

*Non est potestas Super Terram quae Comparetur ei. 100. 41. 24.*  
*Humans are born free, and everywhere they are in chains*  
—Jean-Jacques Rousseau

# THE FREE & JUST SOCIETY

PHL264: Introduction to Political Philosophy

Cleveland State University: Fall 2023

## Liberty, Equality, Justice

Despite rampant political disagreement, it is difficult to find someone who will say that they are opposed to liberty, equality, or justice. Yet, it is clear that we understand these ideas differently. In fact, one way to understand our rampant political disagreement is precisely that we have different conceptions of these fundamental concepts.

This course is a philosophical investigation of these and related core political concepts. Our aim will be to understand how so many people can agree on their importance and yet radically disagree about what they require of citizens and governments. We will also be seeking to improve our understanding of these concepts and what they imply about the role of government, the nature of political rights, and the pursuit of justice.

## What We'll Do

**By the end of this course, you should be able to...**

1. Interpret and explain key texts and arguments in political philosophy
2. Charitably develop and apply philosophical positions and arguments
3. Evaluate key arguments and positions in political philosophy
4. Present original philosophical ideas and arguments clearly in written and oral form
5. Analyze and evaluate political debates using political philosophical concepts and theories

## How We'll Do It

We'll explore classic & contemporary texts in political philosophy, aiming to...

**Interpret** what is being said, how it is being justified, and why it is significant

**Elaborate** on what is being said to understand what else might follow and how it might help us understand contemporary political debates

**Evaluate** the arguments and positions to determine what we have most reason to believe

## Instructor Info

**Dr. Marcus Schultz-Bergin**  
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### Office Hours

[insert]  
And by appointment

## Course Info

### Class Meetings

BH 0444  
Monday/Wednesday 4:30-5:45pm

### Technological Tools Used

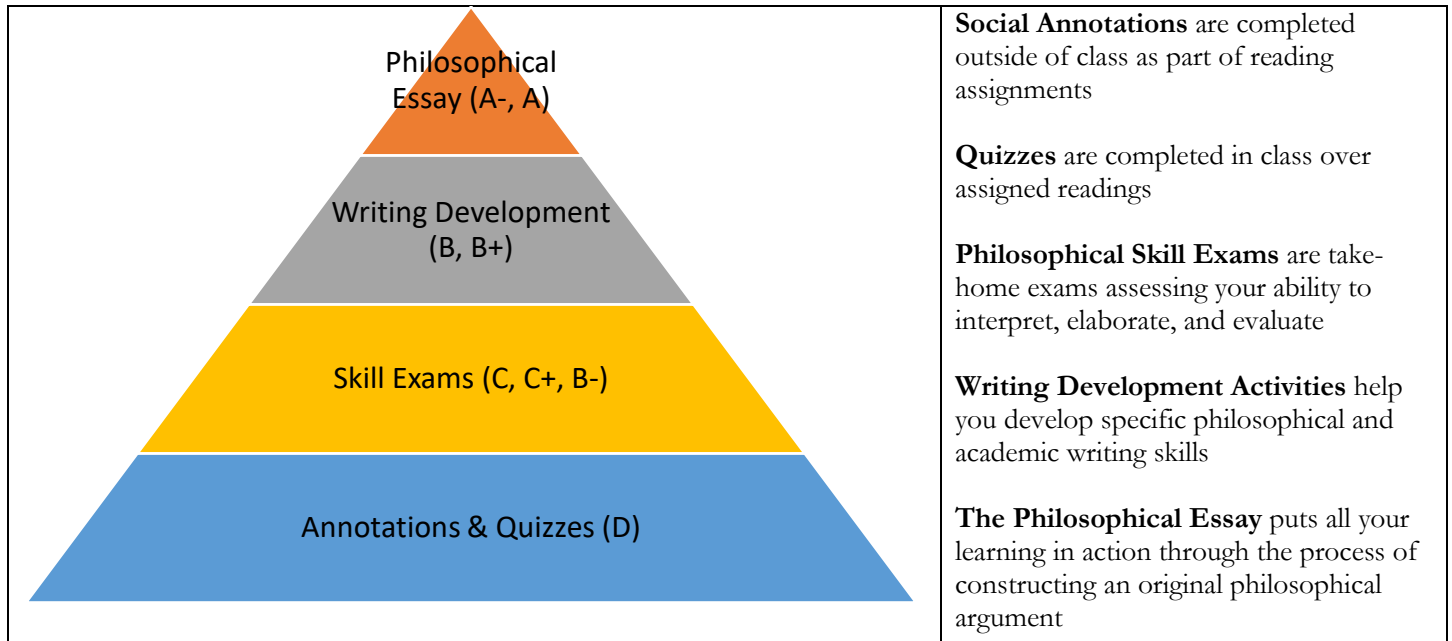
Blackboard: Delivery of materials and submission of assignments

Perusall: Social annotation of readings

*There is no required text for this course. All technological tools are provided free of charge.*

# How We'll Know what you Learned

More detail about the assignments and how they will be assessed is provided in the Complete Syllabus



# What We'll Learn

A complete day-by-day schedule with all assignments can be found in the Complete Syllabus

<b>Does human nature drive us to conflict?</b> The Principle of Charity & Argument Reconstruction	Aug 30 - Sep 13
<b>What is the source of political power and authority?</b> Philosophical Summaries	Sep 18 - Sep 27
<b>What does it mean to be free in a society of laws?</b> Evaluating & Constructing Arguments Philosophical Skills Exam 1 due Oct 18 <sup>th</sup>	Oct 2 - Oct 18
<b>What is political justice?</b> Philosophical Essay 4-part sequence begins, final paper due Nov 29 Philosophical Skills Exam 2 due Nov 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Oct 23 - Nov 29

