PHIL 3110: Social and Political Philosophy (HYBRID)
Course Syllabus, Fall 2011

Note: I STRONGLY ADVISE you to print this entire document and keep it nearby for reference. It contains essential information you will need throughout the semester!

Instructor Information:
S. K. Keltner, Ph.D.
Office: SO 4116
Office Hours: TBA
Phone: 770 423 6648 (prefer email)
Email: skeltner@kennesaw.edu and via Vista (I prefer that you use the Vista system)

Meeting Location: ENG 268
Meeting Time: T 11-12:15

Course Description: A survey of the foundational figures and texts in the history of social and political philosophy, with focus on the concepts of freedom, obligation, authority, power, legitimacy, and social differences in the formulation of the purpose and foundation of political society. Prereq. ENGL 1102

This particular offering of the course will focus on liberal/neo-liberal political philosophy and its critics (e.g. Marxist, communitarian, existential, feminist, etc.). It is scheduled as a hybrid course, which means that the course format is both in-class and online. We will meet as a class (on several Tuesdays) at the start of each new section; the remaining class periods will be devoted to online discussion. Requirements for the course include attendance of the lectures/in-class meetings, participation in discussion forums, two exams, and a final essay. This course is writing intensive.

Course Objectives: This offering of Philosophy 3010 has six major learning objectives. At the end of the course the student should be able to:

1. demonstrate a basic understanding of the major figures, themes, and movements from the history of liberal political philosophy and its critics through reading, discussion board activities, exams, and writing assignments
2. compare and contrast different philosophical schools of social and political thought (and their historical and political roots), as evidenced in classroom discussion activities, exams, and writing assignments
3. identify and employ philosophical analysis and argumentation by participating in public dialogue and writing philosophical analysis of important social and political issues in a global, historical context
4. critically examine her/his own social, cultural, and historical situation and its affects on individual and national beliefs about the self, others, and the world through evaluating and discussing the social and historical origins of those positions
5. research, critically formulate, and present evaluative appraisals of the ethics of global corporate, social, and political activities and ideologies through open discussion
6. be ethically, socially, and politically sensitive to the role of diversity in human thought and action by exploring with and responding to others in open dialogue about human diversity
Course Resources

Required Textbook:

Required Documentaries:
The Hidden Face of Globalization: What the Corporations Don't Want You to Know (documentary by the National Labor Committee) -- available for purchase through www.nlcnet.org or in four parts through the NLC website: http://www.nlcnet.org/article.php?id=243

Zoned for Slavery (documentary by the National Labor Committee) – available for purchase through www.nlcnet.org or in three parts on You Tube: http://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=zoned+for+slavery&search_type=&aq=f

Life and Debt (documentary by Stephanie Black) – available for rent through Netflix

Suggested/Supplemental Primary Resources TBA
Each section of the course will include an introductory lecture on the history of and contemporary trends of approach to social and political philosophy. Some primary source materials will be *suggested* for those students seeking a deeper understanding of the philosophical basis of the issues/topics addressed in An Introduction of Social and Political Philosophy: A Question-Based Approach. Some supplemental materials will be required as needed (TBA).

Course Activities

1. Reading/Viewing: You will be responsible for carefully reading/viewing (and making a reasonable attempt at understanding) all of the assigned materials for the course.
2. Exams: There will be two exams, a midterm and a final. Questions come from the reading, lectures, class discussions, and any background information, overviews, and review materials provided by the professor. These tests will be held online utilizing the Quiz Tool in Vista.
3. Classroom discussion, participation, and attendance: Learning to communicate with others and share ideas will be a key to your success this semester. You will be required to participate in an online forum on our Vista discussion board and to attend all in-class meetings.
4. Writing about philosophy: There will be short essay questions and/or definitions on your exams, discussion board posts, and a final essay.

Description of Evaluated Course Activities & Assessment Rubrics

(1) Attendance/Participation (in-class meetings) – overall impact on final grade
Obviously, class discussion and student/teacher interaction are enhanced when students have read (and made a reasonable attempt at understanding) the reading materials for the course. This is why I am including an attendance/participation grade. You are allowed to miss one in-class meeting without penalty. After one class (and this includes excused absences!), your final grade will drop 1/3 of a letter grade for each class missed, e.g. from an A- to a B+ or from a B to a B-.

