

POL 484H/2026H: Recent Political Theory
Alumni Hall 302 Tuesdays 2:10-4:00

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This course will explore two recent discussions in Anglo-American political theory. The first is called the ideal/non-ideal theory debate. It explores questions about the extent to which political theory should strive to be realistic or practice-guiding. The second is called the all affected interests debate. It begins with the moral principle that we ought to take into account all of the interests affected by a given policy or institution and explores the implications of that principle.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

The course will be conducted as a seminar. Students are expected to attend regularly and to participate actively in class discussions. There are two writing requirements:

1. A paper on the ideal/non-ideal theory debate. 1500-2000 words for undergraduates, 1800-2300 words for graduate students, including notes. Due October 25. Please submit electronically in word format (.doc). Worth 40% of final grade.
2. A paper on the all affected interests debate. 3000-3500 words for undergraduates, 3500-4000 words for graduate students, including notes. Due December 7. Please submit electronically in word format (.doc). Worth 60% of final grade.

Reading Assignments through Oct. 11. (All available on Blackboard):

Sept. 20:

Laura Valentini, "Ideal vs. Non-ideal Theory: A Conceptual Map" *Philosophy Compass* 7/9 (2012): 654–664.

Joseph H. Carens, "Appendix: Presuppositions and Political Theory" from *The Ethics of Immigration* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

Sept. 27:

Zofia Stemplowska and Adam Swift, "Ideal and Nonideal Theory," *The Oxford Handbook of Political Philosophy*, ed. David Estlund.

William Galston, "Realism in Political Theory," *European Journal of Political Theory* 9 (2010): 385–411.

Oct. 4:

Pablo Gilabert and Holly Lawford-Smith, "Political feasibility: A conceptual exploration," *Political Studies* 60(4) (2012): 809–825.

Jack Knight, "The Imperative of Non-ideal Theory," *Political Studies Review* Vol. 12 (2014): 361–368.

Benjamin R. Hertzberg, "Ideal and Non-ideal Theory in Elizabeth Anderson's *The Imperative of Integration*," *Political Studies Review* Vol. 12 (2014): 369–375.

Elizabeth Anderson, "Reply to Critics of *The Imperative of Integration*," *Political Studies Review* Vol. 12 (2014): 376–382.

Oct. 11:

David Miller, "Taking Up the Slack," in *Justice for Earthlings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013): 206–227.

Robyn Eckersley, "The common but differentiated responsibilities of states to assist and receive 'climate refugees'," *European Journal of Political Theory* Vol. 14(4) (2015): 481–500.

Matthew J Gibney, "Refugees and justice between states," *European Journal of Political Theory* Vol. 14(4) (2015): 448–463.

The reading assignments on the principle of affected interests will be handed out next week.