

POLITICAL VIRTUES & EMOTIONS

PHI 5393 SPRING 2026

PROFESSOR: Dr. Anne Jeffrey

MEETINGS: Wednesdays 8:45 -11:30 am

COURSE SITE: Canvas

COFFEE HOURS: 2 pm T or by appointment

anne_jeffrey@baylor.edu

A NOTE BEFORE BEGINNING

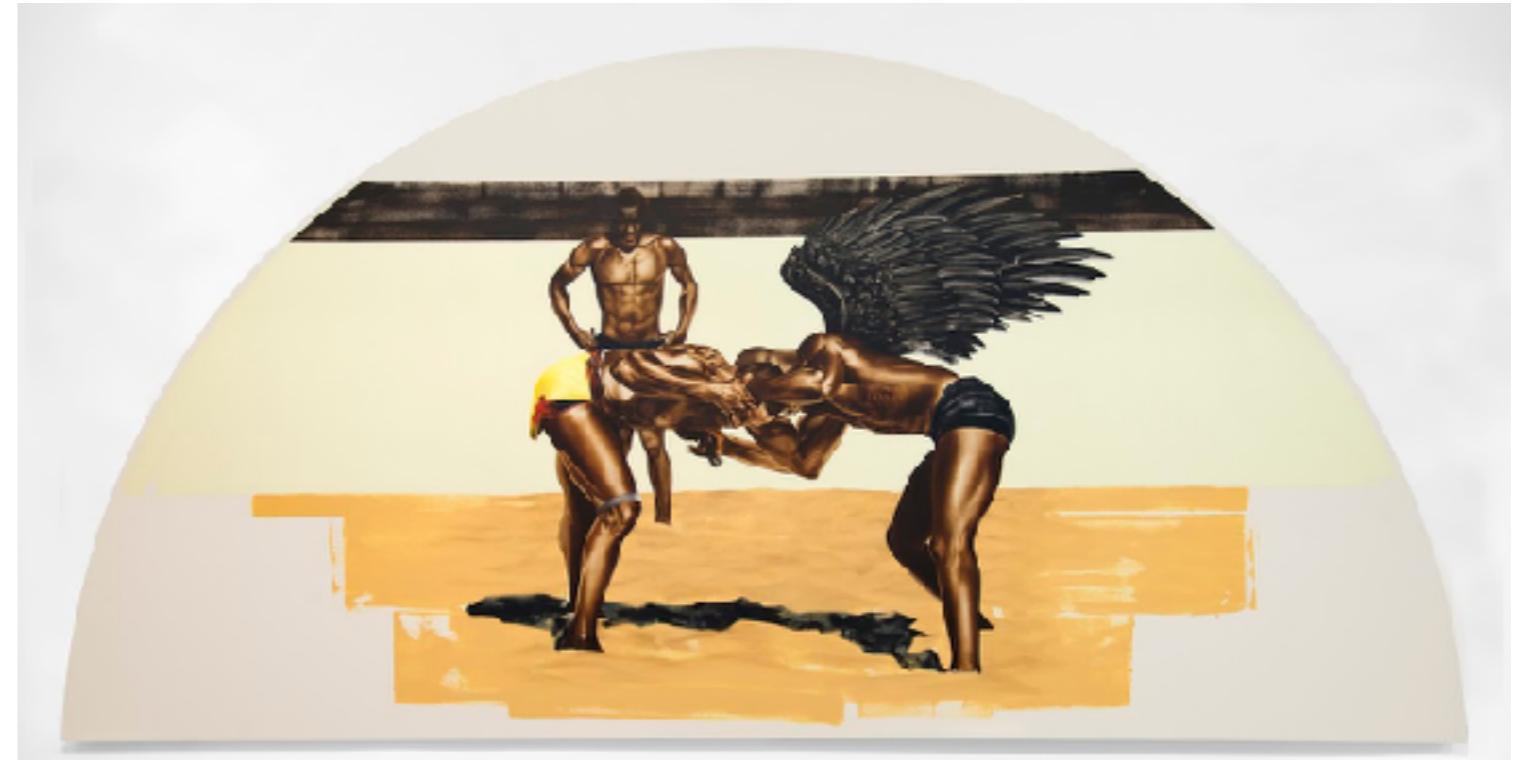
Graduate school can be trying for even the most psychologically healthy and socially supported person. I want you to succeed as students, but more importantly, I care about your thriving as human beings.