Attendance and Participation includes being prepared, alert, and participating in daily activities.
(2) 2 Electronic Exams – 50% of final grade; 25% each
Students are required to complete 2 exams, a midterm and a final. Both will include short answer questions (e.g. multiple choice), definitions, and short essays.

The questions on the exams measure reading comprehension, critical thinking skills, and writing/argumentation skills.

- Reading Comprehension -- Have you completed the reading and made a reasonable attempt at understanding it? Do you know the basic thesis and structure of the assigned text? Can you identify the major ideas? Have you read and understood all of the supplemental materials provided by your instructor?
- Critical Thinking Skills -- Can you follow the line of argumentation in the assigned text and identify key ideas and the support for those ideas?
- Writing/Argumentation Skills: Can you read and respond to a prompt that asks you to think critically and take a stance about a theme from our text(s)? Can you do so in an organized, on-topic, and grammatically sound manner? Does your writing show evidence of philosophical comprehension of the figures, texts, and topics addressed and that is well-supported by specific evidence from our texts?

All exams will be electronic exams given through the Vista system Quiz Tool. You will have 90 minutes, beginning from when you start the exam on Vista, to complete each exam. The exam will be open for two or more days (see course schedule below) in order to allow you to take the exam at your convenience. (Directions and practice exam are available on Vista.) No late exams will be accepted. See course policies below.

Your individual exam grades will be assessed on a 100 point scale. Your final, overall exam grade will be the average of the two exams multiplied by .5 or 50%.

(3) Vista Discussion Board (7 original, 14 responses) – 20% of final grade
Philosophy is difficult to read, difficult to absorb, and difficult to write about. Students also commonly confuse philosophers and philosophical frameworks, if they do not write and evaluate what they have learned consistently and frequently. The more often you write about philosophy's major figures and concepts, however, the easier it becomes. You are required to complete 7 sets of Vista discussion board postings. Each session will require you to write three total posts: one original post and two response posts to two different students due by midnight of the discussion board assignment days noted on the course schedule. Your final Discussion Board grade will be the average of the 7 sets of posts. See course schedule for dates.

You will complete discussion board postings in small groups covering all reading/viewing material of the course. You will be given questions about the texts to which you must respond (check the 'Overview of the Unit and Unit Assignments' posted in the specific unit folder in “Course Units”), and then you must also respond to the posts of other classmates in your group. Each discussion board assignment will count for 20 total points (original post is 10 points and response posts are 5 points each). Your grades will be designated as follows:

Full Credit (Receives 10 points for original post; 5 points for response posts): These posts are insightful, original, thorough, use specific examples from the text (where called for) to support the writer’s points, demonstrate that the writer can make connections to previous or current
content or to real-life situations, and are capable of inspiring rich discussion from other members. These posts are approximately 250 words or more.

Partial Credit (Receives 5 points for original post; 2 points for response post): These posts may answer the questions, but are generally less developed and thorough and may wander from the question asked. These answers are often commonplace; contain fairly obvious ideas that simply restate or summarize the instructor’s background materials or other’s posts; make few or no basic connections to previous or current course content; may ramble or begin but stray from answering the question asked; may contain some specific examples or details from the text but more (or better) examples would make for a stronger post. These posts are generally much briefer.

Disqualified (Receives 0 points for original post; 0 points for response post): These posts are noticeably “skimpy” in their response to the questions provided. The writer provides no (or very little) supporting detail from the text to support his or her position. Posts are fairly superficial with very little analysis or insight, may be off-topic completely, or neglect to fully answer one or more parts of the questions provided. **Note that posts are also disqualified if they are not posted by the deadline.**

Your final discussion board grade will be the average of the seven individual grades.

Step-by-step directions are available on Vista, and the first discussion postings in which you introduce yourselves will be our first ‘go’ (letting you focus on mastering the tool with content you are very familiar with)! This way we can be sure that each of you is comfortable using the Discussion Tool. For all subsequent posts, check the ‘Overview of the Unit & Unit Assignments’ document in the appropriate ‘Unit’ folder by the Monday night before the first discussion board assignment is due. There you will find detailed directions for completing your discussion board assignment (plus all other work for the unit) in small groups.

