



**University of Edinburgh
School of Social & Political Science
Politics and International Relations
2018-19**

WHAT'S WRONG WITH INEQUALITY?

PLIT10110

Semester 2, Honours

Key Information

Course Organiser

Dr. Philip Cook
Email: philip.cook@ed.ac.uk
Room 3.29
Chrystal Macmillan Building, 15a George Square
Guidance & Feedback Hours: Tuesdays 4pm-6pm

Location

Lectures:
Mondays 13.10-14.00 Seminar Room 5 Chrystal MacMillan Building
Tutorials:
Fridays
Group 1 – 10.00-10.50 Lister Learning and Teaching Centre 4.1
Group 2 – 11.10-12.00 Lister Learning and Teaching Centre 2.1
Group 3 – 12.10-13.00 Lister Learning and Teaching Centre 2.3

Course Secretary

Mr. Ethan Alexander
Email: Ethan.Alexander@ed.ac.uk
Undergraduate Teaching Office

Assessment Deadlines

- Critical Reasoning Exercise, Monday 25th Feb 2019, 12 noon
- Assessed Essay, Monday 29th April 2019, 12 noon

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Aims and Objectives

This course aims to introduce students to central debates in moral and political philosophy regarding equality. The course is structured as follows:

- PART ONE: RAWLS, JUSTICE AND EQUALITY
 - We begin the course by reviewing some of the main ideas from John Rawls and his important theory: 'Justice as Fairness.' Rawls's ideas are important to understand in their own terms as contributions to our understanding of equality. But equally importantly for our purposes on this course, they provide the starting point for many of the subsequent debates about equality. It is therefore important to have a good grounding in Rawls's ideas to appreciate many of the disputes that we will explore in more detail later in the course. In week 1 we will focus on his contractarian argument, his notion of Primary Social Goods, and the first principle of justice. In week 2 we will focus on the second principle of justice (Fair equality of opportunity and the Difference Principle).
- PART TWO: EQUALITY OF WHAT?
 - In Part Two we begin to examine critical responses to Rawls. We start in week 3 with Amartya Sen's important work 'Equality of What?' which is presented in part as a response to Rawls's theory of primary social goods. We then move onto other alternatives that pay greater attention to matters of responsibility (which to some seem to be neglected in the difference principle). This is the tradition known as choice-sensitive egalitarianism (or also known as Luck Egalitarianism). In week 4 we consider Dworkin's equality of resources, in week 5 we examine Cohen's equal access to advantage and Arneson's equal opportunity for welfare.
- INTERLUDE: RELATIONAL EQUALITY
 - In week 6 we pause to reflect on the 'Equality of What?' debates. We focus on critics of the 'luck egalitarian' family of thought who argue that equality is a matter of equal relationships. This perspective has come to be known as 'relational equality.' It originates as a critical response to 'luck-egalitarianism' (indeed this term was coined by a critic we will study - Elizabeth Anderson), but has developed into an alternative perspective on equality that is still in the process of being worked out. We will look at the early advocates of this view before considering some of the recent analysis of relational equality as a distinct perspective on equality.
- PART THREE: EQUALITY OR NOT?
 - In Part Two we focused on the question of 'Equality of What?' We now turn our attention to the value of equality. Is equality valuable in itself, or is it valuable instrumentally to promote other values or principles? Part 3 really challenges us to reflect on the character of our commitment to equality. We may find that our egalitarian sympathies are motivated by non-egalitarian concerns! In week 7 we look at Derek Parfit's famous paper 'Equality and Priority' which introduces a number of key distinctions and arguments that have inspired great interest and controversy. In week 8 we examine a different alternative to 'telic' egalitarianism: sufficiency. This is the view that what matters is that

individuals have enough, not that they have equal amounts. We examine Frankfurt's famous statement of this view, and various defences and criticisms. In week 9 we examine a new frontier in thinking about egalitarianism: limitarianism, the view that it is wrong to have too much. This argument is still emerging, but we look at the current arguments and consider its prospects.

- CODA: EQUALITY AND TIME
 - We end in week 10 with a topic that raises a range of important puzzles: equality and time. Should we aim to make people equal when we take their whole lives into account? Or should we aim to make people equal at any given time? These kinds of questions are theoretically compelling but also have practical urgency. For example, health care, education, pensions, even Brexit affect people in different generations differently. We conclude this course by exploring the question of equality between generations with a wide range of concepts and arguments from our preceding study.

Equality in Theory and Practice

The course examines both theoretical arguments regarding equality and inequality and practical implications of the different positions discussed. We will relate each of the main arguments considered to practical cases such as health, education, disability and race. This use of case studies will also form an important part of the first element of assessment: the critical reasoning exercise (see below).