You are training for a profession with frequent submission deadlines and intense pressures to be productive. Our profession, and the institutions in which we work, often lack an infrastructure for recognizing and accommodating ordinary human limitations. Whether it is sleep deprivation, a hidden disability, a sudden relationship rupture, or a loss of a loved one, we all encounter obstacles that impact our ability to deliver what is expected in the time expected. And they don't tend to conform to our work calendars.

So I invite you to practice some habits this semester that will help you operate within professional boundaries while also healthily noticing and accepting humane limits. Consider what sorts of issues might arise for you that will affect your work in the course (health, relationships, caregiving) and make plans for your coursework that include them rather than ignore them. Ask someone in the class to take notes for you in advance if you have to miss a seminar. When something unexpected arises, simply communicate quickly by emailing about the impact on your work and follow up with an idea that will help us work toward a joint solution. I hope we can normalize the humanness of limits by voicing our limits and what sorts of things we are doing to accommodate ourselves and each other routinely.

If you are in need of psychological support, please call the Counseling Center at 254-710-2467 or Chaplain Burt Burleson at 254-710-3517.

WHAT IS THIS COURSE ABOUT?



Meleko Mokgosi. *Acts of Resistance I*. 2018.

Many political philosophers say that justice is the first virtue of institutions, and that justice is the virtue that governs the domain of our relationships to one another as fellow citizens. Recently, we have seen a growing interest in whether other virtues, like forgiveness, might be attributable to political institutions and if so, what this means for our accounts of these virtues in the personal register.

Are there personal habits like solidarity that are especially important for individuals to enact from within political roles, but less salient or significant in private life? What virtues regulate politically significant emotions specifically?

In addition, we will consider whether there are certain vices, or political emotions when left unregulated, especially dangerous to a liberal democratic republic. Do different approaches to political liberalism order those vices differently, as Judith Shklar argues? What roles are political institutions licensed to play in guarding against vice or promoting virtues? “How can a decent society do more for stability and motivation... without becoming illiberal?” as Martha Nussbaum asks.

We will explore such questions to help us think about the grammar of virtue, vice, and emotions in the political realm— both what it is now and what it could be.

WHAT WILL WE READ?

We will read recent work in the form of articles, works in progress, and excerpts from some older books. I have tried to make most of this available freely through Canvas. Some of the books are available to you in their entirety electronically through the Baylor library. We will read portions of:

