

PHIL 347 – Contemporary Moral Philosophy: Respect, Tolerance, and Civility

W: 10-11:30 / F: 8:30-10 | M-C D214

Office: Watson 322 | Office Hours: W: 1-2 / F: 10-11

E-mail: brandon.olsen@queensu.caCourse Website: <https://qshare.queensu.ca/Users01/blo/www/phil347.html>**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

What does it mean to respect others? Is tolerance a form of respect, or something else entirely? Do we have obligations to tolerate even those who are intolerant? When, where, and why ought we be civil to one another? What does civility entail?

This course addresses a set of moral issues having to do with respect, tolerance, and civility. Throughout the term, we will examine these concepts, their connection to one another (or lack thereof), and what moral obligations are associated with them. This examination will involve theoretical analysis – with an eye towards differing approaches to these issues – as well as inquiry into particular cases and contexts where such questions arise. For example, we will explore possible responses to purported cases of moral conflict between cultural groups – both international and domestic – and evaluate recent debates about what role civility should play in public political discourse.

TEXTS:

- *Toleration and Its Limits*, ed. Williams and Waldron. 2008. [TIL]
- *Religion in the Public Square*. Audi and Wolterstorff. 1997. [RPS]
- Articles on Electronic Course Reserve [E-Reserve]*
- Texts on Reserve at Stauffer Library [Print Reserve]*

* I will also make many of the Reserve texts available on the Course Website. They will still require a Queen's NetID for access.

ASSIGNMENTS:

In this course, you will be required to complete **four** short (1-2 page) **response assignments**, which will be graded in a pass/fail manner. (A fifth, optional response can be turned in to replace a failed response). You will also be required to write **two** longer (5-7 page) **papers**. The assignments are addressed below, and we will each assignment in more detail in class.

Each response assignment will be worth 5% of the total grade (20% together), and each longer paper will be worth 35% of the total grade (70% together). In addition, class participation will be worth 10% of the total grade. The **due dates** for all assignments will be as follows:

- Response #1 [on material covered in weeks 1-3] – **due by 1/28 (at the latest)**
- Response #2 [on material covered in weeks 3-6] – **due by 2/18 (at the latest)**
- Paper #1 – **due by 2/18**
- Response #3 [on material covered in weeks 6-9] – **due by 3/18 (at the latest)**
- Response #4 [on material covered in weeks 10-12] – **due by 4/8 (at the latest)**
- Paper #2 – **due by 4/13**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Class Material, Preparation and Attendance: You are expected to read the assigned material for each class session before class begins and to be prepared to participate in the class discussion. I suggest that you gain access to the class materials (downloading, printing, etc.) well in advance of when you will need them, so that you have no last minute problems. Please let me know if you have problems accessing material, but note that I am not responsible for solving last minute access problems.

2. Response Assignments: Response assignments are to be short reactions to one or two course readings. These reactions can take many forms. For example, they can raise an objection to a reading, compare two readings, or apply a reading to a real-world case. Response papers are expected to be turned in on the day we discuss the relevant readings in class. Unless you request an extension in advance, I *will not* accept response assignments outside of class or after the day we discuss the relevant readings. For each quarter of the course (i.e., weeks 1-3, 4-6, etc.), you must turn in one response assignment.

3. Papers: I will suggest topics for the two longer papers. You may write on one of these topics *or* you can write a paper based on one of the response assignments that you have written for the course. Extensions of time should be requested in advance of the deadline. Unexcused late papers will be penalized 5 points per day late (e.g., 100 to 95, 95 to 90, etc.).

4. Class Participation: Discussion is an essential part of this course and of philosophy in general. So, you are expected to come to class prepared to talk about the course material. Your participation grade (10%) will be based not on the *quantity* of comments you make, but on their general *quality* – by which I mean their tendency to advance and deepen the class discussion. Questions and requests for clarification are always helpful in this regard. Questions and comments directed to me outside of class (i.e., during my office hours or over e-mail) can also count towards class participation.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Act with integrity, and do not plagiarize others' work. I assume you are familiar with what constitutes plagiarism and Queen's University's rules concerning academic integrity. If you are not, I suggest you find out immediately, either by asking me or tracking the information down elsewhere. (A good place to start is the Department of English's Statement on Academic Integrity: <http://www.queensu.ca/english/pdf/plagiarism.pdf>, which includes a link to Queen's official academic integrity policy.) While I encourage you to talk with others about assignments, concepts, etc., I expect that all work you submit in this course is your own, except to the extent to which you give credit to other sources, texts, and/or people. If I find an instance of plagiarism, I will do whatever I can to ensure that the responsible party is sufficiently penalized.

