefs.

Applied PPE Book Project - 10% In addition to reading the general reads of this course, you will choose one book to read on some applied area of PPE. It will be your responsibility to work with me to develop some way to demonstrate to me what you have learned from the book and to teach it to others in the class. We will build a rubric for presentations together as a class.

Final exam – 15% A comprehensive final exam will be held in person on the scheduled by the university. Plan to be present on that date.

Grade Scale:

A+: 98-100% (Truly outstanding work throughout), **A:** 93-97% (Excellent work), **A-:** 90-92%,

B+: 88-89% **B:** 83-87% (Solid work), **B-:** 80-82%

C+: 78-79%, **C:** 70-77% (Average work), **D:** 60-69% (Barely passing work), **E:** 0-59% (Failing work)

Required Texts & Technology

The following text is required for the course: Jonathan Anomaly, Geoffrey Brennan, Michael C. Munger, and Geoffrey Sayre-McCord (eds.) *Philosophy, Politics, and Economics: An Anthology* (Oxford University Press, 2016). ISBN: 978-0190207311 (paperback). Additional readings for this class will be found on Canvas.

You are expected to read all readings **before** class. You must also bring **physical copies** of each of the readings each class they will be discussed. In the latter case, you may print multiple pages per side and double sided to save on printing costs.

Since familiarity with the texts is a prerequisite for productive conversation about them, students who fail to bring their physical texts to class will be asked to leave class and will be marked absent for that day.

Phones, laptops, tablets, and other electronics will not be permitted in class. Research shows students learn better when this policy is in effect. It will also help us develop a common culture in the classroom.

In the event that ASU suspends in person classes or if you need to come to office hours remotely, you will be required to have a device that supports Zoom. The Zoom address you will need is:

<https://asu.zoom.us/j/5994082241>

Miscellaneous Policies

Email Communication and Class Updates

I may need to update students on class activities and assignments. I will send Canvas announcements and emails to students at their ASU email address. Students are responsible for checking Canvas and this email regularly. Please also send all official communications to me via your ASU email address.

When emailing me, I expect you to begin your email with "Dear Mr. Humphries" and end your email with a salutation and your name, e.g., "Best wishes, Joan Smith." If you do not start and end your email this way, I will write back to you to send it again with that information and your answer will be delayed.

Covid Related Policies & Contingencies

- Masks are required in classrooms for Spring 2022.
- ASU has a [Daily Health Check](#) requirement for students and employees to do a quick self-check each morning. The university encourages you to stay home, if you don't feel well.
- ASU provides testing to all students and to faculty, staff and their family members. Find more information about free saliva-based testing on the [Devils' drop-off](#) website.
- A student diagnosed with COVID must immediately report this to the Dean of Students (deanofstudents@asu.edu) and CC me and follow the quarantining and other guidelines at <https://eoss.asu.edu/health/announcements/coronavirus>.
- In the event that ASU suspends in person classes, we will hold class remotely at the regular times at this Zoom address: <https://asu.zoom.us/j/5994082241>. Students will need to submit digital scans of their annotations and launch notes.

University Policy on Absences

In-person attendance in this class is extremely important. The university protects absences in a limited number of cases. If you can **document** the following causes of absence as outlined below, we will arrange for a special meeting in office hours to drop off assignments and have a make-up conversation about anything you missed in class:

1. Information on excused absences related to religious observances/practices that are in accordance with [ACD 304-04](#) "Accommodations for Religious Practices."
2. Information on excused absences related to university-sanctioned events/activities that are in accordance with [ACD 304-02](#) "Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities."
3. Those with possible contagious illness are advised by the university to stay home. I will arrange either in-person or Zoom make up sessions with me or an additional writing assignment for each missed class for those **who email me documentation** that they are (1) tested for COVID with a time stamp or (2) from a medical professional that they are advised to be absent from class due to illness or possible contagion. These make up sessions or writing assignments will be substituted for the missed class. The benefits of sustained peer interaction are significant for you and your peers. Additional meetings and grading additional writing assignments also cost me time. So please be honest and sensible. I'm happy to do make up work for those who are genuinely ill or conscientious about possibly being contagious to others.

Accommodating students with disabilities

Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Services office should contact SAILS immediately. The SAILS Tempe office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. SAILS staff can also be reached at (480) 965-1234 (V) or (480) 965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc.

Expected conduct and freedom of inquiry and discourse

Please be conscientious and kind to everyone. Please be aware of potentially disruptive or distracting behavior such as ringing cell phones that may detract from an environment of concentrated learning. Again, laptops, cell phones, MP3, IPOD, listening to music, messaging, side talking, eating food noisily, etc., are not permitted.

