



PHL 351

Social Philosophy

S1 Day 2017

Dept of Philosophy

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff

Michael Olson

michael.olson@mq.edu.au

W6A Room 723

Tuesdays 10:00-12:00 and by appointment

Credit points

3

Prerequisites

(39cp at 100 level or above) or admission to GDipArts

Corequisites

Co-badged status

Unit description

Social philosophy is a type of philosophical investigation that focuses on issues affecting individuals and communities as a result of dysfunctions in modern society. Using the tools of philosophical analysis, it seeks to define the perspective from which criticism can be formulated, and how possible solutions can be found. The unit draws on key social philosophers of the 20th century to address some of the most pressing issues faced by contemporary societies, such as the social and environmental impacts of the current economic system; the effects of technology upon human bodies and lives; and the limitations placed on individual rights and freedoms by new forms of state and corporate institutions.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.

A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.

An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant

disciplinary approaches.

To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due
<u>Online Quiz</u>	10%	No	Week 4
<u>Contemporary application</u>	30%	No	Week 7
<u>Philosophical Essay</u>	45%	No	Week 13
<u>Participation</u>	15%	No	Throughout the term

Online Quiz

Due: **Week 4**

Weighting: **10%**

An online quiz to be completed in Week 4. This quiz will involve writing short answers to questions based on the topics covered in the first three weeks of the course. The quiz will be available online and accessible to students for one week; once a student commences the quiz, there will be a set period (30-45 minutes) to complete the quiz.

The assessment criteria for this quiz are the accuracy and completeness of student responses.

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Contemporary application

Due: **Week 7**

Weighting: **30%**

In this essay, students will connect the themes and ideas discussed in the unit to contemporary

world events. Students will identify a recent news item and explain how it reflects, challenges, or supports the claims and arguments of one of the authors we have read. This will require students to synthesise their philosophical engagement with the principles of and objections to Enlightenment social philosophy with their appreciation of the important events of our own world.

Assessment criteria for this essay are detailed in the rubric provided on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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Philosophical Essay

Due: **Week 13**

Weighting: **45%**

This major assignment aims to test your ability to engage with a topic in depth. Writing an essay tests your ability to express, analyse, and organise ideas clearly and systematically, and to develop an argument or position in a sustained, coherent, and persuasive manner. In this essay (of approximately 2500 words), you will articulate and defend your own position on a matter of your choosing vis-a-vis one or more of the texts we have considered during the term.

Assessment criteria for this essay are detailed in the rubric provided on ilearn.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Participation

Due: **Throughout the term**

Weighting: **15%**

Regular and active participation in class discussions—in tutorials for in-the-flesh students and on iLearn for external students—is an essential ingredient in coming to grips with the historical and present significance of the ideas we will discuss in this unit. This is an advanced unit, and so I expect students to take the lead by arriving to the discussion having read the assigned material carefully and prepared questions or objections based on their responses to the material.

The criteria by which this assessment is evaluated include both the quality (insight, concision, comprehension) and quantity of student participation.

On successful completion you will be able to:

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- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Delivery and Resources

Lecture and Tutorial Times

There are two lectures per week:

Monday 1:00-2:00

Tuesday 3:00-4:00

Tutorials for in-the-flesh students will follow the Tuesday lectures, meeting from 4:00-5:00.

Consult the University timetable for up-to-date meeting locations.

External students will be required to lead and participate in online discussions on iLearn. Just like in-the-flesh students, external students are expected to spend an hour a week posting questions, reading classmates' posts, and making constructive comments. I will also participate in these discussions from time to time, mainly in a facilitating role.

All required readings will also be made available through the library and iLearn.

Readings

Interested students might think about purchasing the following books, which we will refer to regularly:

- Max Horkheimer, *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004).
- Isaac Kramnick (ed.), *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* (New York: Penguin, 1995).
- Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*, trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
- James Schmidt (ed.), *What is Enlightenment? Eighteenth-Century Answers and Twentieth Century Questions* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).

Unit Schedule

Week One: Defining the Enlightenment in France

- Jean Le Rond D'Alembert, [from] "Preliminary Discourse to the *Encyclopédie*" and "Reflection on the Present State of the Republic of Letters," in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 7-17.
- Denis Diderot, "Encyclopédie," *Encyclopédie*, eds. Diderot and D'Alembert in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 17-21.
- César Chesneau Dumarsais, "Philosophe," *Encyclopédie*, eds. Diderot and D'Alembert, in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 21-22.

