

PHIL 433/535: Collective Responsibility for Justice (1.5 units)

Course Information:

PHIL 433/535 A01 (CRN 12637/12639)

Course Schedule: W 2:30-5:20 in (Room TBA)

Prerequisites: One of PHIL 335, 336, 339, or permission of the department.

Instructor Information:

Name: Dr. Audrey Yap (she/they) (you can call me Audrey)

Email: ayap@uvic.ca

Appointments: Th 9-11am over Zoom (booking link: <https://calendly.com/ayap/office>) or email to make alternative arrangements

Territorial Acknowledgement (Contributed by Scow and Underwood):

The University of Victoria is situated on the unceded territory of the lək'wəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples. This is their land—a reality that all of us who have come here must acknowledge. We must also recognize how our presence here interrupts ancient ways of being in this world. We all have a responsibility to prevent further intrusion into lək'wəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ lives and, if called upon, to support expressions of lək'wəŋən and W̱SÁNEĆ nationhood. We must also recognize that we are living on someone's home—spread across Greater Victoria are the hunting and fishing grounds, village sites and ceremonial places of Salish people, and we must acknowledge how our presence here can either disrupt or repair the relationships between the original people and their territory.

Course Logistics:

Course website through Brightspace (<https://bright.uvic.ca/d2l/home>)

This is designed to be a face-to-face course, though for the sake of accessibility, I will enable online access for any times when you are not able to attend in person. For the sake of open discussion, however, course sessions will not be recorded. The course will focus on our collective responsibility in the face of injustice, with a particular focus on incarceration in its various forms. As such, you can expect participation in the course from people with incarceration experience. While what we read throughout the semester is extremely important and will build our vocabularies and theoretical frameworks, being able to talk through issues with people who speak from lived experience is invaluable.

You should also know that we will talk about violence of various kinds in this class. This will include interpersonal violence enacted by one person to another, but also state and institutional violence. Though the focus of our discussions will be on our responsibility in the face of such injustice, we will need to carefully understand it in the first place.

Learning Objectives and Strategies:

The course is intended to help students understand how theoretical frameworks of social and political philosophy might be applicable in their ordinary life. More specifically, we will

use Iris Marion Young's writing about shared responsibility for injustice, and the ways she suggests people think through their responsibilities in light of their particular social location. The forms of injustice we will consider in detail will be those connected to incarceration and policing (broadly construed).

Assessment:

Engagement:

10% of your grade will **require** you to be present at class sessions. You will be able to receive 1 mark per week, and full marks for this will require you to satisfy the requirements in 10 of the 13 instructional weeks of the term. To receive your engagement grade for the week, after the class is over, a Brightspace forum will open where you will (anonymously if you like) post two things:

- One thing you appreciated about someone else's class contribution (maybe a comment they made, question they asked, or positive interaction you had with them)
- One thing you want to learn more about as a result of what we talked about or read

These must be done within 2 days of the class session, so will be due on Fridays at 11:59pm. You will not be able to receive an engagement point if you were not present.

Reflections:

One central purpose of the course is to understand what Young's views about collective responsibility might mean for you, given where you are in the world. As a result, there will be a series of assignments that will ask you to reflect on exactly those questions. Each one will build on the previous one. These are not intended to be formal writing assignments, but reflections on how the philosophical material we're considering has relevance for your life. Each one should be about 2-3 pages (750-1000 words), but no strict word counts will be implemented. At the end of the term, we will assess these as a portfolio with each one counting as 15%.

- *Self-Location.* How are you socially located? You don't need to disclose anything about your background that you don't feel comfortable with, but you should describe some relevant features of your position in the world. How does your social location inform your social responsibilities. I don't expect you to be comprehensive when you're talking through this - just reflect on it as much as possible given what you know to date.
- *Midway Reflection.* Looking back on your midway assignment, are there any things that you would now mention about your social location, that you hadn't previously thought about as significant? Given some of the vocabulary we've introduced to talk about structural injustice and collective responsibility, how might you phrase the description of your responsibilities? Please mention anything that you think you could add to your initial self-location.

- *End of Term Reflection.* Looking back at the reflections about your social location and corresponding social responsibilities, what are some concrete things that you think you could do to fulfill them, keeping in mind that it's probably impossible for most of us to fulfill every single one of our responsibilities completely - given limited time and resources. Consider who else you might work with, since it's primarily collective responsibility, rather than individual responsibility, that we're focusing on here.

