



Philosophy 1120G (670)
POWER, SOCIAL POLITICS, AND CULTURE
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: D. Proessel
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Course Information

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the key social, political, and legal structures and ideas that shape our contemporary culture and worlds. Students explore complex, often-hidden social and political concepts and organizational practices that prescribe modes of behaviour, human interactions, and material modes of production.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category B

Subject Code: PHILOSOP

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's College
Department of Philosophy
Philosophy 1120G (670): Power, Social Politics and Culture

Instructor: Dean Proessel
Email: dproesse@uwo.ca
Location: OWL Brightspace
Office Hours: Thursday 9:30 – 10:30 (via zoom)

Course Description

This course explores the structures and forces of power that condition and shape our daily lives. We will examine the internal relations between power, social politics, and culture with a view to highlighting how these relations affect and condition the construction of self and others. Students will be introduced to key models and thinkers, and a variety of themes will be investigated, including capitalism, work and exploitation, the politics of neoliberalism, biopolitics and immigration, race and gender, propaganda and the media. By bringing to light these different and often hidden and obscured forces of power, and by showing ways in which they inform our daily lives and sense of self, students will be empowered to think through and imagine ways of challenging these sources of power.

Method of Delivery

All course readings will be posted on Brightspace. Since this course is on-line, each week will include power-point slides and video recordings on the readings and themes being investigated that week. You will also have a chance to discuss the readings via a weekly zoom meeting.

Course Requirements

Paper 1 (February 9)	35% (5-6 pages)
Paper 2 (March 20)	35% (5-6 pages)
Final exam (TBA)	30%

The penalty for late papers is 3% a day.

Further details regarding papers and the exam will be posted on OWL.

Reading Schedule

Unit 1: Markets and Property

John Locke, "Of Property," from *The Second Treatise of Government*

Adam Smith, Excerpt from the *Wealth of Nations*

Debra Satz, "What do Markets Do?" from *Why Some Things Should Not be For Sale*

Unit 2: Liberalism and Neoliberalism: the distribution of property

Milton Friedman, "Neoliberalism and its Prospects"

Robert Nozick, The Entitlement Theory, from *Anarchy, State and Utopia*

John Rawls, "Justice as Fairness," from *A Theory of Justice*

Unit 3: Marxian critiques of work and capitalism

Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts* (1844)

Antonio Gramsci, "Hegemony, Relations of Force, Historical Block"

Louis Althusser, *Ideology, and Ideological State Apparatuses*

Unit 4: Foucault's theory of power and biopolitics

Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*: "We Other Victorians," "The Deployment of Sexuality" and "The Right of Death and Power Over Life"

Unit 5: Immigration, stateless people and biopolitics

Hannah Arendt, "The Perplexities of the Rights of Man" from *Origins of Totalitarianism*

Serena Parekh, "Beyond the ethics of admission: stateless people, refugee camps, and moral obligations"

Jacques Ranciere, "Who is the Subject of the Rights of Man"

Reading Week (February 14-22)

Unit 6: Race

Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, "The Black Man and Language" and "The Lived Experience of the Black Man"

Unit 7: Gender

Simon DeBeauvoir, "Introduction" to *The Second Sex*

Iris Marion Young, "Throwing Like a Girl"

Judith Butler, Selections from *Gender Trouble*

Unit 8: Propaganda and the media

Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*

Edward Bernay, Selections from *Propaganda*

Rupert Read, "What is New in Our Time? The Truth in 'Post Truth'"

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a "Multiple Exam Situation" (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum

course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under Special Examinations).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-supportservices/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:
https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safecampus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammarchecking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/OriginalityReports-TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.