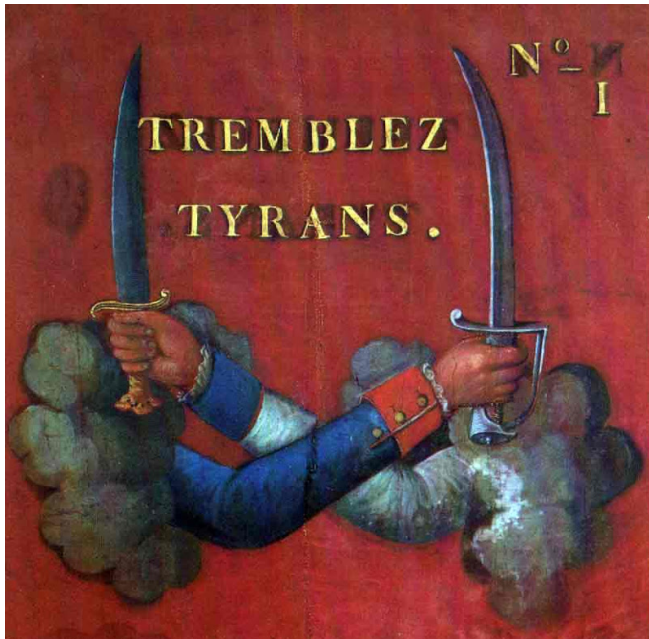


# **LIBERTY, RIGHTS, AND RESPONSIBILITIES: INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL ETHICS AND POLITICAL THOUGHT**



## **INSTRUCTOR**

Simone Gubler

## **CONTACT**

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## **LECTURE TIMES**

12:20PM - 1:10PM

## **LECTURE LOCATION**

Murphey 105

## **OFFICE HOURS**

WF 10:00AM-11:00AM

## **OFFICE LOCATION**

Caldwell 214A

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Today, we find ourselves living in a democratic state. None of us caused the United States to be a democracy, but we all live here, nonetheless, under a democratic regime. And because the American state is not something given to us by nature, but something made by human beings like us, we stand in a special relation to it. We can look at our present political situation as a product of human choices, and we can ask searching questions: Why is our present system of government the way it is? Should we, the inheritors of this system of social organization, change it? Should we replace it altogether?

In this class, we will examine different traditions of human governance and social organization, and ask questions about the origin, nature, and justification of central political concepts such as power, freedom, equality, justice, and rights.

## POLICIES

### Office Hours

All students are encouraged to visit me during my office hours. I want each of you to come at least once, early on in the semester, so that I can get to know you. In the first class, I will pass around a sign-up sheet, so that you can make an appointment to meet with me in Week Two. After that, you are welcome to drop by at any time during office hours, or by appointment as necessary. Office hours represent a good opportunity to discuss any questions you might have in relation to the course, as well as to troubleshoot any challenges that threaten your academic success.

### Readings

All assigned readings are compulsory. The readings may be found on Sakai. Readings consist of edited extracts from longer works, so be sure to use the versions on Sakai in preparation for class.

### Disabilities

Accommodations will be made for students with disabilities. If you think that you are likely to need accommodations, please contact Accessibility, Resources and Service (details here: <https://ars.unc.edu/accommodations>), and present your Accommodation Letter to me as soon as possible.

### Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the requirements of the student Honor Code (<https://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/>). You will be asked to sign the honor pledge as a condition of submitting assignments for this course. Suspected violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

### Electronic Devices

No phones are to be used during class time. Use of other electronic devices is discouraged. Electronic devices are distracting - not merely for you, but for the people around you. A bonus: studies suggest that you'll enjoy better recall if you take notes by hand (see for example: <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2014/05/to-remember-a-lecture-better-take-notes-by-hand/361478/>).

### Charity

Some of the ideas that we'll deal with in this class are likely to seem very odd to you. You might even want to reject them outright. That's perfectly normal. When we encounter new or unfamiliar ideas and arguments, especially when they seem to threaten our standard ways of thinking about things, there's a strong impulse to reject them. But the art of being a good philosopher is, in part, the art of pushing through (and then rationally investigating) that initial reaction of repulsion to a strange idea. So, to that end, let's operate according to a guiding principle: 'the principle of charity':

*"The principle of charity governs the interpretation of the beliefs and utterances of others. It urges charitable interpretation, meaning interpretation that maximizes the truth or rationality of what others think and say"*

- R. Feldman, *Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

I'd like us to follow this principle in all of our work in this class — in our interactions with each other, with invited guests, as well as with the ideas in the set readings.