**Final Essay – 30% of final grade**

Thinking is intimately bound up with writing. In order to think clearly about a subject, you must be able to write and speak clearly. Further, thinking requires that you care about the subject you address in some way. I am requiring one final research project in order to provide you with the space to particularize and summarize your own interests in the course. I will not hand out topics. These should be generated by you and address your own experience(s) in the course. The essays should be 3,000 to 4,000 words long (or, nine to twelve pages), typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and in a font no larger than 12 pt. (11 pt if you are using Ariel or Courier). Essay topics, preliminary theses, initial research findings, and tentative plan of the essay must be presented mid-semester in a small group format. Groups and dates TBA. Small group presentations will count for 20% of the final essay grade. Final essays are due at the start of class on the final Tuesday of the semester, at which time they are to be briefly presented and discussed in an open face-to-face discussion session.

Content Requirements:

1. **focus**: a contemporary social and/or political topic (e.g., a concept, issue, institution, public/private relation, debate, phenomenon); topics may be focused locally, regionally, nationally, internationally, but they must be of contemporary concern

2. **thesis**: critically defends or opposes liberalism/neo-liberalism in general or with respect to a particular issue/institution/relation/etc.
(3) resource(s) 1, the doxa: a review of the popular discourse surrounding the chosen topic, utilizing relevant search engine(s) (e.g., Nexis-Lexis, Google/Yahoo news) – how far back you chose to research will depend on the focus/thesis of the essay and may thereby vary from student to student;

(4) resource(s) 2, primary theoretical materials: at least two works of social/political theory/philosophy (chapters, essays, books from any region and historical time are all acceptable);

(5) resource(s) 3: any other materials conducive to the argument of the paper (e.g., journalistic writings, advertisements, press releases, political speeches, etc.)

(6) Appendix: essays should include a thorough and organized portfolio of your research that includes all materials collected (referenced or not referenced) for the essay (Note that the Appendix does not count as part of the final word count of the essay. For book-length resources, an annotated bibliographic entry is sufficient. For materials not easily printed – a one-page summary is sufficient).

The final essay specifically measures your research, organizational, and writing/philosophical argumentation skills at a level higher than your exams. Can you think through and develop a focused, well-researched, and socially/politically relevant philosophical essay? Can you do so in an organized, on-topic, and grammatically sound manner? Does your writing show evidence of an original, thought-provoking argument that is well-supported by specific evidence and thorough research?

Final essay grade breakdown:
20%: Small group presentation on topic/thesis/preliminary research
80%: Final essay (including all requirements)

Most importantly, this project is meant to be fun and interesting! I hope you will take your time with it and enjoy the creative learning process!

Your insight essay grades will be designated as follows:

A+ = 30 points (100%)
A = 27 points (94%)
B = 25 points (85%)
C = 22 points (75%)
D = 19 points (65%)
F = 18 points and below (59% and below)

Assessment Rubric for All Writing for the Course (Writing Portions of Exams, Discussion Board Postings, and Essays) Grading of writing for the course will be based on accuracy, organization, overall clarity, detail, and quality of both form and content. Effective communication also requires proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling, but the grade will not be lowered for a few minor errors. The University Catalogue defines a grade of “C” as average, a “B” as good, and an “A” as excellent. Accordingly, only the very best essays will earn an ‘A’ on the writing activities for the course.

A = Exceptional; one of the very best in the class.
B = Above average for the class; take it up a notch next time
C = About as good as most students in the class; think about how you might improve your performance next time; get the help you need to do better
D = Not quite up to the level of most students; schedule a meeting with your instructor; weigh your options: stay in the class and work harder to do better next time.

F = Unsatisfactory (e.g., way too short, exhibits little to no understanding); think seriously about whether you are committed to the work required in the course.

Writing Center: You should be aware of a writing center on campus. It is located in Humanities 242 and is open seven days a week. To schedule an appointment, you can visit their website at http://www.kennesaw.edu/english/WritingCenter/index.shtml or call them at 770 423 6380.