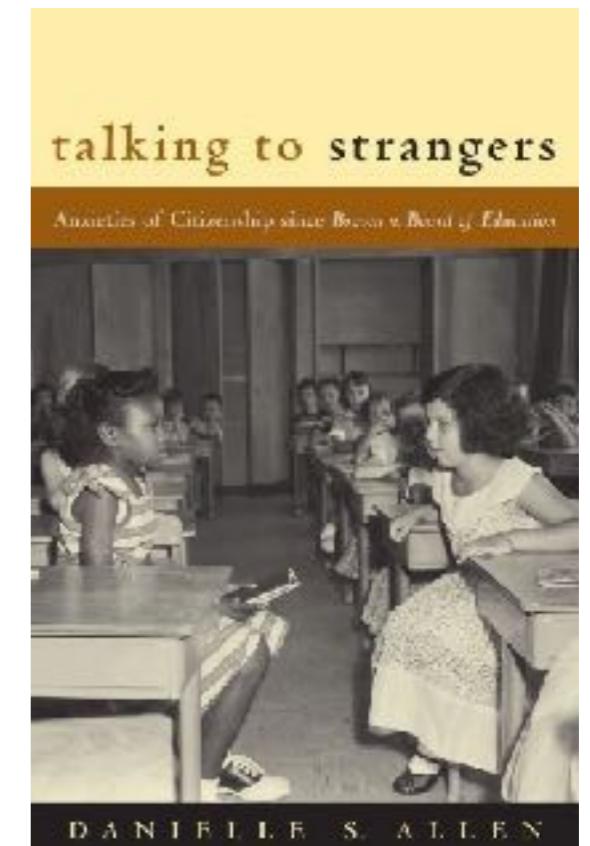
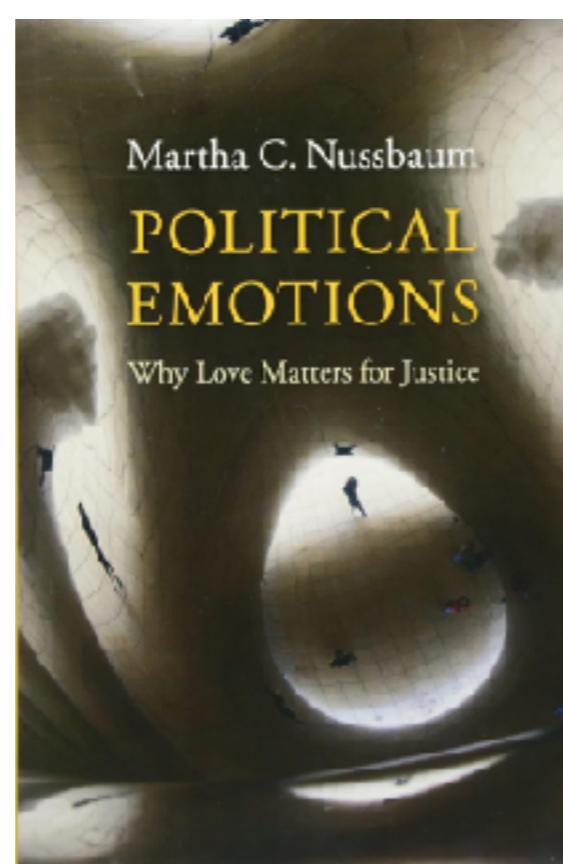
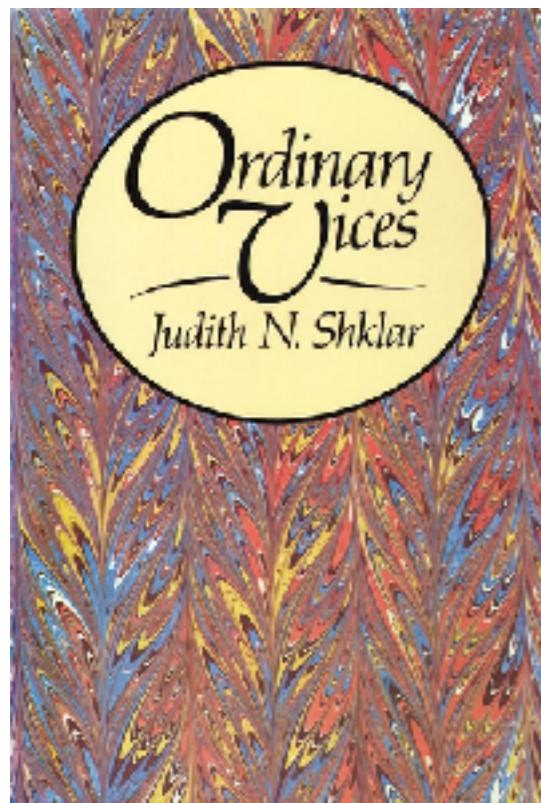
Danielle Allen, *Talking to Strangers*.

Hannah Arendt, *On the Origins of Totalitarianism*

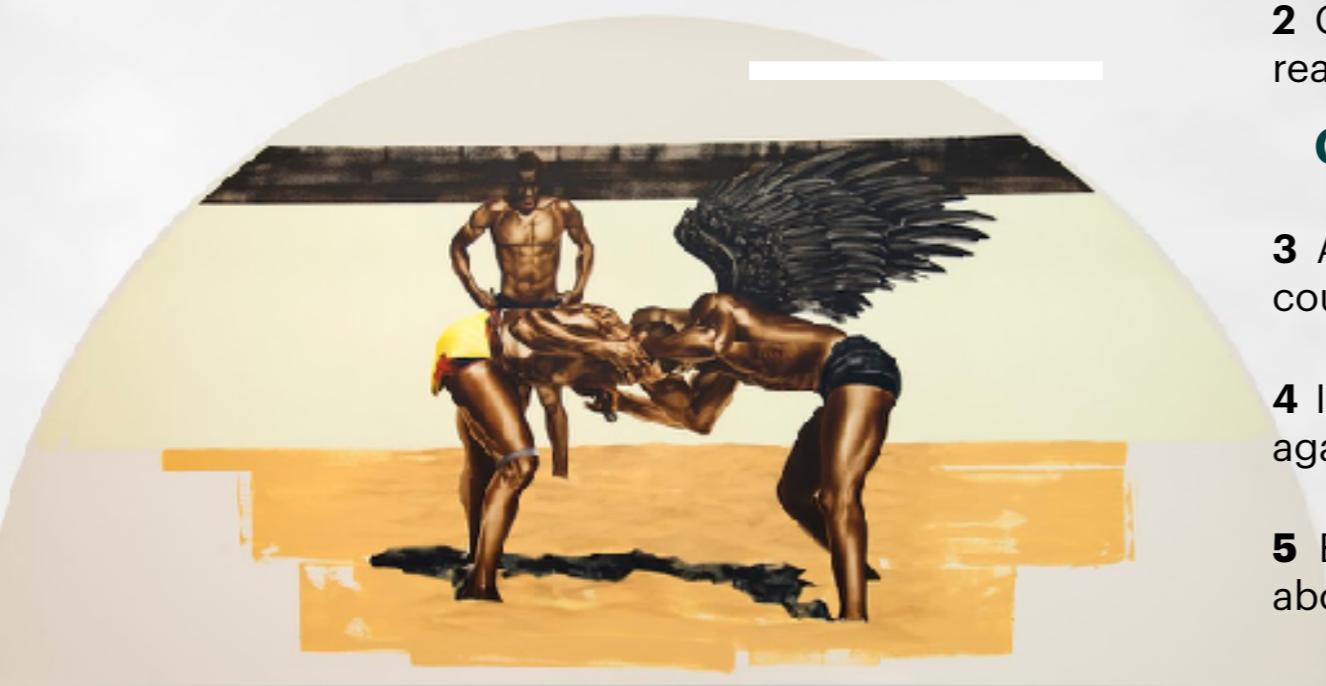
Martha Nussbaum, *Political Emotions* (Harvard University Press, 2013)