So, when someone makes an argument or claim:

- Start from the assumption that the person is rational and is trying to communicate something interesting and meaningful to you.
- Be generous: try to give the best possible interpretation to their statement.
- Be patient: avoid attributing wrongness or confusion until you've carefully considered whether a relevant insight may be derived from their statement.

## ASSESSMENT

### Op-Ed: Democracy

- 20%** The prompt for the op-ed assignment (2 pages) will be posted on Sakai and distributed in class on Friday, August 23. Due in class on Friday, September 6.

### In-Class Reading Quizzes

- 10%** These five quizzes contain questions that anyone who has done their reading should be able to address. When will I give them? Only time (and diligent class attendance) will tell!

### Midterm Take-Home Exam

- 30%** The take-home exam will be distributed in class on the 11th of October and will cover all material up to that date. Answers are due in class on the 14th of October.

### Final Paper

- 40%** Topics for the final paper will be distributed on the 4th of November. This assignment has two components.
1. You are to produce a 2 page blueprint for the paper, including a topic sentence, paragraph by paragraph argument plan and an annotated bibliography. The blueprint is worth 1/4 of the final paper grade. It is due on the 11th of November. You will receive feedback on the 18th of November.
  2. The final 6 page paper is due on Sakai, on the 13th of December.

### Extra Credit

- 2%** Your education does not end at the classroom doors. As an incentive to participate in, and benefit from, the research activity of the university at large, 2% extra credit is on offer to students who attend events that are relevant to this class (1% per event, maximum of two events). There is a list of eligible events on Sakai (you may also apply to the instructor to add an event to the list). You will need to write a short account of each event that you attend (prompt online) in order to claim credit for it.

## ASSESSMENT

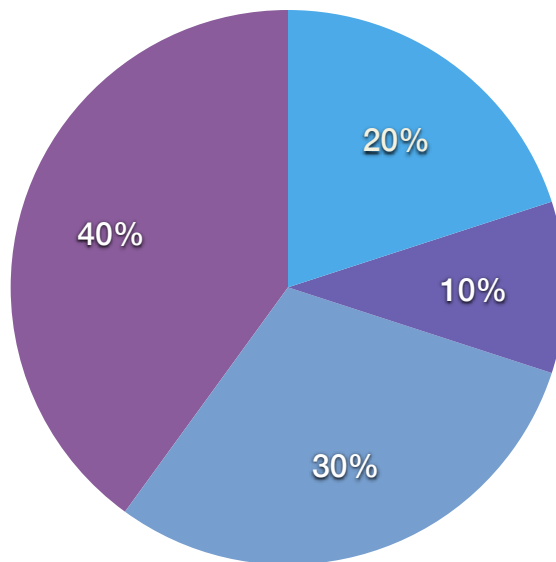
### Attendance

Attendance is compulsory. Each student is permitted a maximum of two unexplained absences. Each further unexplained absence will result in a 2% reduction in the overall course grade.

### FINAL GRADE BREAKDOWN

A	94-100	A-	90-93
B+	87-89	B	84-86
B-	80-83	C+	77-79
C	74-76	C-	70-73
D+	67-69	D	64-66
D-	60-63	F	0-59

- Op-ed: 20
- Reading Quizzes: 10
- Mid-Term Exam: 30
- Final Paper: 40



**SCHEDULE  
OF CLASSES**

WEEK ONE Wednesday, August 21	<b>Ancient Democracy and its Discontents</b>	<i>Syllabus overview</i>
WEEK ONE Friday, August 23		<i>The Funeral Oration</i> Thucydides
WEEK TWO Monday, August 26		<i>Every Cook Can Govern</i> C.L.R. James
WEEK TWO Wednesday, August 28		1. <i>Making Athens Great Again</i> Rebecca Newberger Goldstein 2. <i>Power to the People</i> Mary Beard
WEEK TWO Friday, August 30		<i>The Republic, VIII</i> Plato
WEEK THREE Monday, September 2	<b>LABOR DAY</b>	
WEEK THREE Wednesday, September 4		<i>Politics</i> Aristotle
WEEK THREE Friday, September 6	<i>Op-ed due in class</i>	<i>Democracy: From City-States to a Cosmopolitan Order?</i> David Held
WEEK FOUR Monday, September 9	<b>Social Contract and Sovereignty</b>	<i>Leviathan</i> Thomas Hobbes
WEEK FOUR Wednesday, September 11		<i>Leviathan</i> Thomas Hobbes
WEEK FOUR Friday, September 13		<i>Remarks on Hobbes</i> Catharine Macauley
WEEK FIVE Monday, September 16		<i>On Political Societies</i> John Locke
WEEK FIVE Wednesday, September 18		<i>The Social Contract</i> Jean-Jacques Rousseau

