

## **PHILOSOPHY 433/535 - Equality, Class, and Justice Spring 2026**

**Class meets:** Monday & Thursday 1:00 pm-2:20 pm, CLE B315

**Instructor:** Prof. Colin Macleod (pronouns: he & him)

**Office:** CLE B328

**e-mail:** cmacleod@uvic.ca

**Office Hours:** Monday 2:30-4:30 pm and by appointment

### **Texts**

There are no required texts that you must purchase for the course. All the readings will be available online via the University Library or Brightspace.

### **Course Objective**

In this course we will examine recent work about the nature and significance of growing economic inequality for democratic communities.

### **Territorial Acknowledgement**

I acknowledge and respect the Ləkʷəŋən (Songhees and Esquimalt) Peoples on whose territory the university stands, and the Ləkʷəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

### **Formal Course Requirements**

Written work for the course consists of 1 term paper (approximately 3,000-4,000 words in length), a brief critical analysis (approximately 1,000 words), and (as many as) 10 quote and comment assignments. The term paper is worth 60% of the course grade, the critical analysis is worth 25% of the course grade, and the quote and comment assignment is worth 10% of the course grade. 5% of the course grade is devoted to contribution to seminar discussion.

### **Informal Course Expectations**

I expect students to attend class regularly and to participate actively in class discussion. You should feel free to pose questions and raise philosophical issues related to the material we are studying. I expect students to be attentive to and respectful of the perspectives of others in the class but this does not mean you should not voice disagreements with or raise criticisms about the philosophical views presented by members of the class. We can all learn a lot from lively exchanges of different points of view. So, I encourage voice your views in an open and thoughtful manner. You should expect to challenge the views of others and to have your views challenged by me and other members of the class. If there is material in the course that you find puzzling or difficult to understand please ask me about at an appropriate juncture in class or discuss your questions with me during my office hours.

### **Late Policy**

Unless you qualify for an academic concession due to [unexpected and unavoidable circumstances, or conflicting responsibilities](#) I will not change the due date of

assignments nor will I reschedule exams for you. I will accept, without grade penalty, **essays** that are submitted up to one week after the due date. However, essays that are submitted in this period will not receive detailed comments. After this **grace period** unexcused essays will not be accepted.

### **Course Materials on Brightspace**

You can access the Brightspace page for this course by signing in with your netlink id. Various essential course materials will be posted there (e.g., powerpoint slides, some readings, assignments, etc.) **Please note** that all assignments for this course and all materials posted to Brightspace are the intellectual property of myself and the University of Victoria. Do not circulate this material or post it to note-sharing sites without my permission. Posting course materials to note-sharing sites or otherwise circulating course materials without the permission of your instructor violates the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#)

### **Appropriate Academic Conduct and Professionalism**

Students are expected to understand and abide by the University regulations concerning academic misconduct - e.g., plagiarism, cheating, etc. For further information about these matters students can consult the [Policy on Academic Integrity](#) . If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism or academic misconduct, consult me before submitting an assignment. Professional and mutually respectful conduct is expected from all students enrolled in courses at UVic. The [Tri-Faculty Standards for Professional Behavior for Students](#), which draws together a number of existing UVic policies in one place for ease of reference.

### **Use of Digital Tools**

Please be advised that in this course you are not authorized to use any form of generative AI. In order to successfully complete course activities, generative AI is not required nor welcomed. **Students should not make any use of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT that use AI for content generation.**

### **Wellness and Counseling Resources**

Many students experience challenges to their wellbeing during their studies. [Uvic Student Wellness](#) offers many resources to support student wellness. Assistance for matters concerning physical, mental, and spiritual health is available. There is a designated [student counsellor for law students](#). Information about other resources and opportunities for law students is [available here](#).

### **Uvic Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response:**

You can learn more about how Uvic defines sexualized violence and its approach to prevention by visiting [www.uvic.ca/svp](http://www.uvic.ca/svp). If you or someone you know is impacted by sexualized violence and needs information, advice, and/or support, please contact the sexualized violence resource office in Equity and Human Rights (EQHR). Whether or not you have been directly impacted, if you want to take part in important prevention work on campus, you can reach out to: Sexualized Violence Resource Office in EQHR, Sedgewick C119; email: [svpcoordinator@uvic.ca](mailto:svpcoordinator@uvic.ca).

## **Important Dates**

Brief Critical Analysis: **February 12**

Term Paper: Due on or before **April 9** (Grace period ends **April 16**)

Quote and Comment Assignments: Throughout the term (maximum 1 per week)

## **Reading Schedule**

Note: This is a provisional reading schedule. Some revisions may be made during the course of the term.

