

Philosophy 590S
Promises
Fall 2021

Tuesday, 3:30-6
204 West Duke

Gopal Sreenivasan
210 West Duke

Schedule

Tuesday, August 24 Introduction. No reading.

August 31 Atiyah, *Promises, Morals, and Law* (1981), chh. 5-7.

September 7 Raz, "Promises and obligations," in Hacker and Raz (eds.) *Law, Morality, and Society* (1977), pp. 210-28;
Raz, "Promises in morality and law," *Harvard Law Review* 95(4) (1982): 916-38.

Sept 14 Thomson, *Realm of Rights* (1990), ch. 12.

Sept 21 Scanlon, *What We Owe to Each Other* (1998), ch. 7.

Sept 28 Gilbert, "Scanlon on promissory obligation," *Journal of Philosophy* 101 (2004): 83-109.

October 5 Fall break. No class.

Oct 12 Wallace and Kolodny, "Promises and practices revisited," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 31(2) (2003): 119-54.

Oct 19 Owens, *Shaping the normative landscape* (2012), chh. 5-6.

Oct 26 Owens, *Shaping the normative landscape* (2012), chh. 7-8.

November 2 Owens, *Shaping the normative landscape* (2012), chh. 9-10.

Nov 9 Shiffrin, "Promising, conventionalism, and intimate relationships," *Philosophical Review* 117 (2008): 481-524.

Nov 16 Smith, "A paradox of promising," *Philosophical Review* 106 (1997): 153-96.

Nov 23 TBA (if necessary)

Assignments

Everyone will be required to write a weekly 600 word essay on the assigned topic. Essays will be due at 10 am in the Sakai dropbox on Tuesdays (ie, class day). Topics will be posted in Sakai the week before. Everyone has **three** free passes on the short essays, i.e. you may elect not to submit an essay on three weeks of your choosing.

Philosophy graduate students will also be required to write a 3000 word essay at the end of term. Their 1 page topic proposal is due by e-mail on Friday, October 29. The essay itself is due Wednesday, December 8.

Grading

Of each student's 9 short essays, I will count your highest 6 grades.

For philosophy graduate students, these 6 grades will count for 60 percent of your final grade; your longer essay will count for 40 percent.

For other students, the 6 short essay grades will count for 80 percent of your final grade and participation will count for 20 percent. There is no longer essay required. However, anyone may elect to follow the graduate philosophy pattern.

Office hours

By appointment.

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14 August, 2021