

Freedom

Philosophy 600

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:30-4:30, Thursday 9:00-11:00, and by appointment.

I. Texts

Watson, G. (ed.). *Free Will*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

Carter, I., Kramer, M., and Steiner, H. (eds.). *Freedom: A Philosophical Anthology*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.

II. Class Goals

In this course we will undertake a systematic investigation of a single topic. Our topic is freedom. We will begin by looking at freedom of the will and then move to the topic of freedom, liberty, and autonomy in the areas of political philosophy, philosophy of law, and applied ethics.

III. Grading

Participation	10%
Quizzes	30%
Paper presentation	30%
Term paper	30%

Participation: Read. Attend. Talk. The last two will be especially important when your classmates present their papers.

Daily quizzes: You will have a quiz over each of your reading assignments. After we discuss the readings in class you will have 24 hours to log on to Moodle and take a quiz consisting of 5 true/false questions. You can review your notes and/or the readings before you take the quiz, but you should put all material away before you take the quiz. During the quiz you should consult no references other than your memory. This is an essential part of the course and your ability to learn the course material. You should take the quiz even if you miss class. Except for extraordinary circumstances, make up quizzes will not be given.

Term paper and paper presentation: A requirement for this course is that you write a term paper on one of the questions addressed in our readings. The paper should be six to eight single-spaced pages. The first step is email your paper topic to me. You should do this by 11 a.m. on May 1.

The second step is to prepare for a conference with me on your paper. The conference will take about 20 minutes in my office. Before you come to the conference you should be prepared the following: (1) your thesis, (2) a bibliography of the sources that you will discuss in your paper, (3) the basic argument that you will use to defend your thesis, and (4) a description of what you consider to be the strongest argument against your thesis. The conference will be a discussion where we can hopefully refine your thesis and argument, as well as consider whether there are any additional sources that your paper should address.

The third step is to present an oral version of your paper to the class. The model here is presenting a paper at a philosophy conference. Most of the criteria that go into a judging a good paper apply equally well to a good presentation. Your presentation should articulate a clear thesis. The thesis should engage a current philosophical discussion. It should add something to that discussion. You should have a clear argument to defend your thesis. It should engage counter arguments that other philosophers would likely make.

In addition to criteria that are similar to the ones used to judge a philosophical paper, there are some that are unique. It can be more difficult to follow complex arguments when they are presented orally, and it is your job to make it as easy as possible for your audience to understand you. You should use either a handout or Power Point to highlight key passages and outline arguments.

After your paper presentation you will have a chance to make a final set of revisions before you turn in your paper. When I grade your final paper I will consider the following criteria:

A. Organization and Clarity:

Your paper should have one clear, precise sentence for your thesis.

Your thesis should be the last sentence of your first paragraph.

Your thesis should clearly limit the scope of your discussion.

Your thesis should defend a position.

Your thesis should be the organizing idea for your paper.

The introductory paragraph should provide a context making it easier for the reader/listener to understand the significance of your thesis.

The topic sentences of your supporting paragraphs should provide reasons why the reader/listener should accept your thesis.

The body of each supporting paragraph should provide reasons why the reader/listener should believe the topic sentence of that paragraph.

Avoid awkwardly phrased sentences.

Avoid spelling and grammatical errors.

Citations should use *The Chicago Manual of Style* as a guide.

B. Description of the Text:

References to the text should be accurate and not mislead.

You should strive to make the ideas in the text as easy to understand as possible.

You should not ignore sources relevant to the defense of your thesis.

C. Argument:

Your arguments should not assume the wrong audience.

Because the members of your audience are diverse, you should not presume that they hold specific religious or ideological views.

Give the reader a sense of why someone might disagree with your thesis and show the reader why these reasons are unpersuasive.

Late term papers are penalized as follows:

Up to 24 hours – half a letter grade

24 to 48 hours – one letter grade

48 to 72 hours – two letter grades

Assignments turned in after 72 hours receive a failing grade.

I will sometimes grant brief extensions, but you must request the extension at least two business days before the assignment is due.

IV. Schedule

Week 1: March 31—April 4

Mon: First day of class

Wed: G. Watson, "Introduction," R. Chisholm, "Human Freedom and the Self," P. van Inwagen, "An Argument for Incompatibilism," pp. 1-57.

Fri: J. J. C. Smart, "Free Will, Praise, and Blame," P. Strawson, "Freedom and Resentment," pp. 58-93.

Week 2: April 7—11

Mon: D. Lewis, "Are We Free to Break the Laws?" H. Bok, "Freedom and Practical Reason," pp. 122-166.

Wed: H. Frankfurt, "Alternative Possibilities and Moral Responsibility," D. Widerker, "Libertarianism and Frankfurt's Attack on the Principle of Alternative Possibilities," J. Fischer, "Frankfurt-Style Compatibilism," pp. 167-211.

Fri: G. Strawson, "The Impossibility of Moral Responsibility," T. Nagel, "Freedom," pp. 212-256.

Week 3: April 14—18

Mon: T. O'Connor, "Agent Causation," R. Clarke, "Toward a Credible Agent-Causal Account of Free Will," pp. 257-284.

Wed: R. Kane, "Responsibility, Luck, and Chance: Reflections on Free Will and Indeterminism," H. Frankfurt, "Freedom of the Will and the Concept of a Person," pp. 285-336.

Fri: G. Watson, "Free Agency," T. M. Scanlon, "The Significance of Choice," pp. 337-371.

Week 4: April 21—25

Mon: S. Wolf, "Sanity and the Metaphysics of Responsibility," P. Pettit and M. Smith, "Freedom in Belief and Desire," pp. 372-407.

Wed: R. Albritton, "Freedom of Will and Freedom of Action," R. Wallace, "Addiction as Defect of the Will: Some Philosophical Reflections," pp. 388-452.

Fri: Carter, et al., "General Introduction" and "Negative and Positive Freedom," pp. xvii—38, (Green and Ruggiero optional).

Week 5: April 28—May 2

Mon: "Negative and Positive Freedom," pp. 39-80, (Day optional).

Wed: "Freedom, Government, and Arbitrary Power," pp. 81-122 (Harrington, Locke, and Montesquieu optional).

Thurs: By 11 a.m. you should email me your paper's topic.

Fri: "Freedom and the Mind," pp. 123-186, (Megone, Flathman, and Kramer optional).

Week 6: May 5—9

Mon: "Freedom and Morality," pp. 187-215, (Benn and Weinstein optional).

Wed: "Freedom and Morality," pp. 216-248.

Fri: *Reading period*

Week 7: May 12—16

Mon: *Conferences – No class*

Wed: "Coercion," pp. 249-292, (Steiner optional).

Fri: "Coercion," pp. 293-321.

Week 8: May 19 – 23

Mon: "Autonomy," pp. 321-350 (Benn optional).

Wed: "Freedom, Ability, and Economic Inequality," pp. 351-380, (Leoni optional).

Fri: "Liberalism and the Value of Freedom," pp. 381-428, (Popper, Raz, and Sen optional)

Week 9: May 26—30

Mon: *Memorial Day*

Wed: "Liberalism and the Value of Freedom," pp. 429-440, "The Measurement of Freedom," pp. 441-490 (Pattanaik and Xu, Sen, Sugden, and van Hees optional).

Fri: Presentations

Week 10: June 2—6

Mon: Presentations

Wed: Presentations

Fri: Presentations

Final Paper Due: Noon on Monday June 9.