

RESEARCH METHODS IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Professors:

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INTRODUCTION

The main goal of this course is to introduce and debate the main methods of developing arguments in political philosophy. The course is divided in two parts: in the introductory part, we will review the basic protocols of academic writing in political philosophy, and deal with general issues such as the relationship between theory and practice, the types of research questions, arguments and fallacies. The second part of the course will deal with various methods in political philosophy from conceptual analysis and constructivism to Critical Theory and Cambridge School. The course will combine the critical discussion of both the theoretical assumptions and the applications of these methods.

Objectives

- 1) Providing the basic tools necessary for writing, investigating and reading academic work in political philosophy.
- 2) Familiarizing the students with the plurality and rigor of methods in doing research in political philosophy.
- 3) Improving students' writing and debating skills by means of an open and interactive relationship with the professors.

Evaluation

- 1) Assistance, class participation, presentation (50%)
- 2) Short Essay - 2000-3000 words (50%)

Plan

1. Introduction
2. Building arguments, and presentating them
3. Writing Papers
4. The Role of Conceptual Analysis in Political Philosophy
5. The Quest for Coherence in Political Philosophy
6. Political Philosophy, Social Science, and Political Practice
7. Ethics, Politics, and Evolution
8. Critical Theory and Genealogy
9. The Cambridge School & *Begriffsgeschichte*
10. Devising Research Proposals

General Bibliography

D. Copp (ed), The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory

A. Fisher, *The Logic of Real Arguments*

M. Foucault, Power and Discourse

J. Habermas, Theory and Practice

J. Habermas, Between facts and Norms

J. Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Revised Edition)

J. Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: a Restatement* John Rawls, A Theory of Justice;

T. M. Scanlon, "Rawls on Justification", in Samuel Freeman, The Cambridge Companion to Rawls

Q. Skinner, *Visions of Politics*

J. Williams, Style: Towards Clarity and Grace