Week Two: Defining the Enlightenment in Prussia

- J.K.W. Möhsen, "What is to Be Done Toward the Enlightenment of the Citizenry?," in *What is Enlightenment?*, 49-52.
- Moses Mendelssohn, "On the Question: What is Enlightenment?," in *What is Enlightenment?*, 53-57.
- Immanuel Kant, "Answer to the Question: What is enlightenment?," in *What is Enlightenment?*, 58-64.
- Karl Leonhard Reinhold, "Thoughts on Enlightenment," in *What is Enlightenment?*, 65-77.

Week Three Enlightenment Politics—Rationality and Progress

- Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose," in *Political Writings*, ed. H.S. Reiss, trans. H.B. Nisbet (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,

2007) 41-53.

- Marquis de Condorcet, [from] "Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind," in *Portable Enlightenment Reader* 26-38.
- Johann Adam Bergk, "Does Enlightenment Cause Revolutions?," in *What is Enlightenment?* 225-231.
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Week Four: Instrumental Reason and the Dialectic of Enlightenment

- Max Horkheimer, "Reason Against Itself: Some Remarks on Enlightenment," *Theory, Culture, Society*, vol. 10, no. 2 (1993) 79-88.
- Horkheimer, "Means and Ends," in *Eclipse of Reason* (London: Continuum, 2004) 3-39.
- Horkheimer, "The Revolt of Nature," in *Eclipse of Reason* 63-86.

Week Five: A Crisis of Legitimacy

- Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*. (Yes, the whole thing).

Weeks Six and Seven: Reaffirming the Enlightenment

- Richard Rorty, "The Continuity between the Enlightenment and 'Postmodernism,'" in *What's Left of Enlightenment? A Postmodern Question*, eds. Keith Michael Baker and Peter Hanns Reill (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001) 19-36.
- Jürgen Habermas, "Modernity: An Unfinished Project," in *Habermas and the Unfinished Project of Modernity: Critical Essays on The Philosophical Discourse of Modernity*, eds. Maurizio Passerin d'Entrèves and Seyla Benhabib (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1997) 38-54.
- Michel Foucault, "What is Critique?," in *What is Enlightenment?* 382-398.
- Michel Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?," in *The Foucault Reader*, ed. Paul Rabinow (New York: Pantheon, 1984) 32-50.

Weeks Eight and Nine: The Enlightenment and Race

- David Hume, [from] "Of National Characters," in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 629.
- Immanuel Kant, [from] *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 637-639.
- Frederick Douglass, "The Meaning of the Fourth of July for the Negro."

- Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002), "A Genealogy of Modern Racism."
- Charles W. Mills, "Defending the Radical Enlightenment," *Social Philosophy Today*, vol. 18 (2002) 9-29.

Week Ten: The Enlightenment and Gender

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, [from] *Emile*, in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 568-579.
- Immanuel Kant, [from] *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and Sublime*, in *The Portable Enlightenment Reader* 580-586.
- Robin May Schott, "The Gender of Enlightenment," in *What is Enlightenment?* 471-487.
- Anne Phillips, "The Universal Pretensions in Political Thought," in *Destabilizing Theory: Contemporary Feminist Debates*, eds. Michèle Barrett and Anne Phillips (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992) 10-30.

Week Eleven: Australian Colonisation

- Bruce Buchan, "Savagery, Civilization, and Political Thought," in *Empire of Political Thought: Indigenous Australians and the Language of Colonial Government* (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2008), 17-31.
- Robert Sparrow, "History and collective responsibility," *Australasian Journal of Philosophy*, vol. 78, no. 3 (2000), 346-359.

Weeks Twelve and Thirteen: Preparing your Essays

In the final two weeks of the semester, we will focus on your essays. In Week 12, I will discuss how best to structure longer, argumentative essays. You will workshop paper ideas. In Week 13, you will peer review each others' essays before submitting them at the end of the week.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

Academic Honesty Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/academic_honesty/policy.html

Assessment Policy http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/assessment/policy_2016.html

Grade Appeal Policy <http://mq.edu.au/policy/docs/gradeappeal/policy.html>

Complaint Management Procedure for Students and Members of the Public http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/complaint_management/procedure.html

Disruption to Studies Policy (in effect until Dec 4th, 2017): http://www.mq.edu.au/policy/docs/disruption_studies/policy.html

Special Consideration Policy (in effect from Dec 4th, 2017): <https://staff.mq.edu.au/work/strategy-planning-and-governance/university-policies-and-procedures/policies/special-consideration>

In addition, a number of other policies can be found in the [Learning and Teaching Category](#) of Policy Central.