**BS = available on Brightspace**

**V = available online via UVIC Library**

### **Week of January 5 - History**

Introduction, Chapters 1-4 Thomas Piketty, *A Brief History of Equality* (V)

### **Week of January 12 - History**

Chapters 5-7, Thomas Piketty, *A Brief History of Equality* (V)

### **Week of January 19 – History**

Chapters 8-10, Thomas Piketty, *A Brief History of Equality* (V)

### **Week of January 26 - Property Owning Democracy**

Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 4 O'Neill, M., & Williamson, T. (2012). *Property-owning democracy: Rawls and beyond* (1st ed.). (V)

### **Week of February 2 – Private Government**

Chapters 1-2 Elizabeth Anderson (2017). *Private government: how employers rule our lives (and why we don't talk about it)* (V)

### **Week of February 9 - Alienation**

Introduction and Chapter 1, Cordelli, C. (2021). *The privatized state*. Princeton University Press. (V)

Cordelli, C. (2025). What Is the Wrong of Capitalism? *The American Political Science Review*, 119(4), 1806–1821. (V)

### **Week of February 16 READING WEEK**

### **Week of February 23 - Work**

Schwartz, A. (1982). Meaningful Work. *Ethics*, 92(4), 634–646. (V)

Bowie, Norman E., 'Dignity and Meaningful Work', in Ruth Yeoman, and others (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Meaningful Work*, Oxford Handbooks (2019; online edn, Oxford Academic, 11 Feb. 2019) (V)

### **Week of March 2 – Minimums and Maximums**

Robeyns, I. (2022). Why Limitarianism? *The Journal of Political Philosophy*, 30(2), 249–270. (V)

Van Parijs, P. (2004). Basic Income: A Simple and Powerful Idea for the Twenty-First Century. *Politics & Society*, 32(1), 7–39. (V)

### **Week of March 9 – Taxation and Ownership**

Ryan Tonkin, ‘Taxation’, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. (BS)

Liam Murphy. (2005). Book symposium: Liam Murphy and Thomas Nagel. The Myth of Ownership: Taxes and Justice (2002): author’s introduction. *Australian Journal of Legal Philosophy*, 30(2005), 122–128. (V)

### **Week of March 16 – Democracy**

Chapter 1 - Herzog, L. (2023). *Citizen knowledge : markets, experts, and the infrastructure of democracy*. Oxford University Press. (V)

### **Week of March 23 – Education**

Elizabeth Anderson (2007). Fair Opportunity in Education: A Democratic Equality Perspective. *Ethics*, 117(4), 595–622. (V)

Debra Satz. (2007). Equality, Adequacy, and Education for Citizenship. *Ethics*, 117(4), 623–648. (V)

Colin Macleod. (2010). Justice, Educational Equality, and Sufficiency. *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 40, 151–175. (V)

### **Week of March 30 – Affluence and Personal Conduct**

Chapter 10, Cohen, G. A. (2000). *If you’re an egalitarian, how come you’re so rich?* Harvard University Press. (V)

Colin Macleod “Diagnosing the ‘Burdens’ of The Rich Egalitarian: How Capitalism Nurtures Pleonexia” (BS)

## Quote and Comment Assignment Instructions

Over the course of the term, you may complete as many as 10 quote and comment assignments. However, you may only submit **ONE** quote and comment in any given week of term. In order to receive marks for the quote, comment, and critique assignment you must submit your assignment to the Brightspace page during the week that reading is on the outline. **You must also attend the class at which the reading is discussed** in order to receive credit for a submission. Your task is to identify an interesting passage in the assigned readings for the week and offer a clear, concise, and thoughtful comment on the passage. Make sure you clearly identify **the author** and **source of the passage** you quote. In your remarks, provide a brief explanation of the issue raised in the cited passage and then provide a brief response – e.g., a criticism or comment or constructive question – about the cited passage. It is best to begin with the quotation, then provide a brief characterization of the point made in the quoted passage (e.g., “In this passage Jones claims...”). Only after you have characterized the issue at stake should you offer your comment. Your remarks **should never exceed** a single, double-spaced piece of paper. Use 12 point font and regular margins. The date, your name, student number and the course number should be clearly indicated at the top left-hand side of the page. I will assign full marks to any assignment that reflects a good faith effort to engage the material in a thoughtful way.

### Your assignment **MUST** have the following elements:

Your Name & Student #

The date

Course #

Quote & Comment # (e.g., #1)

Quotation and source (this can be single-spaced)

Your concise comment (this must be double-spaced)

### About Colin Macleod

Colin Macleod B.A. (Queens), M.A. (Dalhousie), Ph.D. (Cornell) is a Professor of Philosophy and Law. He joined the Philosophy department at the University of Victoria in 1998. His research focuses on issues in contemporary moral, political and legal theory with a special focus on the following topics: (1) distributive justice and equality (2) children, families and justice and (3) democratic ethics. He is the author of *Have A Little Faith: Religion, Democracy and the American Public School* (University of Chicago Press 2016) [co-written with Ben Justice]; *Liberalism, Justice, and Markets: A Critique of Liberal Equality* (OUP 1998) and coeditor with David Archard of *The Moral and Political Status of Children* (OUP 2002). His articles have appeared in journals such as *The Chicago-Kent Law Review*, *Theory and Research in Education*, *Politics and Society*, *The Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, *The Canadian Journal for Law and Jurisprudence*, *Law and Philosophy*, and *Dialogue*. He is an executive editor of the *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*. When he is not engaged in philosophical discussion and argument, he enjoys playing hockey and tennis and strumming his guitar while jamming with his musical friends.