**COURSE SYLLABUS**

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**Discord and Unity:**

*Engaging Contemporary World through Ethics and Philosophy*

**Instructor**

Adam Chmielewski and Lotar Rasinski

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**Office Hours**

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**Prerequisite / Co-requisite:**

None

**Description:**

The course discusses important moral, social, and political dilemmas of today and places them in the categories of debates in contemporary philosophy and ethics. We will focus on ongoing public deliberations related to such issues as: the condition and future of democracy, rising challenges of bioethics, problems of social justice, the changing position of the state and citizenship in the globalizing world, the role of language as a means to understanding social reality, or the challenges of multiculturalism to classical models of rationality, with the goal of helping students to productively discuss these dilemmas through the application of philosophical and ethical concepts.

Essential to our pedagogical approach is the understanding of philosophy and ethics as permeated by discord and unity. While striving for finding unity in variety, and harmony in diversity, philosophy has been defined by internal discord that has generated intellectual categories to which we will introduce our students, including: Consent vs. Agonism; Normativity vs. Responsibility; Liberty vs. Equality; Minimal vs. Welfare State; Cosmopolitanism vs. Patriotism; Representation vs. Discourse; Relativism vs. Universalism; Reason vs. Commitment. By showing how internal tensions in scholarship have been translated into generative categories that propel intellectual debates, we are hoping to help students learn how to engage in democratic argumentation on issues that have been a source of conflict in contemporary politics and societies. The course thus aims to prepare students for deliberative and critical understanding of moral and political ideas present in contemporary life, while developing a civic attitude based on the responsibility and understanding of the tensions of diversity and unity in the world today.

**Learning Outcomes* (definition and examples at end of form):**

*After taking this course, the students will be able to:*
• understand the importance of reflexive and critical approach in everyday life as a condition of democratic freedom

• characterize the basic assumptions of ethical and philosophical conceptions discussed in the seminar, and use them in everyday life

• diagnose and take a position on ethical, existential, and political dilemmas using the concepts and arguments learned in the seminar

• adopt open attitude towards other ethical, religious, and cultural world-views and engage in democratic deliberations with them

Bibliography/ Texts / Supplies – Required:

1) Appiah, K.A., Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers, New York: W.W. Norton, 2006;


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Bibliography/ Texts / Supplies – Additional:


Requirements:
Students are required to read the assigned texts and actively participate in class discussions. Final papers (15 pages, double-spaced for undergraduate students, 25 pages for graduate students) will build on course material (readings, discussions), and specific topics will be developed in consultation with instructors during the course.

Grading:
Participation in discussion – 40 percent
Interim written essay exam (choice of 3 topics) - 20 percent
Final paper – 40 percent

Course Specific Policies on attendance, late work, make up work, examinations if outside normal class time, etc.:
Final papers must be delivered by the program end date.

Additional Information:
The reader with suggested readings will be delivered in an electronic form 1 month before the course starts.

Academic Integrity
The Syracuse University Academic Integrity Policy holds students accountable for the integrity of the work they submit. Students should be familiar with the Policy and know that it is their responsibility to learn about instructor and general academic expectations with regard to proper citation of sources in written work. The policy also governs the integrity of work submitted in exams
and assignments as well as the veracity of signatures on attendance sheets and other verifications of participation in class activities. Serious sanctions can result from academic dishonesty of any sort.

For more information and the complete policy, see [http://academicintegrity.syr.edu](http://academicintegrity.syr.edu)

**Disability-Related Accommodations**
If you believe that you need accommodations for a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), [http://disabilityservices.syr.edu](http://disabilityservices.syr.edu), located in Room 309 of 804 University Avenue, or call (315) 443-4498 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. ODS is responsible for coordinating disability-related accommodations and will issue students with documented Disabilities Accommodation Authorization Letters, as appropriate. Since accommodations may require early planning and generally are not provided retroactively, please contact ODS as soon as possible.

**Religious Observances Policy**
SU religious observances policy, found at [http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm](http://supolicies.syr.edu/emp_ben/religious_observance.htm), recognizes the diversity of faiths represented among the campus community and protects the rights of students, faculty, and staff to observe religious holidays according to their tradition. Under the policy, students are provided an opportunity to make up any examination, study, or work requirements that may be missed due to religious observance provided they notify their instructors before the end of the second week of classes. For fall and spring semesters, an online notification process is available through [MySlice/StudentServices/Enrollment/MyReligiousObservances](http://myslice.syr.edu/StudentServices/Enrollment/MyReligiousObservances) from the first day of class until the end of the second week of class.

[Add course specific language as appropriate here about how and when academic requirements will be made up.]

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Enter week/lecture, topic for the week/lecture, and required reading in the appropriate columns below. Use the Tab key to move around in the table. To insert rows, click on the table, the **Table** menu appears, highlight **Insert** and select the action you want. To delete rows, highlight the rows you want to delete, right click and select **Delete** and then on the **Table** menu, point to **Delete** and click on **Rows**.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week/Lecture</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Required Reading and Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>case of a local writer-philosopher from Wroclaw accused for a murder.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Facts and interpretation of facts - the question of objectivity.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. Relativism and foundationalism in politics.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. Classical view on language – representation.</td>
<td>(ch. ‘The beetle in the box’).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Week 5
Between life and death
2. Bioethics and ‘traditional’ ethics.

Week 6
Consent and disagreement in politics
2. Agonism and democracy.

Week 7
Political Aesthetics
1. Beauty and duty.
2. Elements of political aesthetics.

Week 8
The Individual and the Community
1. Liberal-communitarian debate.
2. Contemporary concepts of the individual.
Learning Outcomes definition and examples:

Learning outcomes are statements that specify what learners will know or be able to do as a result of a learning activity or course or program. Learning outcomes help instructors communicate more clearly to students what is expected of them. Outcomes also help instructors develop effective strategies for evaluating student work and learning. Outcomes are usually expressed, using action verbs, as knowledge, skills, and/or attitudes. They should be observable and measurable.

1. You/students will be able to explain the six reasons for conducting a needs assessment.
2. You/students will be able to demonstrate the ability to analyze texts using various critical and theoretical approaches.
3. You/students will be able to explain in writing the importance of cultural diversity in the workplace.
4. You/students will be able to describe, analyze, compare, and contrast socio-cultural data from diverse cultural settings.
5. You/students will be able to apply logical reasoning methods and approaches in constructing arguments and positions.
6. You/students will be able to use INFOMAP’s MAP routine to draw and print a dot map and then give a verbal description of the pattern revealed.

*Note: This template was designed by the College of Arts & Sciences. It is designed to help ensure that the proposal meets the requirements of the Senate Committee on Curricula.*