Course Description: This course will ask what pragmatist political theory might contribute to recent debates in political philosophy concerning the methodological orientations of “ideal theory” and its various alternatives (most notably “non-ideal theory” and “realist theory”). Where ideal theory holds that political philosophy ought to arrive at correct principles of justice, right, or legitimacy as a standard against which political reality should be measured, non-ideal theory and realist theory argue that we need to begin with the concrete terms of the political situations in which we find ourselves as the starting point of theorizing. The practice-centered perspective of pragmatism would seem to have something to contribute to the debates between these two perspectives. The course will not presume endorsement of any particular conceptions stemming from pragmatist, ideal, non-ideal, or realist theory; all it will presume is a willingness to rigorously engage the philosophical stakes of these approaches to political theory. We will be interrogating this debate in only one of its possible forms—for the most part we will take as our focus fairly mainstream views of pragmatist political theory as well as mainstream contributions to the debates over ideal theory and its alternatives. The course will begin with a brief review of mainstream literature in ideal theory and non-ideal theory. We will begin the class with selections from the most important statement of ideal political theory over the past half-century: Rawls’s work in *A Theory of Justice* and *Justice as Fairness* (students lacking any familiarity with his work are strongly encouraged to read from these books prior to the first class). We will next move to a brief overview of recent literature on methodology in political theory. The majority of the course will then be focused on (again, mainstream) contributions to pragmatist political theory from both its classico-pragmatist and neo-pragmatist phases: readings will include selections from William James, W.E.B. Du Bois, John Dewey, Walter Lippmann and Richard Rorty. We will then move to discussions of contemporary contributions to pragmatist political theory. Student work will involve regular reading responses and a final research paper in which detailed engagement with both primary and secondary literature is expected.
**Course Day and Time:** Every Tues & Thur, 12:05-1:50; Spr. 2018 term  
**Course Location:** Susan Campbell Hall Room 250C  
**Course Instructor:** Colin Koopman  
**Instructor Contact:** koopman@uoregon.edu  
**Instructor Office Hours:** Tuesdays 3:30-5:30 (tentative, to be confirmed first day of class)  
**Course Website:** via Slack at uophil641.slack.com (private site; an invitation will be sent to all students)

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**Reading & Seminar Schedule** (complete all required readings before class meeting that day)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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| 4/3  | Framing a Debate for Context: Ideal Theory versus Non-ideal Theory                            | **Ideal Theory: The Content of, and Argument for, Rawls’s Theory of Justice**  
Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971), §§3-4 (pp. 11-22), §11 (pp. 60-65)  
—, *Justice as Fairness* (2001), §§2-9 (pp. 5-29), §§13-16 (pp. 42-57)  
Recommended:  
| 4/5  | **Ideal Theory: Rawls’s Methodology**                                                           | Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (1971), §2 (pp. 7-11), §25 (pp. 142-145), §39 (pp. 243-251)  
—, *Justice as Fairness* (2001), §1 (pp. 1-5), §5 (pp. 12-14), §18 (pp. 61-66)  
Stemplowska & Swift, “Rawls on Ideal and Nonideal Theory” (2014), in *A Companion to Rawls*  
Recommended:  
—, *Political Liberalism* (1993), §9 (pp. 281-285)  
—, *The Law of Peoples* (1999), Introduction (pp. 3-7), §1.1 (pp. 11-12), §13.1 (pp. 89-91)  
Simmons, “Ideal and Nonideal Theory” (2010), *Philosophy and Public Affairs*  
Schmidt, ”Nonideal Theory: What It Is and What It Needs to Be” (2011), *Ethics* |
| 4/10 | **Challenges to Ideal Theory: The Role of Nonideal Theory as an Alternative to Ideal Theory**  | Hendrix, “Where Should We Expect Social Change in Non-Ideal Theory” (2013), *Political Theory*  
Recommended:  
Weber and Vallier (eds.), *Political Utopias* (2017)  
Levy, “There Is No Such Thing as Ideal Theory” (2015), *Social Philosophy and Policy*  
Valentini, ”On the Apparent Paradox of Ideal Theory” (2009), *Journal of Political Philosophy*  
Farrelly, “Justice in Ideal Theory: A Refutation” (2007) *Political Studies* |
Challenges to Ideal Theory: Racial Injustice as a Challenge to Ideal Theory
(w/ guest visitor Melvin Rogers, Brown University, Political Science)
Rogers, "Being a Slave of the Community" (forthcoming), chap. in The Darkened Light of Faith
Mills, "Ideal Theory as Ideology" (2005), Hypatia