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: https://students.mq.edu.au/support/student_conduct/

Results

Results shown in *iLearn*, or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit ask.mq.edu.au.

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Learning Skills

Learning Skills (mq.edu.au/learningskills) provides academic writing resources and study strategies to improve your marks and take control of your study.

- [Workshops](#)
- [StudyWise](#)
- [Academic Integrity Module for Students](#)
- [Ask a Learning Adviser](#)

Student Services and Support

Students with a disability are encouraged to contact the [Disability Service](#) who can provide appropriate help with any issues that arise during their studies.

Student Enquiries

For all student enquiries, visit Student Connect at ask.mq.edu.au

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit http://www.mq.edu.au/about_us/offices_and_units/information_technology/help/.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Graduate Capabilities

Commitment to Continuous Learning

Our graduates will have enquiring minds and a literate curiosity which will lead them to pursue knowledge for its own sake. They will continue to pursue learning in their careers and as they participate in the world. They will be capable of reflecting on their experiences and relationships with others and the environment, learning from them, and growing - personally, professionally and socially.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Philosophical Essay
- Participation

Discipline Specific Knowledge and Skills

Our graduates will take with them the intellectual development, depth and breadth of knowledge, scholarly understanding, and specific subject content in their chosen fields to make them competent and confident in their subject or profession. They will be able to demonstrate, where relevant, professional technical competence and meet professional standards. They will be able to articulate the structure of knowledge of their discipline, be able to adapt discipline-specific knowledge to novel situations, and be able to contribute from their discipline to inter-disciplinary solutions to problems.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

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- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Contemporary application
- Philosophical Essay
- Participation

Critical, Analytical and Integrative Thinking

We want our graduates to be capable of reasoning, questioning and analysing, and to integrate and synthesise learning and knowledge from a range of sources and environments; to be able to critique constraints, assumptions and limitations; to be able to think independently and systemically in relation to scholarly activity, in the workplace, and in the world. We want them to have a level of scientific and information technology literacy.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Contemporary application
- Philosophical Essay
- Participation

Problem Solving and Research Capability

Our graduates should be capable of researching; of analysing, and interpreting and assessing data and information in various forms; of drawing connections across fields of knowledge; and they should be able to relate their knowledge to complex situations at work or in the world, in order to diagnose and solve problems. We want them to have the confidence to take the initiative

in doing so, within an awareness of their own limitations.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcome

- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Contemporary application
- Philosophical Essay
- Participation

Effective Communication

We want to develop in our students the ability to communicate and convey their views in forms effective with different audiences. We want our graduates to take with them the capability to read, listen, question, gather and evaluate information resources in a variety of formats, assess, write clearly, speak effectively, and to use visual communication and communication technologies as appropriate.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- To articulate ideas clearly, cogently, and convincingly through critical analysis, interpretation, and appropriate forms of written and oral communication.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Contemporary application
- Philosophical Essay
- Participation

Engaged and Ethical Local and Global citizens

As local citizens our graduates will be aware of indigenous perspectives and of the nation's historical context. They will be engaged with the challenges of contemporary society and with knowledge and ideas. We want our graduates to have respect for diversity, to be open-minded, sensitive to others and inclusive, and to be open to other cultures and perspectives: they should have a level of cultural literacy. Our graduates should be aware of disadvantage and social justice, and be willing to participate to help create a wiser and better society.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.
- To participate actively in group and online discussion and in group learning activities during tutorials.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Contemporary application
- Philosophical Essay
- Participation

Socially and Environmentally Active and Responsible

We want our graduates to be aware of and have respect for self and others; to be able to work with others as a leader and a team player; to have a sense of connectedness with others and country; and to have a sense of mutual obligation. Our graduates should be informed and active participants in moving society towards sustainability.

This graduate capability is supported by:

Learning outcomes

- A good understanding of the history and significance of European social and political philosophy.
- A good understanding of the relevance of the theoretical approaches considered for broader philosophical, social, cultural, and political debates.
- An ability to understand and analyse arguments and concepts in European social philosophy, and to evaluate different philosophical theories in relation to other relevant disciplinary approaches.

Assessment tasks

- Online Quiz
- Contemporary application
- Philosophical Essay

- Participation

Changes from Previous Offering

Since last being offered, this unit has undergone the following changes:

- revision of learning activities, outcomes, and assessment tasks;
- revision of curriculum mapping of relationship between activities, outcomes, and graduate capabilities;
- addition of new content, including new topics and weekly readings.