

Political Philosophy

Saul Smilansky (Department of Philosophy)

First semester 2024-5

Sunday 1400-1800

4 Semestral-hours

This course is intended as an introductory BA course for students of the department of philosophy and of the PPE programme of the University of Haifa, but is open to others who might be interested. The students will learn *how* to do philosophy in the political sphere, and *why* doing philosophy in this sphere is intellectually and practically significant. Political philosophy is understood here as essentially moral philosophy, in the political sphere. So we shall see why moral-philosophical thinking is relevant, interesting and fruitful on the political level. It is a problem-based course, but also aims to familiarize students with some of the central figures of contemporary analytic political philosophy.

1. What is philosophy? What does philosophy do? What is analytic philosophy? What is political philosophy? Scepticism about morality.
2. Background: Plato, Hobbs, Lock, Marx.
3. How to approach distributive justice?
4. Utilitarianism (Goodin)
5. Egalitarianism A: Rawls
6. Egalitarianism B: luck-egalitarianism (Cohen)
7. Egalitarianism C: relational-egalitarianism (Andersen)
8. Libertarianism: Nozick
9. Liberalism: Berlin
10. Democracy and pluralism (Walzer)
11. Moral paradoxes (Smilansky)
12. Practical topic selected by the students
13. Conclusion.

Selected Bibliography

Andersen, Elizabeth ("What's the point of equality?")

Berlin, Isaiah ("Two concepts of liberty")

Cohen, G.A. (selections from "The currency of egalitarian justice")

Goodin, Robert (selections from *Utilitarianism as Public Philosophy*)

Nozick, Robert (selections from *Anarchy, State and Utopia*)

Rawls, John (selections from *A Theory of Justice*)

Walzer, Michael (selections from *Spheres of Justice*)