Recommended:
Rogers, “The People’s Two Bodies: ... W. E. B. Du Bois’ The Souls of Black Folk” (forthcoming), chap. in Darkened Light
Glaude, Democracy in Black: How Race Still Enslaves the American Soul (2016)
Boettcher, “Race, Ideology, and Ideal Theory” (2009), Metaphilosophy

Challenges to Ideal Theory: Realist Political Theory as an Alternative to Ideal Theory
Williams, In The Beginning Was the Deed (2007), Ch. 1 (“Realism and Moralism...”), (pp. 1-17)

Recommended:
Prinz and Rossi, “Political Realism as Ideology Critique” (2017), Crit Rev of Int'l Soc and Pol Phil
Sleat, “Realism, Liberalism and Non-ideal Theory...” (2016), Political Studies
Rossi and Sleat “Realism in Normative Political Theory” (2014), Philosophy Compass
Larmore, “What is Political Philosophy?” (2012), Journal of Moral Philosophy
Galston, “Realism in Political Theory” (2010), European Journal of Political Theory
Geuss, Philosophy and Real Politics (2008)

Locating Pragmatist Political and Moral Thought: Sources

Pragmatist Metaphilosophy
James, Pragmatism (1906), (lectures I & II), “Present Dilemma” and “What Prag Means” in WWJ

Recommended:
McKenna and Pratt, American Philosophy (2015)
Misak, The American Pragmatists (2013)
Bacon, Pragmatism: An Introduction (2012)
Bernstein, The Pragmatic Turn (2010)
Koopman, Pragmatism as Transition: Historicity and Hope in James, Dewey, and Rorty (2009)
Dewey, Reconstruction in Philosophy (1920)
Dewey, “The Need for a Recovery of Philosophy” (1917)

James, “The Moral Philosopher and the Moral Life” (1891), in WWJ
—, “The Moral Equivalent of War” (1910), in WWJ

James, “The Will to Believe” (1896), in WWJ
—, Spanish-American War writings (ca. 1899-1904), published writings (pp. 1-21 of pdf only)

Recommended:
James, “On a Certain Blindness in Human Beings” (1898), in WWJ
—, “What Makes a Life Significant?” (1898), in WWJ
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>5/1</td>
<td>Dewey, <em>The Public and Its Problems</em> (1927), Chs. 5-6 (pp. 171-234)</td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong> Dewey, <em>Liberalism and Social Action</em> (1935)</td>
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<td>—, <em>Ethics</em>, 2nd ed. (1932) [with James Hayden Tufts]</td>
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<td>—, <em>Individualism Old and New</em> (1930)</td>
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<td>—, review of Lippmann's <em>Public Opinion</em> (1922), <em>The New Republic</em></td>
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<td>—, review of Lippmann's <em>The Phantom Public</em> (1925), <em>The New Republic</em></td>
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<td>5/3</td>
<td>Lippmann, <em>Public Opinion</em> (1922), Pts. 1-5 (pp. 1-160)</td>
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<td>5/8</td>
<td>Lippmann, <em>Public Opinion</em> (1922), Pts. 6-8 (pp. 161-263)</td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong> Lippmann, <em>The Phantom Public</em> (1925)</td>
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<td>—, <em>Drift and Mastery</em> (1914)</td>
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<td>5/10</td>
<td>Du Bois, <em>The Souls of Black Folk</em> (1903), Chs. 1-6 (pp. 1-91)</td>
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<td>5/15</td>
<td>Du Bois, <em>The Souls of Black Folk</em> (1903), Chs. 7-14 (pp. 91-217)</td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong> Du Bois, <em>Darkwater: Voices from Within the Veil</em> (1920)</td>
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<td>—, “Sociology Hesitant” (1905)</td>
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<td>—, “The Conservation of Races” (1897)</td>
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**Contemporary Scholarship on Pragmatist Political Thought: Mobilizations**