Grading Scale:
A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; Failing = Below 60. Kennesaw does not have a +/- system. However, the +/- system will be used throughout the semester in determining grades for individual assignments. (A+ = 100; A = 95; A- = 90; B+ = 88; B = 85; B- = 82; C+ = 78; C = 75; C- = 72; D+ = 68; D = 65; D- = 62; Failing = Below 60)

Course Policies & Expectations

Online Course Attendance and Participation: Because this is a hybrid class, your participation in the discussion board and online activities also count as your attendance. Missing a discussion board activity equals missing a class. However, since you are graded on all of the activities required for the course, you will not be further penalized for missing an activity. You will simply receive a zero for that assignment.

Late Work: I do not accept late work. Every assignment, exam, and writing assignment has a posted deadline. None of these materials are accepted once the deadline has passed. See the Course Policy concerning technical problems.

Guidelines for Discussion Board/Communication Etiquette, or Netiquette: You will often use the discussion board and email to communicate with your classmates and with me. Please remember that this is a public and professional forum. You should make every attempt to write in a manner you would deem appropriate for turning in a college paper in a face-to-face class. If you would hesitate to use offensive language, slang, or abbreviations in a regular essay, you should hesitate here. When you disagree with your classmates or with me (and you probably will; this is fine!), make sure that your writing argues with the person’s ideas rather than attacking someone as a person in a hurtful or offensive way.

Technical Problems: Technical problems related to computer connections or equipment will not be accepted as an excuse for failure to complete assignments or failure to participate online. You are personally responsible for locating the computer hardware, software, and Internet connections necessary to maintaining your course work. Because there are alternative Internet connections available through the KSU campus, public libraries, coffee shops and many restaurants, and through friends or family, if your personal computer equipment or connection is not working, you should be prepared to make the necessary arrangements to complete the course work on time. You should also make accommodations for the possibility that Vista may be unavailable due to scheduled maintenance. This usually (though not always) occurs on Fridays or
over the weekend. A scheduled maintenance calendar can be found at http://www.usg.edu/gaview/support/maint-schedule.

Provisions for Natural or Technical Disasters: Accommodations will be made on a needs basis for natural disasters or University-wide or city-wide technical disasters. I strongly advise you to print the syllabus or my contact information at least where you can find my phone number. Simply leave a voicemail with your full name and phone number where you can be reached.

KSU’s Statement on Academic Integrity: Every KSU student is responsible for upholding the provisions of the Student Code of Conduct, as published in the Undergraduate and Graduate Catalogs. Section II of the Student Code of Conduct addresses the University’s policy on academic honesty, including provisions regarding plagiarism and cheating, unauthorized access to University materials, misrepresentation/ falsification of University records or academic work, malicious removal, retention, or destruction of library materials, malicious/intentional misuse of computer facilities and/or services, and misuse of student identification cards. Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be handled through the established procedures of the University Judiciary Program, which includes either an “informal” resolution by a faculty member, resulting in a grade adjustment, or a formal hearing procedure, which may subject a student to the Code of Conduct’s minimum one semester suspension requirement.

I reserve the right to fail for the course any student in violation of KSU’s Academic Integrity Policy.

KSU’s Statement on Disruption of Campus Life: It is the purpose of the institution to provide a campus environment, which encourages academic accomplishment, personal growth, and a spirit of understanding and cooperation. An important part of maintaining such an environment is the commitment to protect the health and safety of every member of the campus community. Belligerent, abusive, profane, threatening and/or inappropriate behavior on the part of students is a violation of the Kennesaw State University Student Conduct Regulations. Students who are found guilty of such misconduct may be subject to immediate dismissal from the institution. In addition, these violations of state law may also be subject to criminal action beyond the University disciplinary process.

KSU’s Diversity Statement: The KSU Population reflects differing backgrounds and experiences including but not limited to age, disability, ethnicity, family structure, gender, geographic region, language, race, religion, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status. It is our goal to foster a community in which every human being is treated with dignity, respect, and justice. The KSU academic experience will provide the opportunity to gain knowledge and experiences necessary to thrive in a diverse, global environment.