John Rawls, *Justice As Fairness: A Restatement*

Judith Shklar, *Ordinary Vices* (Harvard University Press, 1984)



WHAT ARE THE COURSE GOALS?



Meleko Mogkosi, (Angels) Democratic Intuition, Lerato, 2016.

The course goals are the intangible aims I hope you'll accomplish by the end of the semester. Your measurable progress towards these goals will be assessed by assignments designed for you to meet the tangible, specific **course objectives**.

There are 8 course objectives. Assignments are assessed using rubrics with the course objectives. Your final grade is based on your success in meeting the course objectives by the end of the semester. You won't be penalized for not meeting them earlier on- instead, you will be rewarded if you can meet these objectives by the end of our time together. There are opportunities to earn up to 20 points in the course over the semester.

ARTICULATE AN UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT POLITICAL THEORIES ARE DOING

- 1 Identify and accurately articulate main theses about political theorizing from the readings
- 2 Communicate purported impact of arguments or views from the readings

COMMUNICATE THE ARGUMENTS

- 3 Accurately and charitably reconstruct an argument for a view from course texts
- 4 Identify and accurately summarize objections to or arguments against the view
- 5 Explain the context for the philosophical debate or line of inquiry about political virtues, vices, or emotions

DEVELOP AND DEFEND AN ORIGINAL VIEW

- 6 Communicate an interesting and original claim pertaining to political virtues or emotions
- 7 Advance a novel, valid argument for your claim

ENGAGE FRUITFULLY WITH PEERS IN PHILOSOPHICAL DISCUSSION

- 8 Communicate respectfully and thoughtfully in philosophical discussion with your fellow students

WHAT WILL WE DO?

READINGS & DISCUSSION (5 points possible)