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5/17</td>
<td><strong>Neopragmatist Political Interventions</strong> Rorty, <em>Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity</em> (1989), Intro (pp. xiii-xvi), &amp; Chs. 1-3 (pp. 3-69)</td>
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<td>—, <em>Contingency, Irony, and Solidarity</em> (1989), Ch. 4 (pp. 73-95) &amp; 9 (pp. 189-99)</td>
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<td><strong>Recommended on Rorty’s Political Thought:</strong> Chin, <em>Richard Rorty Between Pragmatism and Continental Thought</em> (forthcoming)</td>
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<td><strong>Recommended Additional Neopragmatist Political Thought:</strong> Fossen, “Taking Stances, Contesting Commitments: Political Legitimacy &amp; the Pragmatic Turn” (2013), <em>J Pol Phil</em></td>
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<td>Fossen, “Politicizing Brandom’s Pragmatism: Normativity &amp; the Agonal Character of Social Practice” (2011), <em>Eur J Phil</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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### Deweyan Political Interventions

**Rogers**, *The Undiscovered Dewey* (2009), prfc. (pp. ix-xiii), intro (pp. 13-21), + ch. 5 (pp. 191-237)

Bohman, “Participation through Publics: ... Dewey ... Lippmann” (2010), *Contemp Prag*

**Recommended on Dewey’s Political Thought:**
- Berk & Galvan, “…: A Field Guide to Creative Syncretism” (2009), *Theory and Society*
- Hildreth, “Reconstructing Dewey on Power” (2009), *Political Theory*

**Recommended on Pragmatist Deliberative Democracy:**
- Dieleman, “What Would It Mean to Call Rorty a Deliberative Democrat?” (2017), *Contemporary Pragmatism*
- Vanderveen, “Pragmatism & Democratic Legitimacy: Beyond Minimalist Accounts of Deliberation” (2007), *J Spec Phil*

**Recommended on Lippman’s Thought:**

### Jamesian Political Interventions

**Livingston**, *Damn Great Empires!* (2016), Intro (pp. 1-23) + Ch.4 (pp. 103-125)

Medina, “The Will Not to Believe: Pragmatism, Oppression, & Standpnt...” (2015), (pp. 235-261)

**Recommended on James’s Political Thought:**
- Koopman, “Transforming the Self Amidst the Taming of Chance: WJ on ‘Our Undisciplinables’” (2016), *diacritics*
- Throntveit, *William James and the Quest for an Ethical Republic* [esp. ch. 4] (2014)

**Recommended on Pragmatist Critical Epistemology:**
- Dieleman, “Epistemic Justice and Democratic Legitimacy” (2015), *Hypatia*
- Collins, “Social Inequality, Power, & Politics: Intersectionality... American Prag” (2012), in *Pragmatism & Justice*
- Medina, “James on Truth & Solidarity: Epstmlgy of Diversity & the Poltcs of Specificity” (2010), in *100 Years of Prag*
- Cormier, “Ever Not Quite: Unfinished Theories, Unfinished Societies, & Prag” (2007), in *Race & Epstmlgs of Ignrnc*
- Taylor, “Race Problems, Unknown Publics, Paralysis, and Faith” (2007), in *Race & Epstmlgs of Ignrnc*

**Recommended on Du Bois’s Thought:**
- Rogers, “The People, Rhetoric, and Affect” (2012), *APSR*
- Taylor, “W.E.B. Du Bois” (2010), *Philosophy Compass*
Taylor, “What’s the Use of Calling Du Bois a Pragmatist?” (2004), *Metaphilosophy*

### Liberal Egalitarian Political Interventions

Anderson, *The Imperative of Integration* (2010), chs. 1 (pp. 1-22), 4 (pp. 86-88) + 6 (pp. 112-134)