Special Needs & Accommodations Statement: Kennesaw State University provides program accessibility and reasonable accommodations for persons defined as disabled under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who require accommodations (academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids or services) for this course must contact the Office for Disabled Student Support Services via Ms. Carol Pope, ADA Compliance Officer for Students, at 770-423-6443 (V) or 770-423-6480 (TDD) or visit their website at http://www.kennesaw.edu/stu_dev/dsss/dss.html. If there are any special considerations I should be aware of, you should acquire a letter of accommodation from
the Office for Disabled Student Support Services and come and speak with me immediately. I will make every effort to accommodate any particular case and maintain your privacy.
(Tentative) Course Schedule

*Small group meetings to discuss final essay topics/proposals TBA; scheduling to take place September 27 during in-class meeting*

Introduction to the Course.
Week 1 – No in-class meeting. Classes officially start on Wednesday, August 17.
Assignment: Read through the Orientation document and syllabus carefully to familiarize yourself with the course and its format; familiarize yourself with the textbook and get started on chapter 1.

Unit One – Liberalism and Its Internal Contradictions
Reading: Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy (ISPP), chpt. 1
Week 2 – August 23
Tuesday, in-class meeting (discussion forum questions TBD democratically)
Online assignment: original posts due Thursday midnight
Week 3 – August 30
Online assignment: first response posts due Tuesday midnight; second response posts due Thursday midnight

Unit Two – Liberalism’s Answer to the Purpose & Foundation of Political Society
Reading: ISPP, chpt. 2
Week 4 – September 6
Tuesday, in-class meeting (discussion forum questions TBD democratically)
Online assignment: original posts due Thursday midnight
Week 5 – September 13
Online assignment: first response posts due Tuesday midnight; second response posts due Thursday midnight

Midterm Exam.
Week 6 – September 20
Tuesday, Midterm (Electronic) Exam (via Vista Quiz Tool; open all day, 12 a.m. – 11:59 pm)

Unit Three – The Rise of Neo-Liberalism and Global Political Economy
Reading: ISPP, chpt. 3
Week 7 – September 27
Tuesday, in-class meeting (discussion forum questions TBD democratically & final essay small groups organized and scheduled)
Online assignment: original posts due Thursday midnight
Week 8 – October 4
Online assignment: first response posts due Tuesday midnight; second response posts due Thursday midnight

Unit Three continued: Globalization, from the eyes of the least favored
Viewing: NLC Documentaries; Life and Debt
Reading: TBA
Week 9 – October 11
Online assignment: (discussion forum questions included in Overview of Unit document) view documentaries; original posts due Thursday midnight

Week 10 – October 18
Online assignment: first response posts due Tuesday midnight; second response posts due Thursday midnight

Unit Four – The Philosophy of Democracy
Reading: ISPP, chpt. 4
Week 11 – October 25
Tuesday, in-class meeting (discussion forum questions TBD democratically & *presentation 1 of B.A. candidates’ senior theses*)
Online assignment: original posts due Thursday midnight

Week 12 – November 1
Online assignment: first response posts due Tuesday midnight; second response posts due Thursday midnight

Reading: ISPP, chpt. 5
Week 13 – November 8
Tuesday, in-class meeting (discussion forum questions TBD democratically)
Online assignment: original posts due Thursday midnight

Week 14 – November 15
Online assignment: first response posts due Tuesday midnight; second response posts due Thursday midnight

Week 15 – November 22 (Thanksgiving Break: Wed. Nov. 23 – Sun. Nov. 27)
No class this week – work on final essays!!!

Final Essays.
Week 16 – November 29
Tuesday, in-class meeting – presentation & open discussion of final essays (essays due at start of class period); (*presentation 2 of B.A. candidates’ senior theses*)

Exam Week (Week 17).
Final (Electronic) Exam – via Vista Quiz Tool, open Tuesday, November 29, 12:45 p.m. through the final scheduled examination time, Tuesday, December 6, 2:30 p.m.

Summary of Evaluated Course Activities
(1) Attendance/Participation – overall impact on final grade
(2) 2 Electronic Exams – 50% of final grade; 25% each
(3) Participation/Vista Discussion Board (7 original, 14 responses) – 20% of final grade
(4) Final Essay (3,000-4,000 words) – 30% of final grade
Grading Scale:
A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; Failing = Below 60. Kennesaw does not have a +/- system. However, the +/- system will be used throughout the semester in determining grades for individual assignments. (A+ = 100; A = 95; A- = 90; B+ = 88; B = 85; B- = 82; C+ = 78; C = 75; C- = 72; D+ = 68; D = 65; D- = 62; Failing = Below 60)