

# PPE Capstone Seminar

Fall 2013



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## Course Description

The capstone seminar is a chance to take some of the core concepts you've learned in previous PPE courses and apply them to specific topics. The class is also an opportunity for you to write a concise research paper on a PPE-related topic of your choice. In the first part of the semester, we'll discuss the readings below. In the second part, you will present work in progress and get feedback from your peers. Each student will be assigned a time slot to present a chunk of their research paper, or talk about a book chapter or article that is central to their paper. Final papers will be submitted on the last day of class, and should be about 15 pages long.

## Grading and Attendance

10% Participation    45% Midterm exam    45% Final paper

Attendance is mandatory: any more than one unexcused absence will adversely affect your grade.

## Reading

All articles are available on Sakai

Required book: Mark White, *The Manipulation of Choice: Ethics and Libertarian Paternalism*

## Week One    UTILITARIANISM

JJ Smart, "Extreme and Restricted Utilitarianism"

Bernard Williams, "A Critique of Utilitarianism"

Philosophy Bites Podcast: Philip Pettit on Consequentialism

## Week Two    COST-BENEFIT ANALYSIS and PUBLIC POLICY

Steven Kelman, "An Ethical Critique of Cost Benefit Analysis"

David Schmidtz, "A Place for Cost Benefit Analysis"

Robert Frank, "Why is Cost-Benefit Analysis so Controversial?"

### Week Three REGULATION and RENT-SEEKING

Bruce Yandle, "Bootleggers and Baptists"

Mike Munger, "Rent-Seek and You Will Find"

James Buchanan, "How can Constitutions Be Designed so that Politicians Who Seek the Public Interest can Survive and Prosper?"

Eban Goodstein, "The Political Economy of Environmental Regulation"

Planet Money podcast: Why Taxpayers Pay for Farmer's Insurance

### Week Four LIBERTARIAN PATERNALISM Part 1

Richard Thaler and Cass Sunstein, "Libertarian Paternalism is not an Oxymoron"

### Week Five LIBERTARIAN PATERNALISM Part 2

Mark White, *The Manipulation of Choice: Ethics and Libertarian Paternalism*, chapters 3-7.

### Week Six MARKETS and MORALS

Michael Sandel, "How Markets Crowd Out Morals"

Herbert Gintis, "Giving Economists their Due" (reply to Sandel)

Samuel Bowles, "How Markets Crowd *In* Morals" (reply to Sandel)

Peter Singer, "Altruism and Commerce"

Loren Lomasky, "Gift Relations, Sexual Relations and Freedom"

### Week Seven SEX, MARRIAGE and BABIES

David Friedman, "Marriage, Sex and Babies"

Kate Taylor, "Sex on Campus: She Can Play That Game, Too"

Kay Hymowitz *et al*, "Knot Yet: The Benefits and Costs of Delayed Marriage"

Julian Savulescu, "The Moral Obligation to Create Children with the Best Chance of the Best Life"

Philosophy Bites Podcast: Julian Savulescu on Designer Babies

### Week Eight MONEY and HAPPINESS

Richard Easterlin, "Will Raising the Incomes of All Increase the Happiness of All?"

Will Wilkinson, "In Pursuit of Happiness Research"

Philosophy Bites podcast, Myles Burnyeat on Aristotle on Happiness

TED talk (in-class screening): Dan Gilbert on the Science of Happiness

### Week Nine COLLECTIVE ACTION

Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action* (excerpt)

Gerald Marwell and Ruth Ames, "Economists Free Ride, Does Anyone Else?"

Elinor Ostrom, "Collective Action and the Evolution of Social Norms"

Herbert Gintis and Samuel Bowles, "The Evolutionary Basis of Collective Action"