CAVEAT:

The course schedule below represents what I aim to cover in the course. While I expect to be able to make it through all of the material on the schedule, I recognize that circumstances may arise that cause the schedule to change slightly. For example, we might want to extend our discussion of some of the readings, meaning that we will have to eliminate other readings from the list. Or, we might want to rearrange some of the readings to reflect the interests of the class. In the event of any such change, I will give as much advance notice as possible.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

PART I: RESPECT

WEEK # 1: Introduction; The Nature of Respect

Wed. 1/12 – Course Overview

Fri. 1/14 – Stephen Darwall, “[Two Kinds of Respect](#)” [E-Reserve]

WEEK # 2: Respect for Persons: Conceptual Issues

Wed. 1/19 – Thomas E. Hill, Jr., “[Respect for Humanity](#)” Lecture 1, pp. 3-37 [E-Reserve]

Fri. 1/21 – Hill, “[Respect for Humanity](#),” cont. Lecture 2, pp. 37-76 [E-Reserve]

WEEK # 3: Respect for Persons: Practical Issues

Wed. 1/26 – Onora O’Neill, “[Between Consenting Adults](#)” [E-Reserve]

Fri. 1/28 – Herbert Morris, “[Persons and Punishment](#)” [E-Reserve] (last day to turn in Response #1)

PART II: TOLERATION

WEEK # 4: Introduction to Toleration; Toleration as an Attitude

Wed. 2/2 – Jeremy Waldron and Melissa Williams, *Toleration and Its Limits*, Introduction [TIL]

Fri. 2/4 – T.M. Scanlon, “The Difficulty of Tolerance” [Print Reserve]

WEEK # 5: Toleration and Virtue

Wed. 2/9 – David Heyd, “Is Toleration and Political Virtue” [TIL]

Fri. 2/11 – Kathryn Abrams, “Forbearant and Engaged Toleration: A Comment on David Heyd” [TIL]

WEEK # 6: Toleration and Virtue, continued

Wed. 2/16 – Andrew Sabl, “Virtuous to Himself: Pluralistic Democracy and the Toleration of Tolerations” [TIL]

Fri. 2/18 – Melissa Williams, “Toleration, Canadian-style: Reflections of a Yankee-Canadian” [Reserve] (last day to turn in Response #2) **PAPER #1 DUE **

(READING WEEK 2/21-2/25)

WEEK # 7: Cultural Toleration

Wed. 3/2 – Chandran Kukathas “Cultural Toleration” [Print Reserve]

Fri. 3/4 – *Michael Walzer*, “Response to Kukathas” [Print Reserve]

WEEK # 8: Toleration and Identity

Wed. 3/9 – Ingrid Creppell, “Toleration, Politics, and the Role of Mutuality” [TIL]

Fri. 3/11 – Feldman, “Morality, Self-Interest, and the Politics of Toleration” [TIL]

PART III: CIVILITY

WEEK # 9: Civility and its Role in Public Life

Wed. 3/16 – Cheshire Calhoun, “[The Virtue of Civility](#)” [E-Reserve]

Fri. 3/18 – Thomas Nagel, “[Concealment and Exposure](#)” [E-Reserve] (**last day to turn in Response #3**)

WEEK # 10: Religion in the Public Square

Wed. 3/23 – Robert Audi, “Liberal Democracy and the Place of Religion in Politics” (excerpt) [RPS]

Fri. 3/25 – Robert Audi, “Liberal Democracy and the Place of Religion in Politics,” (excerpt) continued [RPS]

WEEK # 11: Religion in the Public Square, continued

Wed. 3/30 – Nicholas Wolterstorff, “The Role of Religion in Decision and Discussion of Political Issues” (excerpt) [RPS]

Fri. 4/1 – Nicholas Wolterstorff, “The Role of Religion in Decision and Discussion of Political Issues” (excerpt), continued [RPS]

WEEK # 12: Religion in the Public Square, continued

Wed. 4/6 – Robert Audi, “Wolterstorff on Religion, Politics, and the Liberal State” [RPS]

Fri. 4/8 – Nicholas Wolterstorff, “Audi on Religion, Politics, and Liberal Democracy” [RPS]; (**last day to turn in Response #4**)

(STUDY PERIOD 4/9-4/13)

****PAPER #2 DUE ON 4/13****