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Present written and verbal analysis of arguments regarding equality in a clear, logical, and lucid form
2. Identify accurately the main theoretical positions in debates on equality
3. Compare and contrast a range of alternative arguments regarding the nature and value of equality
4. Develop critical evaluations of arguments regarding equality examined in the course
5. Apply relevant theoretical positions regarding equality to salient examples of social equality/inequality and reflect critically and independently on the most appropriate response to the moral problems of equality and inequality

Teaching Methods

The course will be conducted through weekly one-hour lectures. These lectures will introduce the main arguments under discussion each week. The course will then be divided into tutorial groups where we will discuss these topics in greater detail.

Assessment at a Glance

Students will be assessed by:

Assessment	Word count limit Do not exceed the word limit or penalties will be applied	Weighting	Submission date	Return of feedback
Critical Reasoning Exercise	1500 words max (excluding bibliography)*	30%	Monday 25th Feb 2019, 12 noon	Friday 15 th March, 2019
Assessed Essay	3,000 words max (excluding bibliography)*	70%	Monday 29th April 2019, 12 noon	Friday 17 th May, 2019

Note: All coursework is submitted electronically through ELMA. Please read the School Policies and Coursework Submission Procedures which you will find [here](#).

Critical Reasoning Exercise

The 'Critical Reasoning Exercise' is designed to help students understand and engage critically with the material studied in the course. In particular we will critically evaluate how different views on the 'Equality of What?' debate fare when applied to a particular social issue such as health, education, disability, or race. We will discuss the practical details of the assessment in tutorials and lectures, with opportunities for practice and feedback. Detailed guidance, templates, and exemplars will be provided on the Learn site.

Assessment Criteria

The Critical Reasoning Exercise will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- Has the student identified an appropriate social issue as a case to examine critically from the point of view of disputes about equality?
- Has the student demonstrated accurate comprehension of their chosen argument/theory/perspective on equality in their critical examination?
- Has the student applied their chosen argument/theory/perspective to the identified social problem in an appropriate manner, including (but not limited to):
 - relevant empirical/policy/political dimensions of the case
 - consideration of degree of fit between the case and their chosen argument/theory/perspective
 - consideration of the moral implications of the application of their chosen argument/theory/perspective to the case?
- Has the student demonstrated critical evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses/advantages and disadvantages of applying their chosen argument/theory/perspective to their chosen case, including (but not limited to) political, social, and moral dimensions of the application?

Assessed Essay

The Assessed Essay requires students to develop a critical response to material studied on the course. The essays should demonstrate wide reading from the Reading List/Resource List, including material from all three sections (Essential, Recommend, and Further Reading). Further information on the requirements and expectations for the Assessed Essay will be provided during the course.

Assessment Criteria:

- Demonstration of wide and critical reading from material on Reading List/Resource List
- Presentation of analysis in a clear and lucid manner
- Logical and appropriate structure of essay
- Correct use of appropriate citation/reference style
- Development of critical and independent evaluation of arguments from relevant literature

Please refer to the assessment and submission procedure information on our webpages which you will find in [appendix 2](#)

Attendance

Attendance and participation in the lectures and tutorials are essential for developing an understanding of the topics.

Learn Site, Communications and Feedback

This course will make extensive use of the Learn site. You are strongly encouraged to become familiar with the layout and functionality of the Learn site to ensure maximum benefit from the various resources and activities provided throughout the course.

We shall use email to communicate with students, please ensure to read all emails related to the course as these will contain important information about activities, resources, and developments during the course.

All students are provided with email addresses on the university system, if you are not sure of your address, which is based on your matric number, check your EUCLID database entry using the Student Portal. This is the ONLY email address we shall use to communicate with you. Please note that we will be unable to use 'private' email addresses such as yahoo or hotmail; it is therefore essential that you check your university email regularly, preferably each day.

Readings and Resource List

The readings for this course are presented by an online 'Resource List' created by the Library. This resource list should make accessing materials more efficient, as most items will be available through links to electronic materials (such as e-journals and e-books).

The Resource List will be available through the Learn site and will contain all the relevant links to course readings.