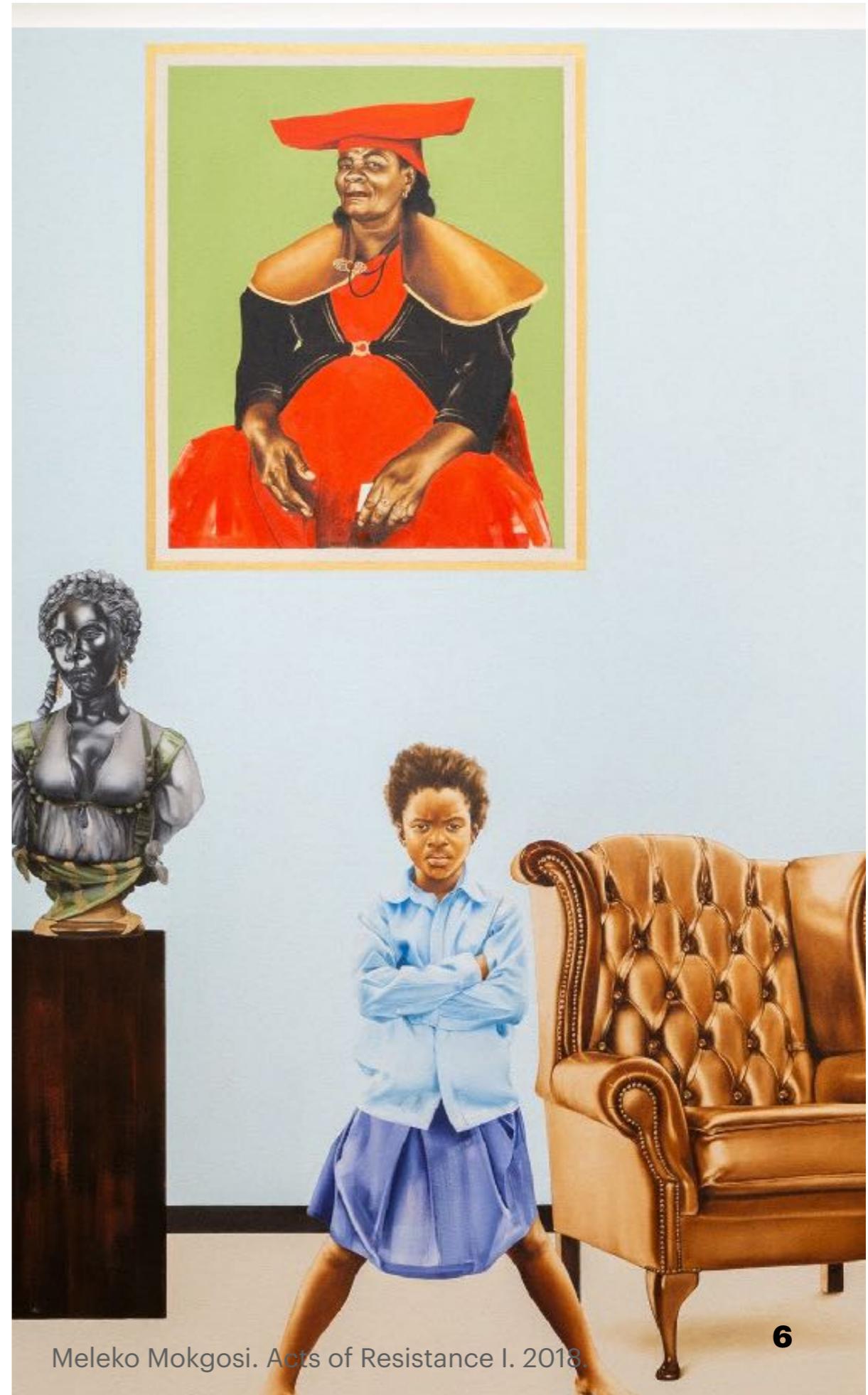
Please come to seminar having read the assigned texts carefully. The goal is not to become an expert on the author or their views, but rather to bring the author into our ongoing dialogue about the course questions. They each offer us different perspectives, insights, and arguments we can engage constructively and critically. You and your peers also contribute to our shared understanding of the course topics, so I will comment on and credit your thoughtful, respectful engagement with your conversation partners- the authors and your peers in class five times over the semester (roughly every 3 weeks).

PRÉCIS: TEACHING THE TEXT (4 points possible, before text due)

Practice teaching the text ideas to upper division undergraduates or presenting to peers unfamiliar with the work. Write a concise (1-2 page) summary of an assigned reading *before class the day the reading is due*. It should show that you know how to read charitably and accurately for the main thesis (objective 1), explain why the thesis under consideration matters (2), recount the major argument(s) in your own words (3), and contextualize the work briefly (4). Bonus for creating a class activity.

SYMPOSIUM (1 point possible, due 4/15)

Each student will circulate a long abstract of their paper to the class (which should include the main question and the central argument) and a draft to one peer reviewer. In class, the peer reviewer will open discussion with one or two questions or suggestions (APA style) and then the author will respond briefly before taking questions and comments for 10-15 minutes (objective 8).



Meleko Mokgosi. *Acts of Resistance I*. 2018.

SEMINAR PAPER

(10 points total possible, due 4/8- draft, 4/15 referee report and symposium, 5/8 final)

Working Draft. (4 points possible, due 4/8)

The working draft, which will be sent to your reviewer, should be conference length (around 3,000 words). Give either the skeletal version of the central argument for your original thesis or a complete version of one of the arguments of the paper that is able to stand alone. *You must make an appointment to meet with me to discuss and get approval on your topic in advance.* It should be in good enough shape to present. You'll turn this in to me and one peer on 4/8.