Final Assignment:

Your final project for this class can take the form of a traditional essay, but I also welcome un-essays. Either way, you need to submit a proposal beforehand, in the form of a 1–2-page double spaced description of what you plan to accomplish in your assignment. If you are writing a traditional philosophy essay, then your outline should describe the central claim or contribution for which you intend to argue. This might also be the case for an un-essay, but for the latter you might also describe a different kind of impact you would like the assignment to have. For instance, if it will be an artistic piece, you might describe the impact you intend to have on the viewer and the medium you will use. Please feel free to consult with me if you would like to take this option but are unsure on how to carry it out.

The outline will also indicate 3-5 sources that you intend to use, and how you intend to use them. These sources should be appropriate to the use. Empirical claims might be backed up with peer-reviewed studies or by sources that draw on peoples' direct experience. Either way, I want you to think about the type of source you use and what you want to use it to accomplish. The outline will be worth 5% of your final grade.

The remaining 40% of your grade will be for your final assignment. If you are writing a paper, then undergraduates should write between 12-14 pages (3000-3500 words) and graduate students should write between 14-16 pages (3500-4000 words). These will be due on Brightspace by Dec 13.

If you **complete the final assignment**, you will be considered to **have completed the course**. If you do not complete it, then you will receive an N grade, regardless of the percentage score you have on the other assignments.

Grading Breakdown:

Gradeable Item	Description	Value	Total
Engagement	Post-class reflection, due on Friday nights	1% x 10 weeks	10%
Reflection Portfolio	Reflection assignments	15% x 3 reflections	45%
Final Assignment Proposal	Outline describing the planned final assignment	5%	5%
Final Assignment	Final (un)essay due after the end of term	40%	40%
		Total	100%

Extension Policy:

I know that sometimes things do not go as planned. If you need to turn in an assignment late, I ask that you let me know when it will be handed in. I have no need or desire to police your reasons for turning in late work, but do want to know that you have a plan for completing all of the course material by the end of term. I also have deadlines for turning in my final grades, so without such plans, but we can collaborate to ensure that everything is turned in with sufficient time for me to meet them.

Academic Integrity:

You are welcome and encouraged to talk through all the course material with others. All assignments are completely open book, with the understanding that you will use some kind of standard citation format to credit your sources. If you're not sure how to do that, the library has [citation help resources](#). You're also welcome to share drafts of work with your classmates and provide each other with comments, with the understanding that whatever is handed in is still your own work.

Use of generative AI on graded items is a violation of academic integrity, however. Using it to write on your behalf will not help you learn. However, I teach this course under the assumption that you are here to learn. If you are having trouble with the material, or are unsure about how to use a particular kind of resource, then my expectation is that you will ask me for help or clarification, and I will do my best to work with you on whatever you need.

You can find UVic's policy on Academic Integrity here:

https://www.uvic.ca/calendar/future/undergrad/index.php#/policy/Sk_0xsM_V

Conduct and Communication:

I do not run a formal classroom and I prefer not to enforce hierarchies with titles. If you prefer them, you can refer to me as Dr. Yap or Professor Yap. But I encourage you to call me Audrey. She and they are both correct pronouns for me, and if you think I wouldn't know which pronouns you use, please don't hesitate to make me aware.

Email is the best way to get in touch with me outside of class time, particularly if you have any official requests. If you ask me a question over email, you can expect a reply within about 1 working day. If you don't hear back from me after that time frame, feel free to try again in case your message went astray. If you are nervous about sending me an email or asking a question, feel free to include a picture of a puppy (or cute animal of your choice) with your request. This will not affect whether I will be able to help you with your request but will give you an excuse to look for pictures of puppies or other cute creatures. In fact, it will make me happy to know that you have read the course outline to this point, so feel free to send me a picture of a cute animal now.

I also consider you to be the best authority on your needs in the classroom. That means if you need to do things like eat or drink during class, leave the room, knit, stim, or anything else, the only thing I ask is that you respect others in the room and try not to distract them.

Also, if you haven't taken a three-hour seminar class before, don't worry! We will have breaks for our bodies and brains.

The one feature of this course that might be different from your other classes is that I have invited guests to attend who have lived experience of incarceration. Some will attend as regular students and others might visit as guests to speak to particular areas of their expertise. I expect you to treat them with respect, as you would treat any other student or visiting speaker. Importantly, you should not ask them for any details about why they are incarcerated, and treat anything they might voluntarily share about it as confidential unless explicitly told otherwise.

