

**Dalhousie University**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**Political Science 3401: Contemporary Political Thought**  
**Instructor: Florian Bail**  
**Office Hours: M/W/ 12:30 – 1:30 or by appointment**  
**HH 354**  
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## **Description**

This course is a workshop in political thinking. Its goal is to examine normative responses to the current transformation of the state system and national economies affecting the balance of power between and within states, sovereignty and governance.

This and the systemic crises in its wake, among them climate change, migration, escalation of sovereign and private debt, the standardization of culture and norms of conduct, security, and rising inequality call for innovative political thinking and a framework for global governance that can overcome, without being insensitive to, parochial impulses.

Much of contemporary political thought concerns the impact of post-modernity on the democratic process and the shift of power from traditional party systems to professional elites and new social movements. In ideological terms, this shift is reflected in libertarianism, neo-liberalism, neo-conservatism, a mix of populism, fundamentalism and nationalism, and new advances in critical theory.

In this course we shall briefly review current global challenges to the state system and their ideological manifestations and then focus on the cosmopolitan approach to the reconfiguration of power.

Cosmopolitanism is an ancient, mostly Stoic, concept. It gained traction again in early modernity and found its most mature expression yet in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. We shall trace this development and test the idea of universal citizenship in political culture, regime design, and policy formation.

## **Texts**

The following books can be purchased at the **Bookmark** at 5686 Spring Garden Road:

**Kwame Anthony Appiah, *Cosmopolitanism. Ethics in a World of Strangers***

**Stan van Hooft, *Cosmopolitanism. A Philosophy for Global Ethics***

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On-line:

**Charles Beitz, "Human Dignity in the Theory of Human Rights: Nothing but a Phrase?" *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 41.3 (2013): 259-90**

**Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace***

**Pauline Kleingeld, Cosmopolitanism in: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy***

**Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political***

**Karsten Stueber, Empathy in: *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy***

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On reserve in Killam Library

(Books used only for reference are marked with an \*)

**Daniele Archibugi, David Held & Martin Koehler (Ed), *Re-imagining Political Community***

----- **(Ed), *Debating Cosmopolitanism (xerox)***

**Richard Beardsworth\*, *Cosmopolitanism and International Relations Theory***

**Ronald Beiner (Ed), *Theorizing Nationalism***

**Seyla Benhabib, *Another Cosmopolitanism***

**Francois Bourguignon, *The Globalization of Inequality (xerox)***

**James Bohman, *Perpetual Peace***

**Gillian Brock (Ed), *The Political Philosophy of Cosmopolitanism***

**Garrett Wallace Brown\*, *Grounding Cosmopolitanism***

**Paul Collier, Exodus (xerox)**

**Annand Bertrand Commissiong\*, Cosmopolitanism in Modernity**

**Jocelyne Couture, Kai Nielsen and Michael Seymour (Ed), Rethinking  
Nationalism**

**Jacques Derrida, On Cosmopolitanism and Forgiveness**

**Robert Fine\*, Cosmopolitanism**

**Juergen Habermas, The Inclusion of the Other**

-----, **The Lure of Technocracy (Xerox)**

**Gavin Kendall e.a. (Eds)\*, The Sociology of Cosmopolitanism**

**Pauline Kleingeld\*, Kant and Cosmopolitanism**

**Avishai Margalit, The Decent Society**

**Onora O'Neill, Bounds of Justice**

**Nikos Pastergiadis, Cosmopolitanism and Culture**

**Roland Robertson e.a. (Eds)\*, European Cosmopolitanism in Question**

**Michael Rosen, Dignity**

**Maria Rovisco e.a. (Eds), The Ashgate Research Handbook on  
Cosmopolitanism**

-----\*, **Cosmopolitanism, Religion and the Public Sphere**

**Steven Vertovec e.a. (Eds), Conceiving Cosmopolitanism**

**Lea Ypi, Global Justice and Avantgarde Political Agency (Xerox)**

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## **Assignments and Grading**

You will write two short essays (1000 words), a longer essay (2500 words) and an in-class exam.

The two short essays will be worth 20% each, the long essay will be worth 30%, and the exam will be worth 20% of the final grade.

Attendance and participation will be worth 10% of the final grade.

## **Due Dates**

First essay: January 26, 2016

Second essay: February 23, 2016

Third essay: March 24, 2016

Exam: April 5, 2016

## **Topics**

First essay: **Do states have obligations?**

Second essay: **Enforceability**

Third essay: On a topic discussed in class, to be chosen in consultation with the instructor and to be presented in outline in class.

The exam essay will cover topics discussed in class.

Instructions regarding the format of the essays, presentations and the exam will be provided in class.

Grading is by letter using the Dalhousie Grading Scheme. All work has to be submitted no later than April

Unexcused late papers carry a penalty of one full grade.

**Please take notice of university policy on plagiarism!**

## Outline

- 1 **Week One - Introduction:** The principal argument and justification of this course

*Readings: Van Hooft, Introduction*

- 2 **Week Two and Three - Presuppositions and Methodology:** Starting position, frame of reference, approach and terminology

*Readings: Bourguignon, Ch.1; Collier, Ch. 2; Dharwadker in: Rovisco/Nowicka Papastergiadis, Ch.7; Sassen, Ch. 1*

- 3 **Week Four - Parochialism:** The principal antagonists to cosmopolitanism

*Readings: Archibugi in: Archibugi/Held; Benhabib, Ch.1 and 2; Greenfeld in: Couture/Nielsen/Seymour; Schmitt, Ch.1; Scruton in: Beiner; Tamir in: Couture/Nielsen/Seymour*

- 4 **Week Five and Six - Philosophical Premises:** Attentiveness, Decency, Dignity, Empathy

*Readings: Beitz in: Philosophy & Public Affairs 41.3 (2013): 259-90; Margalit, Ch. 1; Rosen, Ch. 1; Stueber in: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*

- 5 **Week Seven and Eight - The Kantian Moment:** Political rationality

*Readings: Habermas in: Bohman/Lutz-Bachman; Kant, Perpetual Peace; Kleingeld in: Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy; Nussbaum in: Bohman/Lutz-Bachman; Synovich in: Brock/Brighouse*

- 6 **Week Nine - Cosmopolitan Conscience:** The 'humanitarian imperative' (A. Merkel)

*Readings: Appiah, all; Derrida, Ch.1; O'Neill, Ch. 10*

- 7 **Week Ten - Cosmopolitan Praxis:** Solidarity without borders

*Readings: Archibugi, Debating Cosmopolitics, Ch.13; Bauboeck in: Vertovec/Cohen; Habermas, The Lure of Technocracy, Ch. 2; Habermas, Inclusion of the Other, Ch. 4; Ypi, Ch. 7*

**8 Week Eleven – Enforceability: Reason of state revisited**

*Readings: Kant, Perpetual Peace, Appendix I & II; Moellendorf in:  
Brock/Brighthouse*

**9 Week Twelve – Conclusion and Recap**