Recommended on Pragmatist Liberal Egalitarianism:
Hay, “Consonances Between Liberalism and Pragmatism” (2012), *Transactions of the Charles S. Peirce Society*
Green, “Advancing Cosmopolitan Community Solidarity in Struggles for Economic Justice” (2012), *Cognitio*
Anderson, “Toward a Non-Ideal, Relational Methodology for Political Phil” (2009), *Hypatia*

### Putting a Perspective Into Dialogue: Pragmatist Contributions to the Ideal Theory Debates

6/1 Research Papers due
(due Friday of week 9 @noon – submit a hardcopy under my door & email me a PDF document)

6/5 Festenstein, “Pragmatism, Realism and Moralism” (2016), *Political Studies Review*
Koopman, “Unruly Pluralism and Inclusive Tolerance” (2016), *Political Studies Review*

6/7 Festenstein, “Ideal and Actual in Dewey's Political Theory” (2017), in *Pragmatism and Justice*
Talisse, “Can Non-Ideal Theories of Justice Guide Action?” (2017), in *Political Utopias*

**Additional Literature on Pragmatism and Ideal Theory:**
Bagg, “Between Critical & Normative Theory: Predictive Political Thry as a Deweyan Realism” (2016), *Pol Studies Qtrly*
Anderson, “Reply to Critics of The Imperative of Integration” (2014), *Political Studies Review*
Ralston, “Can Pragmatists Be Institutionalists? … Dewey … the Non-ideal/Ideal Theory Debate” (2010), *Human Studies*

6/12 Final Research Papers due
(due Tues. @noon – submit a hardcopy under my door & email me a PDF document)

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**Books & Texts (and how to obtain them)**

You are required to purchase or locate copies of the following texts. You must bring your reading to class (either as a hardcopy or in an electronic form) *in the edition listed below*. Many of our texts are available in alternative editions, so please confirm the ISBN listed below before purchasing so you can check you have the right edition. Some of these alternatives are a little bit cheaper. However, for scholarly purposes, including close readings and in-class discussion of specific pages, you must acquire the edition below. There will be no tolerance for catching up people who are using a different pagination.


All assigned readings not listed above will be made available via our course website, as well some of the recommended literature above. As above, you must bring your reading to class (either as a hardcopy or in an electronic form) *in the edition supplied online*.

**Assessment and Required Work**

1) Participation, 10% of final grade (this requirement also applies to auditors).

This course will be a seminar. It requires active participation in a series of discussions that will extend throughout the quarter. I will expect that everyone (including auditors) to be very well-prepared at the beginning of every class session.

- **5% of grade** – I expect active participation in the class by all students. I will strive to facilitate the seminar in such a way that we have excellent conditions for excellent conversations. While I will do everything I can to make the class a welcoming environment for all, please let me know what I can do further.

- **5% of grade** - On any given day, I may ask a small group of you (selected at random, or maybe not) to initiate a discussion by starting us off with this question. Be prepared for this.

2) Online Discussion Contributions, 10% of final grade (this requirement also applies to auditors).

I expect all participants to come to class prepared. You must be prepared with questions about and debates with the assigned readings for that session. Accordingly, everyone will post a single question or comment about each day’s reading to our course website by the following time: one hour prior to the beginning of each class session. Please keep your posts short so that everyone can review all comments in the hour prior to class. The first post will be due prior to the second meeting of class.

- **10% of grade** – These posts will cumulatively amount to 10% of your final grade (they will be graded pass/fail rather than for quality).

3) In-Class Presentation, 10% of final grade (does not apply to auditors)

You will develop and deliver a brief in-class presentation in teams of two. Ideally, we will have five teams presenting: one each on James, Dewey, Lippmann, Du Bois, and Rorty on the first session during
which we will be reading and discussing their work. The presentations should be 10-15 minutes in length (with 15 minutes as a hard maximum) and should be divided into two portions (the portions are unequal so your team should not divide the work in two, but rather work collaboratively on both sections by meeting in person and using collaboration tools like Google docs). In the first portion you should offer a 5-10 minute overview of your philosopher’s career and their most influential and/or important ideas. In the second portion you should offer a 5-10 minute contextualization of the book (and/or essays) we are reading by your philosopher—for the second portion you should aim to be highly-specific and excavate contextualizing material including your text’s publication history, reception, and location within your philosopher’s trajectory.