Lecture Summary

Week	Day	Date	Lecture
1	Monday	14 th Jan	Part One - Rawls: Introduction & Rawls, Justice and Equality 1 – Contract and the First Principle of Justice
2	Monday	21 st Jan	Part One - Rawls: Rawls, Justice and Equality 2 – The Second Principle of Justice
3	Monday	28 th Jan	Part Two – Equality of What?: Capabilities
4	Monday	4 th Feb	Part Two: Equality of What?: Resources
5	Monday	11 th Feb	Part Two: Equality of What?: Advantage and Welfare
No lectures or tutorials – Festival of Creative Learning			
6	Monday	25 th Feb	Interlude: Relational Equality
7	Monday	4 th March	Part Three: Equality or Not? Equality v. Priority (telic v. deontic)
8	Monday	11 th March	Part Three: Equality or Not? Sufficiency
9	Monday	18 th March	Part Three: Equality or Not? Limitarianism
10	Monday	25 th March	Coda: Equality and Time: Equality between Generations

Appendix 1 – General Information

Students with Disabilities

The School welcomes disabled students with disabilities (including those with specific learning difficulties such as dyslexia) and is working to make all its courses as accessible as possible. If you have a disability special needs which means that you may require adjustments to be made to ensure access to lectures, tutorials or exams, or any other aspect of your studies, you can discuss these with your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor who will advise on the appropriate procedures.

You can also contact the Student Disability Service, based on the University of Edinburgh, Third Floor, Main Library, You can find their details as well as information on all of the support they can offer at: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/student-disability-service>

Learning Resources for Undergraduates

The Study Development Team at the Institute for Academic Development (IAD) provides resources and workshops aimed at helping all students to enhance their learning skills and develop effective study techniques. Resources and workshops cover a range of topics, such as managing your own learning, reading, note-making, essay and report writing, exam preparation and exam techniques.

The study development resources are housed on ‘LearnBetter’ (undergraduate), part of Learn, the University’s virtual learning environment. Follow the link from the IAD Study Development web page to enrol: www.ed.ac.uk/iad/undergraduates

Workshops are interactive: they will give you the chance to take part in activities, have discussions, exchange strategies, share ideas and ask questions. They are 90 minutes long and held on Wednesday afternoons at 1.30pm or 3.30pm. The schedule is available from the IAD Undergraduate web page (see above).

Workshops are open to all undergraduates but you need to book in advance, using the MyEd booking system. Each workshop opens for booking two weeks before the date of the workshop itself. If you book and then cannot attend, please cancel in advance through MyEd so that another student can have your place. (To be fair to all students, anyone who persistently books on workshops and fails to attend may be barred from signing up for future events).

Study Development Advisors are also available for an individual consultation if you have specific questions about your own approach to studying, working more effectively, strategies for improving your learning and your academic work. Please note, however, that Study Development Advisors are not subject specialists so they cannot comment on the content of your work. They also do not check or proof read students' work.

Students can book a study skills consultation <https://www.ed.ac.uk/institute-academic-development/undergraduate/services/quick-consultations>

Academic English support can also be accessed at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/english-language-teaching>

Discussing Sensitive Topics

The topic of equality/inequality may address a number of issues that some might find sensitive or, in some cases, distressing. You should read this Course Guide carefully and if there are any topics that you may feel distressed by you should seek advice from the course convenor and/or your Personal Tutor.

For more general issues you may consider seeking the advice of the Student Counselling Service, <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-counselling>

Honours Tutorial Allocation

For this course you will have been automatically assigned to a tutorial group and this group will appear on your personalised timetable at the beginning of week 1. This allocation is done using Student Allocator software which randomly assigns you to a suitable tutorial group based on your lecture timetable. It is important you attend the group on your personalised timetable, attending a different group will mean that you will not appear on the register making your attendance difficult to track which could lead to further difficulties for you.

Guidance on how to view your personal timetable can be found at <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-administration/timetabling/personalised-timetables>

Attendance Monitoring

In accordance with the University general degree regulations you are expected to attend all teaching and assessment events associated with all courses that you are enrolled on. The College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences undertakes routine monitoring of attendance at tutorials and seminars for all students enrolled on courses delivered by Schools within our College. We undertake monitoring of attendance and engagement to enable us to identify where individual students may be experiencing difficulties and to ensure that timely and appropriate intervention can be delivered to provide support and guidance. We also undertake monitoring for sponsored students specifically to meet our obligations to the UKVI. If you miss one or more of your tutorials and/or seminars you may be contacted by your local Student Support Team and be asked to provide an explanation for your absence.

All data is gathered and stored in line with the University policies and guidance on data handling and you can view the privacy statement at: <https://www.ed.ac.uk/student-systems/use-of-data/policies-and-regulations/privacy-statement>

External Examiner

The External Examiner for the Politics and International Relations Honours programme is: Professor David Owen, University of Southampton.

Appendix 2 - Course Work Submission and Penalties

Penalties that can be applied to your work and how to avoid them.

Below is a list of penalties that can be applied to your course work and these are listed below. Students **must** read the full description on each of these at: http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/undergrad/current_students/teaching_and_learning/assessment_and_regulations/coursework_penalties

Make sure you are aware of each of these penalties and know how to avoid them. Students are responsible for taking the time to read guidance and for ensuring their coursework submissions comply with guidance.

