

# Capstone Seminar for Philosophy, Politics, & Economics: (In)equality

PHIL/POLI/ECON 698.002  
Fall 2017 - Thurs 9:30-12:00  
Caldwell Hall 213

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Office Hours: Tues. 2:00-3:00 & Thurs. 12:15-1:15

## Course Description:

This course will be structured and run like a graduate seminar. Its focus is (in)equality. We will begin by examining the philosophical foundations of the subject and go on to discuss various particular forms of inequality, drawing heavily from contemporary social scientific sources. A central aim of the seminar is to fortify your understanding of Politics, Philosophy, and Economics. The assignments are designed to facilitate this end. You will write a substantial, article-length essay. Each week we will discuss one or two papers (or book chapters). You will write a short response to the readings, due the evening prior to each meeting.

## Prerequisites:

All other courses required for the PPE minor.

## Assessment:

You will write two essays over the course of the semester and short responses to the reading each week. The first essay (approximately 2000 words) is due September 30, and will be worth 20% of your final grade. The second essay (your final research paper, approximately 5000 words) is due December 12, and will be worth 45% of your grade. The short responses to the reading (approximately 200 words) are due at 6:00 pm the evening prior to each meeting. Collectively these will be worth 20% of your final grade. Attendance and participation in the seminar will count for 10%. The remaining 5% of your grade is for extra-curricular participation. To receive full credit for extra-curricular participation, you can either (a) attend three PPE-relevant events (<http://ppe.unc.edu/events/list>) or (b) consume three total hours of (unassigned) PPE-relevant content (documentaries, podcasts, etc.) and write a short report summarizing your findings with respect to each bit of PPE-relevant content you consume. I consider option (b) a last resort. If you absolutely must choose it, please contact me as soon as possible so we can work on structuring this option for you.

## Seminar Attendance & Participation:

Attendance is mandatory. Participation and preparedness are also mandatory. Missing more than one class without a formal explanation will result in a 5% deduction from your overall grade. Arriving ten minutes late or leaving ten minutes early counts as missing a class.

**Electronics:**

No phones or laptops without prior permission.

**Email:**

Allow 24 hours for a response. If you don't hear back within 48 (business) hours, send a short follow up. Be sure to check this syllabus and the course site for answers to your questions before you email to ask them—and please be professional in your correspondence.

**Required Texts:**

All assigned readings can be found either online or on the course website.

**Reading:**

All the readings for this course are worth reading. Please read them carefully. I advise reading each piece more than once. The goal should be to understand the author well enough to be able to state her/his argument(s) in your own words. Read critically. Question the author's claims, and question your questioning of those claims. See also the following helpful guide to reading philosophy: [www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html](http://www.jimpryor.net/teaching/guidelines/reading.html).

**Writing:**

A principal aim of this course is to help you develop your skills in producing informative and persuasive writing. There will be lots of opportunities for practice. Prior to writing your first paper, I ask that you please view Angela Mendelovici's 'A Sample Philosophy Paper' and that you read closely Jim Pryor's 'Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper'.

**Honor Code:**

All students must be familiar with and abide by the Honor Code, which covers such issues as plagiarism, falsification, unauthorized assistance or collaboration, cheating, and other acts of academic dishonesty. Violations of the Honor Code will not be taken lightly. See <http://catalog.unc.edu/policies-procedures/honor-code/> for more information. Also: re-using papers for past courses qualifies as academic dishonesty, and so is not permitted.

**Topics and Readings:**

- 24 August      **Equality: What's the Point?**  
Elizabeth Anderson, 'What Is the Point of Equality?'  
*Optional:* Kok-Chor Tan, *Justice, Institutions, and Luck*, ch. 4
- 31 August      **Inequality: What's Wrong with It? (Part 1)**  
T.M. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?* chs. 1-3
- 7 September   **Inequality: What's Wrong with It? (Part 2)**  
T.M. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?* chs. 4-6

- 14 September **Justified Inequality?**  
 Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State, Utopia*, pp. 160-164, 235-238  
 T.M. Scanlon, *Why Does Inequality Matter?*, chs. 7-9  
*Optional (but encouraged)*: Gregory Mankiw, “Defending the One Percent”
- 21 September **Wealth and Income Inequality (Part 1)**  
 Heather Boushey, J. Bradford DeLong, and Marshall Steinbaum, “*Capital in the Twenty-First Century*, Three Years Later” (only pp. 1-19).  
 Tyler Cowen, “Capital Punishment”  
 Heather Boushey, “A Feminist Interpretation of Patrimonial Capitalism”  
*Optional (but encouraged)*: Robert Solow, “Thomas Piketty Is Right”
- 28 September **Wealth and Income Inequality (Part 2)**  
 Phillippe Van Parijs, “A Basic Income for All” (and responses by Anderson, Barry, Galston, Alstott, and Edelman)  
 Juliana Bidadanure, “Basic Income versus Basic Capital: A Temporal Perspective”
- 30 September **\*Essay 1 due (by email) at 11:59 pm\***
- 5 October **Intergenerational Inequality**  
 Juliana Bidadanure, “Making Sense of Age-Group Justice: A Time for Relational Equality?”  
 PPE Online Discussion: Juliana Bidadanure’s “Making Sense of Age-Group Justice: A Time for Relational Equality?”
- 12 October **Racial Inequality**  
 Stuart Jeffries, “Angela Davis: ‘There is an unbroken line of police violence in the US that takes us all the way back to the days of slavery’”  
 Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, chs. 1-3
- 19 October **No class – Fall Break**
- 24 October **\*Abstract for final paper due (by email) at 11:59 pm\***
- 26 October **Gender Inequality**  
 Gina Schouten, “Citizenship, Reciprocity, and the Gendered Division of Labor: A Stability Argument for Gender Egalitarian Political Interventions”  
 Jess Zimmerman, “Where’s my Cut?: On Unpaid Emotional Labor”

Emotional Labor: The MetaFilter Thread Condensed  
Jami Ingledue, "The Mental Workload of a Mother"

2 November **Workplace Inequality**

Elizabeth Anderson, *Private Government*, chs. 1, 2, 6, pp. 131-144

9 November **Epistemic Inequality**

Miranda Fricker, "Testimonial Injustice"

Rebecca Solnit, "Men Explain Things to Me"

16 November **Essay Presentations**

23 November **No class - Thanksgiving Break**

30 November **Essay Presentations**

12 December **FINALS PAPERS DUE**