Within your paper, your main aims should be to make an original claim (objective 6) and to support that claim with an original, valid argument (objective 7). Make sure to situate your claim and argument within the broader literature; doing so will provide you an opportunity to meet objectives 1-5. You'll want your discussion to be sufficiently focused, so I recommend aiming for at most 2 of these supplementary objectives in the draft.

Referee Report. (3 points possible, due 4/15)

Everyone will receive a referee report from me and from your assigned peer after the symposium as well as comments from peers in discussion. We will discuss better and worse ways to conduct referee reports and I will provide you with positive examples. You can meet objectives in your comments, for instance, by correcting a restatement of an argument from a course text (objective 3) or explaining why a certain thesis the author is considering matters in some way not identified by the author (objective 2). The manner in which you deliver comments will be assessed for objective 8.

Final Paper. (Up to 3 points possible, 7 points total *inclusive* of 4 makeup points from draft, due 5/8)

This draft should take into account feedback from the referee report, along with a “letter to the editor” style cover letter explaining the changes and responses to the referee reports. Expect this final paper to be 5-7,000 words, including footnotes and references. It should follow Chicago or APA manual of style guidelines.

The revisions will provide you an opportunity to meet any objectives you aimed but failed to meet in the working draft.

SEMINAR PAPER (CONT'D)

including footnotes and references. It should follow Chicago or APA manual of style guidelines.

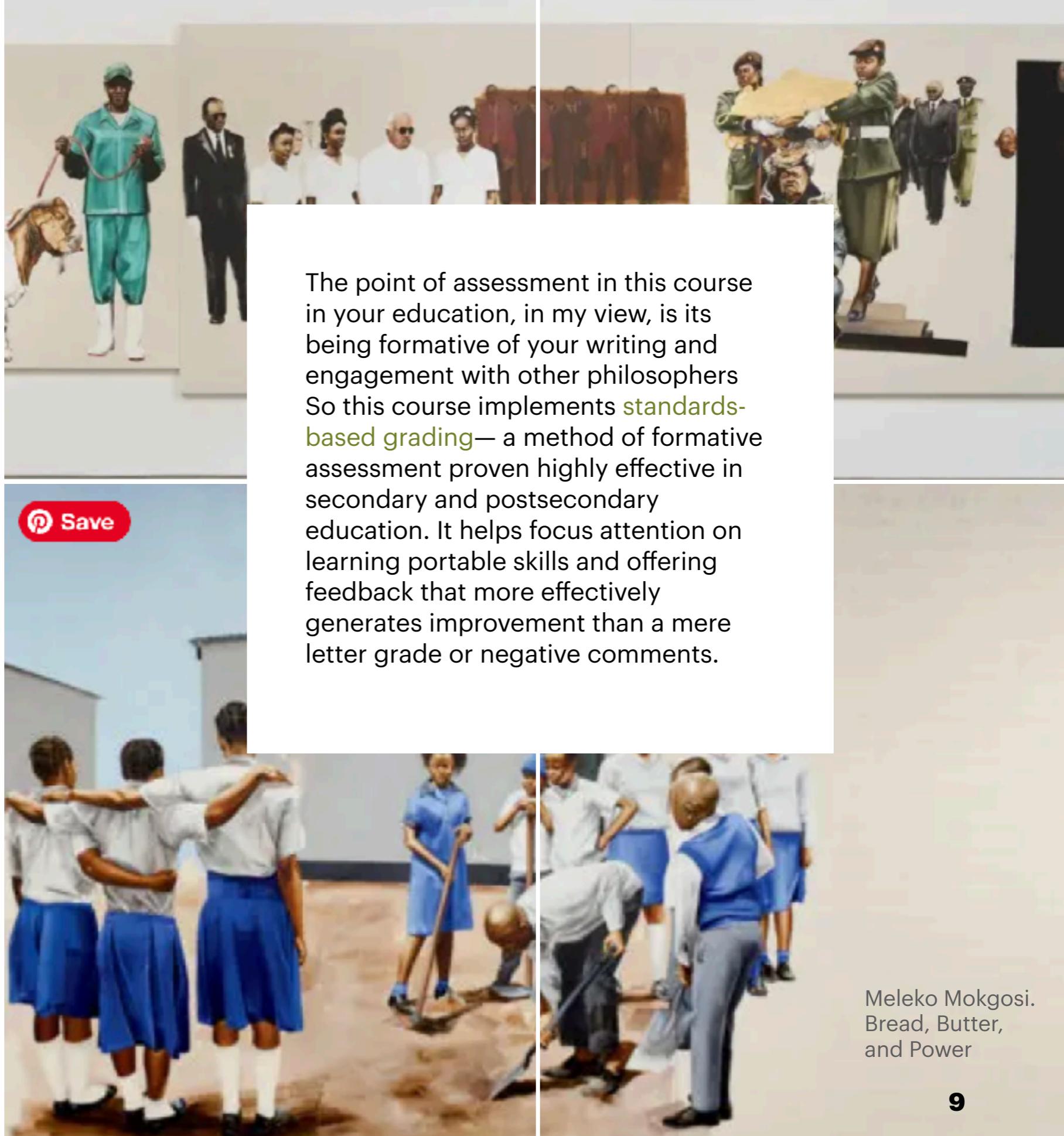
In your final draft, you should clearly connect your original thesis or argument for that thesis to the relevant literature on political emotions or virtues. This involves showing that you are a charitable reader of the texts, appreciate arguments made for the views represented there, and understand theoretical costs of those views and arguments or objections to them (objectives 1-5). Laying this out concisely and in a focused way will help you to practice a crucially important, difficult skill in philosophical writing.