ASU has a fine set of resources for the university community under the Dean of Students page on "Free Speech at ASU," including a statement on "The First Amendment and you" and President Crow's 2019 statement on "free speech, civil discourse, and student conduct," at <https://eoss.asu.edu/resources/free-speech>.

In the spirit of those policy statements and resources I will add for this course that freedom of inquiry and discourse is essential to our work together as a community of learners. All of us should know that our rights and duties regarding free speech and civil discourse are both an end and a means to a

successful course, for faculty and students alike. With the aim of advancing and deepening everyone's understanding of the ideas and issues addressed in the course, and in accord with longstanding principles on the rights and duties of academic freedom, students are urged to speak their minds respectfully, explore ideas and arguments, play devil's advocate, and engage in civil but robust discussions. You are expected to be tolerant of thought or language within these broad boundaries. The expectation is that all of us will work together in the proper spirit of mutual charity and intellectual discourse. The currency of this kind of discourse is reason, evidence, and argument; all ideas or positions within those broad boundaries, relevant to the inquiries of our course are welcome.

Academic integrity

All written work must be your own. Any quotations or paraphrase must be accompanied by citations showing the author, title, and page number where you got the idea. When in doubt, cite a source.

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, and laboratory work, academic transactions and records. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academic-integrity>

Policy against threatening behavior

Each syllabus must include ASU's policy against threatening behavior (Student Services Manual [SSM 104-02](#) "Handling Disruptive, Threatening or Violent Individuals on Campus"):

All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on-or off campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances.

Reporting Title IX violations

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <https://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services, <https://eoss.asu.edu/counseling>, is available if you wish discuss any concerns confidentially and privately.

Policy on Sexual Discrimination

Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information.

Copyrighted materials

You must refrain from uploading to any course shell, discussion board, or website used by the course instructor or other course forum, material that is not the student's original work, unless the students first comply with all applicable copyright laws; faculty members reserve the right to delete materials on the grounds of suspected copyright infringement.

If you have any questions, please refer to [ACD-304-10](#) Course Syllabus or contact Amanda A. Smith or Jenny Smith in The College Office of Students and Academic Programs at (480) 965-6506.

Tentative Schedule of Assignments

Precise readings and assignments will be uploaded in modules on Canvas. The following is a possible outline of readings. All of them may be subject to change. Readings are listed on the dates they are due.

Unit 1 - Economics: Human Action and the Market Process	
Tues, 1/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Syllabus
Thurs, 1/13 The Division of Labor	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• L.E. Read "I, Pencil" (Reader)• Watch: Thomas Thwaites: How I built a toaster -- from scratch (11:21)• Watch: I, Pencil Extended Commentary (5 videos)• Adam Smith "Of the Division of Labor" (Reader)
Tues, 1/18 The Market Process: Prices, Competition, & Entrepreneurship	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Milton Friedman, "The Power of the Market"• Ludwig von Mises, "Profit Management"• Dwight R. Lee, "Freedom and Failure"
Thurs, 1/20 The Knowledge Problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lindsay, "Centralization vs. Uncertainty"• Hayek, "The Use of Knowledge in Society" (Reader)
Tues, 1/25 Price Coordination & Price Gouging	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Boudreaux, "On Price Gouging"• Munger, "They Clapped: Can Price Gauging Laws Prohibit Scarcity?" (Reader)• Snyder, "What's the Matter with Price Gauging?" (Reader)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zwolinski, “Price Gauging, Non-Worseness, and Distributive Justice” (Reader)
Thurs, 1/27 Rational Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heyne, The Economic Way of Thinking • Gary Becker, “The Economic Way of Looking at Behavior” (Reader)
Tues, 2/1 Self-interest vs. Greed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doti, Capitalism and Greed • Paul Heyne on self-interest • David Schmidtz, “Reasons for Altruism” (Reader) • Mao Yushi, “The Paradox of Morality” • Watch: Edgar the Exploiter (07:08) • Watch: Zwolinski How Can Sweatshops Help The Poor Escape Poverty? - Learn Liberty (05:13) • Watch: Leslie T. Chang: The voices of China's workers (14:26) • Watch: John Stossel, “Greed” (6 parts, approx 1 hour)
Thurs, 2/3 Social Responsibility of Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heyne, What Is the Responsibility of Business Under Democratic Capitalism? • Reason Magazine, Rethinking the Social Responsibility of Business
Tues, 2/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 1 Exam
Thurs, 2/10	TBD
Unit 2 - Politics: Public Choice & Public Goods	
Tues, 2/15 Public Choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: Geoffrey Brennan, What is Public Choice Theory? • Russ Roberts, Pigs Don't Fly: The Economic Way of Thinking about Politics • Gordon Tullock, Public Choice • James M. Buchanan, Politics without Romance (Reader)
Thurs, 2/17 Market Failure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tyler Cowen, Public Goods (Reader) • J. Anomaly, Public Goods and Government Action (Reader)
Tues, 2/22 Baptists & Bootleggers and Rent Seeking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downs, An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy (Reader) • Munger, Rent-Seek and You will Find (Reader) • Watch: Munger, Bureaucracy

