Meeting Times:
436.01: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 10:10 a.m.-11:00 a.m., Nesmith Room 119.
436.02: Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays, 12:10 p.m.-1:00 p.m., Nesmith Room 119.

Instructor:  Professor Ruth Sample
Prof. Sample's Office:  Nesmith 306; tel. 862-3074
Email:  ruth.sample@unh.edu (this is the best way to contact me)

Required Texts:

**Text available at Durham Book Exchange and the UNH bookstore.  Some readings may be available as downloads from Canvas (https://mycourses.unh.edu/).

IMPORTANT:  This course is taught through the on-line Canvas system.  Students registered for this course are automatically enrolled as users of Canvas.  Login using your UNH id an password at https://mycourses.unh.edu/.

A Brief Course Description:

In this course we will do two things:

1. We will explore the writings of the major social and political thinkers in Western philosophy, from Plato through John Rawls and his critics.

2. We will learn about the perennial issues of political theory, and how these philosophers have tried to solve them.

   - Why have governments at all?
   - Do we have an obligation to obey the state?
   - What do we owe each other as citizens?  As human beings?
   - Which forms of government are the most defensible?

We will use several different methods of learning and assessment:

   - Regular quizzes will prepare you for class as well as provide you with ongoing assessment of your knowledge of basic concepts and lines of thought.
   - The two examinations will test your knowledge of the various views defended by the philosophers we study, the important conclusions they draw, and the reasons they give in support of those conclusions.  They will also test the breadth and depth of your knowledge of the texts.
   - Online discussions will hone your ability to ask and answer philosophical questions.
   - Essays will give you an opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of the moral philosophy we investigate, and to respond both analytically and creatively to the material.
This course is a discussion-based course, although I will spend part of each class lecturing. It is imperative that you complete each assigned reading before the class in which we discuss it. I expect you to read it at least twice during the week that it is assigned.

**Course Requirements: You must complete all of the required assignments in order to pass this course.**

- Two papers.
- Two in-class examinations.
- Weekly on-line discussion.
- Quizzes each Thursday, with exceptions as noted in the course schedule.
- Attendance at each class. *Five or more absences will trigger a grade of AF (Administrative Failure)*

**Grading:**

- Each paper counts for 15% of your final grade totaling 30%.
- Each examination counts for 15% of your final grade totaling 30%.
- Online discussion contributions count for 10% of your final grade.
- Quizzes (in class, most Thursdays) count for 20% of your final grade.
- Class participation will count for the remaining 10% of your grade.

**Papers:** Each paper will be 4-6 pages long.

**Quizzes:** Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped from the quiz average.

**On-line Discussions:** Each week you will participate in an on-line discussion via Canvas. You must either (a) post a question that was raised by the week’s reading, or (b) answer a question posed by another student, and (c) come to class prepared to discuss your question or response as an “ice-breaker.” Print out your discussion contribution before Thursday’s class; we will continue our discussion in class after the quiz.

**Participation:** Attendance and participation in discussion are required for this course. You may have two absences without penalty. Three to four absences will count against your participation grade. FIVE OR MORE ABSENCES WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESULT IN A GRADE OF AF (ADMINISTRATIVE FAILURE).