- Lateness Penalty

If you miss the submission deadline for any piece of assessed work **5 marks will be deducted for each calendar day that work is late, up to a maximum of seven calendar days (35 marks)**. Thereafter, a mark of zero will be recorded. There is no grace period for lateness and penalties begin to apply immediately following the deadline.

- Word Count Penalty

Your course handbook will specify the word length of your assessments. All coursework submitted by students must state the word count on the front page. All courses in the School have a standard penalty for going over the word length; if you are taking courses from other Schools, check with them what their penalties are.

The penalty for excessive word length in coursework is a 5-mark penalty. These 5 marks will be deducted regardless of how many words over the limit the work is (whether it is by 1 words or by 500!). In exceptional circumstances, a marker may also decide that any text beyond the word limit will be excluded from the assignment and it will be marked only on the text up to the word limit. In most cases, appendices and bibliography are not included in the word count whilst in-text references, tables, charts, graphs and footnotes are counted.

In most cases, appendices and bibliography are not included in the word count whilst in-text references, tables, charts, graphs and footnotes are counted. Make sure you know what is and what is not included in the word count. Again, check the course handbook for this information and if you are unsure, contact the Course Organiser to check.

You will not be penalised for submitting work below the word limit. However, you should note that shorter essays are unlikely to achieve the required depth and that this will be reflected in your mark.

ELMA: Submission and Return of Coursework

Coursework is submitted online using our electronic submission system, ELMA. You will not be required to submit a paper copy of your work.

Marked coursework, grades and feedback will be returned to you via ELMA. You will not receive a paper copy of your marked course work or feedback.

For details of how to submit your course work to ELMA, please see our webpages [here](#).

Please note that all submissions to ELMA should be formatted as a Word document (doc or.docx.). If you are permitted or required to submit in a different format, this will be detailed in your course handbook.

Any submission that is not in word format will be converted by the Undergraduate Teaching Office into word where possible. By submitting in any format other than word, you are accepting this process and the possibility that errors may occur during conversion. The UTO will do everything possible to ensure the integrity of any document converted but to avoid issue, please submit in Word format as requested.

Extensions

If you have good reason for not meeting a coursework deadline, you may request an extension. Before you request an extension, make sure you have read all the guidance on our [webpages](#) and take note of the key points below. You will also be able to access the online extension request form through our [webpages](#).

- Extensions are granted for 7 calendar days.
- If you miss the deadline for requesting an extension for a valid reason, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.
- If you have a valid reason and require an extension of more than 7 calendar days, you should submit your coursework as soon as you are able, and apply for Special Circumstances to disregard penalties for late submission. You should also contact your Student Support Officer or Personal Tutor and make them aware of your situation.
- If you have a Learning Profile from the Disability Service allowing you potential for flexibility over deadlines, you must still make an extension request for this to be taken into account.

Exam Feedback and Viewing Exam Scripts:

General exam feedback will be provided for all courses with an examination. General feedback will be uploaded to the relevant course learn page within 24 hours of the overall marks for the course being returned to Students.

Students who sit the exam will also receive individual feedback. The relevant Course Secretary will contact students to let them know when this is available and how to access it.

If students wish to view their scripts for any reason, they must contact the relevant Course Secretary via email to arrange this.

Plagiarism Guidance for Students: Avoiding Plagiarism

Material you submit for assessment, such as your essays, must be your own work. You can, and should, draw upon published work, ideas from lectures and class discussions, and (if appropriate) even upon discussions with other students, but you must always make clear that you are doing so. **Passing off anyone else's work** (including another student's work or material from the Web or a published author) **as your own is plagiarism** and can be punished severely.

Copying part of one of your own assignments previously submitted for credit for the same or another course is **self-plagiarism**, which is also not allowed. This is an important consideration if you are retaking a course; an assignment submitted the previous year cannot be resubmitted the next, even for the same course.

When you upload your work to ELMA you will be asked to check a box to confirm the work is your own. All submissions will be run through 'Turnitin', our plagiarism detection software. TurnItIn compares every essay against a constantly-updated database, which highlights all plagiarised work. Students who are found to have included plagiarised (including self-plagiarised) material in their work will be reported to an Academic Misconduct Officer for further investigation, and grade penalties can be applied. In extreme cases, assignment grades can be reduced to zero.

For further details on plagiarism see our college website: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/arts-humanities-soc-sci/taught-students/student-conduct/academic-misconduct>

Data Protection Guidance for Students

In most circumstances, students are responsible for ensuring that their work with information about living, identifiable individuals complies with the requirements of the Data Protection Act. The document, *Personal Data Processed by Students*, provides an explanation of why this is the case. It can be found, with advice on data protection compliance and ethical best practice in the handling of information about living, identifiable individuals, on the Records Management section of the University website at:

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/records-management/guidance/research/dpforstudents>