Course Schedule (Provisional):

Week One (Sep 4): Introductions, structural injustice and collective responsibility
Iris Marion Young, *Responsibility for Justice*: Chap 2 "Structure as the Subject of Justice" 43-74

Week Two (Sep 11): Responding to Injustice in the context of the PIC
Iris Marion Young, *Responsibility for Justice*: Chap 4 "A Social Connection Model" 95-113
Angela Davis, *Are Prisons Obsolete?* Chap 5 "The Prison Industrial Complex" 84-104
Self-Location Assignment due Sep 13 on Brightspace

Week Three (Sep 18): Collective responsibility and incarceration
El Jones, *Abolitionist Intimacies*: Chap 1 "Toward a Practice of Collectivity"
Shoshana Pollack & Tiina Eldridge, "Complicity and Redemption: Beyond the Insider/Outsider Research Dichotomy" 132-144

Week Four (Sep 25): Grievability and social death
Judith Butler, *Precarious Life*: Chap 2, "Violence, Mourning, Politics" 19-49
Lisa Guenther, *Solitary Confinement: Social Death and its Afterlives*: Introduction, "A Critical Phenomenology of Solitary Confinement" xi-xxx

Week Five (Oct 2): Colonialism and criminalization
Heidi Kiiwetinepinesiik Stark, "Criminal Empire: The Making of the Savage in a Lawless Land"
Fran Sugar, "Entrenched Social Catastrophe: Native Women in Prison" 87-89

Week Six (Oct 9): Disability and colonialism in the world's largest open-air prison
Jasbir Puar, *The Right to Maim: Debility, Capacity, Disability*: Chap 4 "'Will Not Let Die': Debilitation and Inhuman Biopolitics in Palestine" 127-154
Midway Reflection Assignment due Oct 11 on Brightspace

Week Seven (Oct 16): Institutionalization and disability

Liat Ben-Moshe, *Decarcerating Disability*: Chap 1 “The Perfect Storm: Origin Stories of Deinstitutionalization” 37-68

Week Eight (Oct 23): The school-prison nexus

Erica Meiners, *Right to Be Hostile*: Chap 1, “Surveillance, Ladies Bountiful, and the Management of Outlaw Emotions” 27-55

Subini Ancy Annama, *The Pedagogy of Pathologization*: Chap 1, “Public Schools and the Criminalization of Difference - Destruction and Creation” 27-53

Week Nine (Oct 30): The role of family (policing)

Dorothy Roberts, *Torn Apart*, “Professional Kidnappers”

Tamara Lea Spira, Dayjha McMillan, Madi Stapleton, and Verónica N. Vélez, “ACAB Means Abolishing the Cop in our Heads, Hearts, and Homes”, in *Abolition Feminisms Vol 2*

Week Ten (Nov 6): Precarious sentences

Kathy Boudin, “On Being Human” in *The Long Term*

Ann Hansen, *Taking the Rap*, Chapters 22-23

Week Eleven (Reading Break):

Week Twelve (Nov 20): Taking responsibility

Iris Marion Young, *Responsibility for Justice*: Chap 6 “Avoiding Responsibility” 153-170

End of Term Reflection due Nov 22 on Brightspace

Week Thirteen (Nov 27): Decolonization and moves to innocence

Eve Tuck & K. Wayne Yang, “Decolonization is not a Metaphor” 1-40

Final Assignment Proposal due Nov 29 on Brightspace

Week Fourteen (Dec 4): Imagining the Future

Mariame Kaba, *We Do This Til We Free Us*, “A Jailbreak of the Imagination”

Derek Trumbo Jr, “Every Story Needs Hope: Why You Should Write About Prison” in *The Sentences That Create Us*

Final Assignment due Dec 13 on Brightspace

Other Resources:

Student Resources

- a. [UVic Learn Anywhere](#). UVic Learn Anywhere is the primary learning resource for students that offers many learning workshops and resources to help students with academics and learning strategies.
- b. [Library resources](#). Information for students wishing to use the UVic library.
- c. [Student wellness resources](#)
- d. [Ombudsperson](#) A resource to help resolve disputes or complaints.
- e. Indigenous student services ([ISS](#))
- f. Centre for Academic Communication ([CAC](#))
- g. Math & Stats Assistance Centre ([MSAC](#))
- h. Learning Strategies Program ([LSP](#))
- i. [Other student groups and resources](#)
- j. [Academic Concession Regulations](#)
- k. [Academic Concession and Accommodation](#)
- l. Academic accommodation & access for students with disabilities – [Policy AC1205](#)

University statements and policies

- a. University Calendar - Section "[Information for all students](#)"
- b. [Creating a respectful, inclusive and productive learning environment](#)
- c. [Accommodation of Religious Observance](#)
- d. [Student Conduct](#)
- e. [Non-academic Student Misconduct](#)
- f. [Accessibility](#)
- g. [Diversity / EDI](#)
- h. [Equity statement](#)
- i. [Sexualized Violence Prevention and Response](#)
- j. Discrimination and Harassment [Policy](#)