Thurs, 2/24 Rational Ignorance & Rational irrationality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: Public Choice: Why Politicians Don't Cut Spending (02:19) • Introduction to Public Choice, Alex Tabarrok (33:33) • Huemer, Why People Are Irrational about Politics (Reader)
Tues, 3/1 Voting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jason Brennan: Should You Be Forced to Vote? (03:47) • Watch: Geoffrey Brennan, Expressive Voting • Geoffrey Brennan and Loren Lomasky, Is There a Duty to Vote? (Reader) • Jason Brennan, Polluting the Polls: When Citizens Should Not Vote (Reader)
Thurs, 3/3 The Logic of Collective Inaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (Reader) • Jean Hampton, Free Rider Problem in the Production of Collective Goods (Reader)
Tues, 3/8 – No Class	SPRING BREAK
Thurs, 3/10 – No Class	
Tues, 3/15 The Evolution of Social Norms and Collective Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elinor Ostrom, Collective Action and the Evolution of Social Norms (Reader) • Bowles & Gintis, The Evolutionary Basis of Collective Action (Reader)
Thurs, 3/17 Constitutional Political Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • James Buchanan, How Can Constitutions Be Designed So That Politicians Who Seek to Serve “Public Interest” Can Survive and Prosper? (Reader) • Buchanan, The Soul of Classical Liberalism
Tues, 3/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unit 2 Exam
Thurs, 3/24	Book Project Planning/Rubric Creation
Unit 3 - Philosophy: Property, Justice, and the Problem of Political Authority	
Tues, 3/29 Justice and Utility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: What is Justice? • Watch: Distributive Justice • J.S. Mill, Utilitarianism (Reader) • John Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Reader)
Thurs, 3/31 Justice and Individual Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: Liberalism and Equal Opportunity • Watch: Equal Treatment or Equal Outcome • Watch: Are the Poor Getting Poorer? • Robert Nozick, Anarchy State and Utopia (Reader) • Robert Nozick, Equality of Opportunity (Reader) • Gerald Cohen, Robert Nozick and Wilt Chamberlain: How Patterns Preserve Liberty (Reader)

Tues, 4/5 Property Rights and the Role of Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberty and Individual Responsibility • Locke, Of Property (Reader) • Adam Smith, "Of the Expenses of the Sovereign" (Reader)
Thurs, 4/7 Organ Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen: EconTalk on Organ Markets • Caplan, "Organ Transplantation" • Dworkin, "Markets and Morals: The Case for Organ Sales" • TBD: Michael Sandel, "How Markets Crowd Out Morals" (with replies by Gintis and Bowles) • TBD: Debra Satz, "The Moral Limits of Markets: The Case of Human Kidneys"
Tues, 4/12 The Moral Basis of Property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch: Equal Shares and the Idea of a Social Contract • Marx, <i>Capital</i>: "Primitive Accumulation" (Reader) • Thomas Paine, Agrarian Justice (Reader) • David Hume, Of Justice and Property (Reader) • David Schmidtz, The Institution of Property (Reader)
Thurs, 4/14 Private Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benson, Justice without Government: <i>The Law Merchant Courts of Medieval Europe and Their Modern Counterparts</i> • Stringham, Bundling Private Governance with Brick and Mortar
Tues, 4/19 The Problem of Political Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> (Reader) • Locke, "Popular Basis for Political Authority" (Reader) • Hume, "Of the Original Contract" (Reader) • Rousseau, <i>The Social Contract</i> (Reader)
Thurs, 4/21 Government and Spontaneous Order	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Holcombe, Government: Unnecessary but Inevitable • Hayek, The Results of Human Action, but not of Human Design
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Project Due, Sunday 4/24 by 11:00pm 	
Tues, 4/26 Essays	Book Project Presentations
Thurs, 4/28 Essays	Book Project Presentations
Final Exam: Tues, May 3, 2:30 - 4:20 PM	