**SYLLABUS**

**PHIL 122, SECTION 01 – POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**SPRING 2014**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Clifford Anderson

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**OFFICE HOURS:** TTh 12:30 – 1:30 PM and by appointment

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:** A philosophical examination of the individual, the community and rights; the conflict between individual rights and the common good, various conceptions of justice, equality, liberty and the public good; the relationship of politics to ethics, economics and law; war and peace. 3 units. This course is included in Area C4 of the GE program. To see the GE requirements for this course go to: http://www.csus.edu/acaf/Portfolios/GE/geareaC4.stm.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** One part of political philosophy is abstract and theoretical, another part is practical and applied. We will do some of both. The abstract part explores the basic concepts of political thought such as justice, rights, equality, freedom and democracy. Different political philosophies elucidate how these fundamental values are to be understood and institutionalized. With a better understanding of these different theories, the student can expect to have a better sense of where they themselves want to be in the spectrum of political ideologies and what direction they think the country ought to be heading, politically speaking.

Among the practical problems we will explore are: problems of justice under a capitalistic system, taxation, welfare, environmental protection and the restoration of a true democracy. Obviously these are very large issues; our goal is not to solve them but to understand them better and engage in more intelligent debate over the merits of public policies in which those issues arise.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING SYSTEM:**

* Three take-home writing assignments on the readings and class discussions. The assignments will normally be due one week following the date of the assignment. Late papers without a valid excuse will suffer a grade reduction proportional to the lateness of the paper. Papers will be evaluated on the basis of factual accuracy, clarity, quality of reasoning and grammatical correctness. 60% of grade.
* Weekly (or sometimes bi-weekly) in-class quizzes on the readings and discussions. 40% of grade.
* Assignments will be posted on SacCT.

**TEXT:** The text is a reprint of *Political Philosophies in Moral Conflict*, by Peter Wenz. Outrageously, the cover makes it look as though I am the book’s author as it reads Phil 122 – Political Philosophy followed by my name. This should never have happened but I only learned about it last week; too late to change.

In addition there will be some class handouts and possible references to online encyclopedia articles as needed. The relevant reference sources are:

*The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* Online at <http://plato.stanford.edu>

*The internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* Online at [www.iep.utm.edu](http://www.iep.utm.edu)

*The Routledge Encyclopedia of Philosophy.* In the library at Ref. B52.R68. Also accessible online for students through JSTOR.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:** If you have a disability and require accommodations you need to provide documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, 916-278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester.

**STUDENT HONESTY:** Cheating is a No! No! See the University policy on cheating at:

<http://www.csus.edu/umanual/AcademicHonestyPolicy&Procedures.htm>

**TOPICS AND ORDER OF READINGS:**

Week 1 – Introduction

Week 2 – God’s Will and Natural Law (Chapter one)

Week 3 – Utilitarianism (Chapter two)

Week 4 – Libertarianism and the Harm Principle (Chapter three)

First paper assigned.

Weeks 5 and 6 – Libertarianism and Property Rights (Chapter four)

Week 7 – Free-Market Conservatism (Chapter five)

Weeks 8 and 9 – Rawl’s Liberal Contractarianism (Chapter six)

Second paper assigned.

Week 10 – Communitarianism and Moral Conservatism (Chapter seven)

Week 11 – Deliberative Democracy, Multiculturalism, and the Limits of Tolerance (Chapter eight)

Weeks 12 and 13 – Environmentalism (Chapter ten)

Week 14 and 15 – Cosmopolitanism and Conclusion (Chapter eleven and Conclusion)

Final paper assigned.