Your final draft should also make clear how you are contributing something fruitful and new to the ongoing conversation in the relevant literature. The argument needs to be valid and support the announced thesis of the paper (objectives 6-7).

The revisions will provide you an opportunity to meet any objectives you aimed but failed to meet in the working draft. Submit the final no later than 11:59 pm on 5/8.

HOW ARE WE ASSESSED?

- A 18-20 points
- A- 17 points
- B+ 16 points
- B 15 points
- B- 14 points
- C+ 13 points
- C 12 points
- C- 11 points
- D 10 points



READING SCHEDULE

DATE	QUESTION	REQUIRED READING (subject to change- see Canvas for updates)
1/21	Aims of contemporary political philosophy	John Rawls, <i>Justice As Fairness</i> , parts I and V
1/28	Are there distinctively “political” emotions? Can they be apt or fitting?	Martha Nussbaum, <i>Political Emotions</i> , Introduction Berit Brogaard, “What makes an emotion political? Affective polarisation as a test case for political emotions” Ruth Rebecca Tietjen and Thomas Szanto, “The Appropriateness of Political Emotions”
2/4	What about political virtues and vices? What vices and emotions threaten a liberal democracy?	Martha Nussbaum, <i>Political Emotions</i> , ch. 7 Judith Shklar, <i>Ordinary Vices</i> , Introduction and ch. 6
2/11	What is the political significance of cruelty?	Judith Shklar, <i>Ordinary Vices</i> , ch. 1 Richard Rorty, “The barber of Kasbeam: Nabokov on cruelty”
2/18	What is the political value of patience?	Anne Jeffrey, “Patience, Pathos, and Prophecy” Abraham Joshua Heschel, <i>The Prophets</i> , selections
2/25	When is political anger justified and adaptive?	Myisha Cherry, “Political Anger” Liz Jackson and Carl Hildebrand, “Reframing Affective Injustice: On the Right to Anger and the Priority of Moral Reasons”
3/4	Is there such a thing as specifically political forgiveness and grace?	Quinn White, “Forgiveness: Personal and Political” Abe Mathew, “The Realm of Rights and the Realm of Grace”
3/18	What about habits of attention and indifference?	Amy Flowerree, “Casual Cruelty” Sara Ahmed, <i>The Cultural Politics of Emotion</i> , selections
3/25	How do feelings of betrayal and isolation impact political relationships and institutions?	Hannah Arendt, <i>On the Origins of Totalitarianism</i> , ch. 13 Judith Shklar, <i>Ordinary Vices</i> , ch. 4 Barrett Emerick and Audrey Yap, “Betrayed Expectations”
4/1	Do we have a problem of snobbery and, if so, would solidarity make a difference?	Judith Shklar, <i>Ordinary Vices</i> , ch. 3 Avery Kolers, “Solidarity as a Virtue of Equality” Meghan J. Clark, “Transforming Interdependence into Social Virtue: Solidarity in Catholic Social Thought”