• 10% of grade – These posts will cumulatively amount to 10% of your final grade (they will be graded pass/fail rather than for quality).

4) Final Research Paper (in two stages), 70% of final grade (does not apply to auditors)

You will write a final research paper, which will be developed and due to me in two stages as describe below. I will grade both versions of your paper as if they are finalized and polished pieces of writing. I will assess your work according to a rubric of nine criteria of evaluation to be distributed in advance via a handout (please help remind me to get this to you in a timely fashion).

First Version of Final Paper (35% of final grade)

• 30% of grade – You will write a short argumentative essay, due (as a hardcopy and via email) as per the schedule above.
  o You are expected to develop your own essay topic, with the sole constraint being that the essay must address the subject matter of the course. If you are unsure about your topic, please meet me with me in office hours at least one month before the paper is due.
  o The first shorter version of your paper should be about 10-12 pages (or about 3000 words exclusive of notes and references; with 3500 words as an upper limit). Your essay should discussed assigned primary readings as well as secondary readings (which I can help you locate, so visit my office hour).
  o Although you will revise this essay and expand it into a longer final research essay due at the end of the term, this version of the essay should be highly-polished and well-argued. You are expected to turn in a finalized piece of writing, and not a draft. You will revise this finalized piece of writing once more, but that just shows that revision is an extensive process. Think of it this way: my written feedback on your paper will be more useful to you if you turn in to me a piece of work that you think is perfect; if you turn in something that you know to have shortcomings, then my written feedback will likely only reflect what you already know.

• 5% of grade – You will append to your paper a bibliography that includes three short (100-word) abstracts of three pieces (individual journal articles or individual essays in collected volumes) of secondary literature relevant to your chosen topic. It is important that you craft your paper around a topic for which some secondary literature is available. Find three sources and summarize, or abstract, them in your own words. An abstract is an executive
summary of the work written in the third-person. It is not a report on your judgment of, much less your experience of, the piece you have read. It is not a description of how you will (or do) use the piece in your essay.

**Final Version of Final Paper (35% of final grade)**

- **25% of grade** – You will then take the first version of your research essay, along with my comments, and other peer comments (if you swap with a peer, which you should), and write a final research essay. This will be due (as a hardcopy and via email) early in exam week as per the schedule above.
  - This will be a revision of and improvement upon the first version of the paper you turned in late in the term. This essay should engage with one both the assigned primary literature and relevant secondary literature.
  - The final essay should be about 12 pages in length (aim for 3000-3500 words exclusive of notes and references, i.e. a conference-length paper). Note that **3500 words is a hard limit**. I want you to do everything you can to stay within this limit because this is a typical conference-length paper limit in Philosophy; thus you need to get used to writing to this (sometimes impossibly short!) length.
- **5% of grade** – In addition, you must turn into me a one-page (single-space) set of revisions notes (of the kind you will be expected to submit to a journal if you get a ‘revise and resubmit; I will supply an example if you request one). This will explain all major revisions you made in your paper. It will also explain any decision you have made to not institute revisions in light of reviewer (i.e., instructor, i.e., me!) comments. You should write this as a letter.
- **5% of grade** – You will include at the front of your paper two short abstracts (of your paper) of different length, according to customary conference-submission and journal-publishing standards. The first abstract should be a 100-word summary describing the core argument of the paper. The second abstract should be a longer 250-word version of that. If you need to see a sample abstract please ask me for one.

**Learning Outcomes**

- Engage central contemporary debates in pragmatist philosophy, political philosophy, and metaphilosophy; do so by way of both recent philosophical works and works drawn from the history of philosophy.
- Compare, contrast, and critique representative writers whose work contributes to a variety of philosophical methodologies and traditions and whose contributions span a variety of historical periods.
- Develop and improve basic professional skills including preparing papers for conference submission, preparing article abstracts, and conducting respectful and engaged seminar discussions.