WEEK FIVE Friday, September 20		<i>The Social Contract</i> Jean-Jacques Rousseau
WEEK SIX Monday, September 23	<b>Rebellion and Revolution</b>	1. <i>Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants</i> 2. <i>Against the Murderous, Thieving Hordes of Peasants</i> Martin Luther
WEEK SIX Wednesday, September 25		<i>What is the Third Estate?</i> Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyès
WEEK SIX Friday, September 27		<i>On the Trial of the King</i> Maximilien Robespierre
WEEK SEVEN Monday, September 30		<i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> Edmund Burke
WEEK SEVEN Wednesday, October 2		<i>A Vindication of the Rights of Men</i> Mary Wollstonecraft
WEEK SEVEN Friday, October 4		In class exercise: no assigned reading
WEEK EIGHT Monday, October 7	<b>Property</b>	<i>Two Treatises of Government</i> John Locke
WEEK EIGHT Wednesday, October 9		<i>The Wealth of Nations</i> Adam Smith
WEEK EIGHT Friday, October 11	Mid-term exam distributed	<i>Private Property</i> Karl Marx
WEEK NINE Monday, October 14	Mid-term exam due in class	<i>Communist Manifesto</i> Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels
WEEK NINE Wednesday, October 16		<i>What I Believe</i> Emma Goldman
WEEK NINE Friday, October 18	Fall Break	No class

WEEK TEN Monday, October 21	<b>Rights and Equality</b>	<i>Justice as Fairness</i> John Rawls
WEEK TEN Wednesday, October 23		<i>Justice as Fairness</i> John Rawls
WEEK TEN Friday, October 25		<i>Two Concepts of Liberty</i> Isiah Berlin
WEEK ELEVEN Monday, October 28		<i>The Grounds for an International Declaration of Human Rights</i> Jacques Maritain
WEEK ELEVEN Wednesday, October 30		<i>Human Rights, Rationality and Sentimentality</i> Richard Rorty
WEEK ELEVEN Friday, November 1	<b>The Other Without and Within</b>	<i>On the Rights of the Stateless</i> Hannah Arendt
WEEK TWELVE Monday, November 4	Topics for final essay distributed	<i>Letter from a Birmingham Jail</i> Martin Luther King
WEEK TWELVE Wednesday, November 6		<i>The Concept of the Political: Friend/Enemy Distinction</i> Carl Schmitt
WEEK TWELVE Friday, November 8		<i>Anti-Semite and Jew</i> Jean-Paul Sartre
WEEK THIRTEEN Monday, November 11	Blueprints due in class	<i>Anti-Semite and Jew</i> Jean-Paul Sartre
WEEK THIRTEEN Wednesday, November 13		<i>The Second Sex</i> Simone de Beauvoir
WEEK THIRTEEN Friday, November 15		<i>The Second Sex</i> Simone de Beauvoir
WEEK FOURTEEN Monday, November 18	Feedback on blueprints	<b>In class film:</b> <i>The Battle of Algiers</i>

WEEK FOURTEEN Wednesday, November 20		In class film: <i>The Battle of Algiers</i>
WEEK FOURTEEN Friday, November 22		<i>The Wretched of the Earth</i> Frantz Fanon
WEEK FOURTEEN Monday, November 25		<i>On the Reality of Race</i> (video) Charles Mills <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epAv6Q6da_o">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epAv6Q6da_o</a>
WEEK FOURTEEN Wednesday, November 27	Thanksgiving	No class
WEEK FOURTEEN Friday, November 29	Thanksgiving	No class
WEEK FOURTEEN Monday, December 2	Last day of class	1. <i>An Open Letter to My Sister,</i> <i>Miss Angela Davis</i> James Baldwin 2. <i>Imagining the Future</i> Angela Davis
EXAM WEEK Friday, December 13	Final paper due	
	<b>End.</b>	