READING SCHEDULE

DATE	QUESTION	REQUIRED READING (subject to change- see Canvas for updates)
4/8	What does a virtuous response to difference look like, and what gets in the way of such openness?	Danielle Allen, <i>Talking to Strangers</i> , selections John Bowlin, <i>Tolerance among the Virtues</i> , selections Symposium paper due to peer
4/15	Symposium	Referee report due
4/22	How does hypocrisy erode social trust and what can we do about it?	Judith Shklar, <i>Ordinary Vices</i> , ch. 2 Mathew Jeffers and Alexander Schaefer, "The Function of Hypocrisy Norms" Tom Sinclair, "Hypocrisy as Evasion"
4/29	How can we combat extremism?	Quassim Cassam, "Doubt as a Political Virtue" Ryan Preston Roedder, "Faith in Humanity"
5/6	Is hope appropriate in the face of climate despair?	Leonhard Menges and Hannah Altehenger, "The Value of Climate Despair" Darrel Moellendorf, <i>Mobilizing Hope</i> , selections
5/8		Final paper due

WHAT RESOURCES DO WE HAVE?

COFFEE HOURS

I hope you'll take time to visit with me — over coffee or tea at Pinewood 2 pm Tuesdays or by appointment. This offers me a chance to get to know you better, to learn about your research and teaching interests and backgrounds, as well as to extend our discussions outside class. Email anne_jeffrey@baylor.edu for an appointment.

FOSTER SUCCESS CENTER

Everyone in our class has the ability to meet the goals and objectives outlined. It's tempting to think that student success centers and writing centers are for undergraduates, but we can all improve our writing and work habits. As a faculty member I've participated in seminars offered by the Faculty Hub on research and writing. Foster Success Center is here to help you, too, so I highly encourage you to let them partner with you in your academic journey.

UNIVERSITY WRITING CENTER & LIBRARIANS

The University Writing Center can help you at any stage from brainstorming to editing. And our librarians can help you learn how to research using methods that will take your writing to the next level and prepare you for dissertation-level work. The library has even compiled a Philosophy resource guide for us.

OALA

If you need academic accommodations related to having different ability/disability, please let me know as soon as the semester starts and get signed up with the Office of Access and Learning Accommodation. They'll help walk you through documentation and information.

TITLE IX AND EQUITY

Baylor University does not tolerate unlawful harassment or discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, race, color, disability, national origin, ancestry, age over 40, citizenship, genetic information or the refusal to submit to genetic test, past, current, or prospective service in the uniformed services, or any other protected characteristic under federal, Texas, or local law.

If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience involving sexual or gender based harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, intimate partner violence, or retaliation for reporting one of these types of prohibited conduct, please visit www.baylor.edu/titleix or call 254-710-8454 or email titleIX_Coordinator@baylor.edu .

If you or someone you know would like help related to an experience involving harassment excluding those listed above, or adverse action, based on protected characteristics, please visit www.baylor.edu/equity or call 254-710-7100 or email equity@baylor.edu .

The Office of Equity and Title IX understand the sensitive nature of these situations and can provide information about available on and off campus resources, such as counseling and psychological services, medical treatment, academic support, housing, advocacy, and other forms of assistance that may be available. Staff members at the office can also explain your rights and

procedural options. You will not be required to share your experience.

If you or someone you know feels unsafe or may be in imminent danger, please call the Baylor Police (254-710-2222) or Waco Police (911) immediately.

Except for Confidential Resources, all University Employees are designated Responsible Employees and thereby mandatory reporters of potential sexual and interpersonal misconduct violations. Confidential resources who do not have to report include those working in the Counseling Center, Health Center, and the University Chaplain.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

"We respectfully acknowledge that Baylor University in Waco and its original campus in Independence are on the land and territories originally occupied by Indigenous peoples including the Waco and Tawakoni of the Wichita and Affiliated Tribes, the Tonkawa, the Nʉmʉnʉʉ (Comanche), Karankawa, and Lipan Apache. These Indigenous peoples were dispossessed of and removed from their lands over centuries by European colonization and American expansionism. In recognition that these Native Nations are the original stewards of Baylor's campus locations, the University strives to build sustainable relationships with sovereign Native Nations and Indigenous communities through education offerings, partnerships, and community service."

As a professor of Baylor, I enjoy and distribute benefits gained through these injustices and inequalities and commit to ongoing reparative work in my research, teaching, and service, the ongoing work of restoration, redemption, and God's justice for all people.



*Research done by Baylor Theater Department, 2020

Photo credit: Mark Nadjiwan <https://www.threetreesart.com/>