

**Politics & Ethics**  
**Political Science 4098 & Philosophy 4098**  
**Fall -- 2020**

**Introduction: Intuition, Thoughtfulness, and Moral Sensibility**

etc., is not the same as the faculty of thinking. Thinking deals with invisibles, with representations of things that are absent; judging always concerns particulars and things close at hand.

Hannah Arendt

Topics:       The Origins of the Moral Sense  
              The Nature of the Moral Sense  
              Intuition & Reason  
              Egotism & Altruism  
              Moral Boundaries  
              Conscience & Consciousness  
              Moral Literacy:  
              Thoughtfulness & Judgment

Readings:     Plato, [Euthyphro](#)  
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              Sophocles, [Antigone](#)

**Reflection 1: Thinking and Moral Sensibility**

**Aristotelian Interlude I: Politics and the Good**

Reading: [Nicomachean Ethics](#), Book I and Book 10, section 9

**The Ethics of Virtue and the Virtue of Ethics**

We are not concerned to know what goodness is, but how we are to become good men, for this alone gives the study [of ethics] its practical value.

Aristotle

Topics:       Aretaic Ethics  
  Ethics  
              Correspondence of Virtues to Principles  
              Feminist Care Ethics

Readings:     Aristotle, [Nicomachean Ethics](#), Books II, III, & IV

# **Covenants and Contracts**

## **Second Aristotelian Interlude: General and Particular Justice**

Reading: [Nicomachean Ethics Book V](#)

### **John Rawls and the Question of Distributive Justice**

The natural distribution is neither just nor unjust; nor is it unjust that persons are born into society at some particular position. These are simply natural facts. What is just and unjust is the way that institutions deal with these facts.

John Rawls

Reading: John Rawls, Justice as Fairness: A Restatement

### **Paul Wolff and the Question of Anarchy**

Individuals have rights and there are things no person or group may do to them (without violating their rights). So strong and far-reaching are these rights that they raise the question of what, if anything, the state and its officials may do. How much room do individual rights leave for the state?

Robert Nozick

Reading: [Paul Wolff, In Defense of Anarchism](#)

## Thoughtfulness & Judgment Revisited

What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,

T. S. Eliot

God could create only by hiding himself. Otherwise, there would be nothing but himself. Holiness should then be hidden too, even from consciousness in a certain measure. And it should be hidden in the world.

Simone Weil

Readings: \*\*

The Grading Scale for the course, and for each assignment, will be as follows (in percentiles).

97-100 = A+	73-76 = C
93-96 = A	70-72 = C-
90-92 = A-	67-69 = D+
87-89 = B+	63-66 = D
83-86 = B	60-62 = D-
80-82 = B	Below 60 = F
77-79 = C+	

**Readings:** You are asked to purchase two readings for the course: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* and John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*, Oxford University Press. There is no textbook for the course, but