PHIL 0350: Philosophy & Public Issues (Fall 2014)
Instructor: Stephen C. Makin (1009A CoL)
Lectures: Tu/Th, 12-12:50 p.m., 324 Cathedral of Learning
Office Hours: Tu/Th, 1-2 p.m.
Email: scm18@pitt.edu

Teaching Assistants:
Ms. Jen Jhun (1425 CoL, hours TBD): jsj14@pitt.edu
Mr. Jack Samuel (1425 CoL, hours TBD): jackhsamuel@gmail.com
Mr. Joe Milburn (1425 CoL, hours TBD): jcm55@pitt.edu

Précis
· This course is concerned with issues roughly at the intersection of Political Philosophy and Ethics. Our departure point is J.S. Mill’s seminal On Liberty. In the first two-thirds of the course we will take up in succession several very general issues about social policy: the (putative) legitimacy of legislating morality; toleration, and its limits; and paternalism. The last third of the course will look at some particular controversies more closely. Our discussions throughout will more or less presuppose the perspective of a generic Liberal state; but we will also be concerned with the question, whether Liberalism can be everything it claims to be, and in particular, whether Liberal ideology is genuinely ‘neutral’.

Required Texts:
· The readings for this course will be posted as .pdf’s on a gmail account. The username for the account is pitt.ethics and the password is deontology. (On the left panel you will see a label with the course name.) It is strongly recommended that you print each article and bring it to Lecture and, most important, Recitation. Each reading should be read before the date on which it is listed below, so that you may come to class prepared for the day’s lecture and discussion. This syllabus, and other information pertaining to this course, can also be found on this gmail account.
· If you are in a writing section, please see the supplemental syllabus, which will be distributed in Section.
· If you have a disability that requires accommodation, you should contact Disability Resources and Services, 140 William Pitt Union, (412) 648-7890 as soon as possible.

Grading:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paper One</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paper Two</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Papers:
· Paper topics will be distributed two weeks before the paper is due. Late papers will be accepted with a penalty: one-third of a letter-grade for each day the paper is late. Extensions for papers will be granted only for serious reasons. You should consult your TA, who will be grading your paper, about an extension in advance of the due date (see below for due dates).
· The penalty for plagiarizing a paper is non-negotiable failure for the entire course. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the University’s policies on plagiarism: http://www.provost.pitt.edu/info/ai1.html

Examinations:
· All exams will be administered in lecture. Do not be late on an exam day! Exams will consist of both short answer questions and essays. (See below for Examination dates.)

Participation:
· In order to achieve full participation credit you must: (1) attend both Lectures and Recitations regularly; (2) come to Recitation having carefully done the reading; (3) willingly contribute to discussion in recitation in an informed and intelligent way. Good faith efforts, shown through sweat and earnest attempts at improvement, also count towards your participation grade. Note well: your TAs may elect to give further assignments or quizzes, which will be part of your participation grade; please consult your TA in recitation.
Optimistic Schedule (bracketed readings are optional):

**Week 1**: Mill on Liberty  
Tu. Aug 26: Introductory  

**Week 2**: Mill on Liberty  
Tu. Sept. 2: Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch.2, pp. 28-64  

**Week 3**: Morality and the Law  
Th. Sept. 11: Devlin, “Morals and the Criminal Law”

**Week 4**: Morality and the Law  
Th. Sept. 18: *no new reading*

**Week 5**: Tolerance  
Tu. Sept. 23: Scanlon, “The Difficulty of Tolerance”  
Th. Sept. 25: Williams, “Toleration: An Impossible Virtue?”

**Week 6**: Tolerance  
Tu. Sept. 30: Fish, “Why We Can’t All Get Along”  
Th. Oct. 2: *no new reading* (*First Paper Due*)

**Week 7**: Mid Term  
Tu. Oct. 7: Exam Review, no reading assigned  
Th. Oct. 9: *First Examination*

**Week 8**: Paternalism  
Tu. Oct. 14: *Monday Make-up: no class*  
Th. Oct. 16: G. Dworkin, “Paternalism”

**Week 9**: Paternalism  
Th. Oct. 23: Smiley, “Paternalism & Democracy”

**Week 10**: Paternalism Redux: Nudges  
Tu. Oct. 28: [Sunstein & Thaler, “Preferences, Paternalism, and Liberty”]; Hausman & Welch, “Debate: To Nudge or Not to Nudge”  
Th. Oct. 30: Williams, excerpt from *Ethics & the Limits of Philosophy*, Ch. 3

**Week 11**: Punishment  
Tu. Nov. 4: Bentham, *Principles of Morals and Legislation* [selections]  
<http://www.econlib.org/library/Bentham/bnthPML.html>  
Th. Nov. 6: Mabbott, “Punishment”
Week 12: Voting or Free Speech
Tu. Nov. 11: TBA
Th. Nov. 13: TBA

Week 13: Euthanasia
Tu. Nov. 18: (no new reading)
Th. Nov. 20: Thomson, “Physician-Assisted Suicide”

Week 14: Euthanasia
Tu. Nov 25: (no new reading) (Second Paper Due)
Th. Nov. 27: Thanksgiving Recess, No Class

Week 15: Euthanasia
Tu. Dec. 2: Velleman, “Against the Right to Die”
Wed. Dec 4: Exam Review, no reading assigned

Exam Week
Mon. Dec. 8: The final examination will be held from 12 to 1:50 in CL 324