Description du cours :

This class is a general introduction to political theory and problems raised by political theorists: morality and ethics; justice and fairness; liberalism, pluralism and equality. The class is divided into three broad chapters: an introductory section on the paradoxes of political modernity, a section on competing (moral) theories of justice, and a final section on cosmopolitan or global equality. We will discuss grand theories and small real life cases. Theory and practice do not always match although many problems discussed by classical or contemporary philosophers are problems we face almost on a daily basis. We usually solve them to the best of our understanding, with conventional wisdom, lessons drawn from past experience, intuition, and our personal view of moral obligations. We will read classical works from liberals, utilitarians, libertarians, egalitarians and discuss their writings in the light of contemporary moral dilemmas. Every week, we will discuss a hard case and put “politics on trial”. We will use political theory and moral philosophy to challenge undue forms of power, dull conformity, the despotism of custom or … difficult moral decisions. Students are supposed to participate in the debates and contribute to lively discussions.

Langue principal de l'enseignement : anglais

Assignments and workload

★Please pick one reading every week
I have listed a fair amount of readings among which to choose: we do not all have to read the same texts, on the contrary: the more opinions, thoughts, insights, points of view represented, the better for our discussions.