Course Description

In this course we explore the issue of conscientious law-breaking, mainly in the context of political protest and resistance (for example, militant demonstrations, non-violent direct action, etc.), but also in the context of certain non-political, but still morally motivated forms of non-compliance with the law (e.g., assisted suicide, illegally offering of asylum to refugees or immigrants facing deportation). In the first part of the course we focus our attention on theoretical perspectives concerning “legal obligation” and the legitimacy of conscientious law-breaking. In the second part of the course we turn our attention to the ethical issues raised by various forms of civil disobedience (in the widest sense), including non-violent direct action, militant protest, sabotage, revolutionary action, and terrorism.

Required Readings

1. Course Pack for Philosophy 442F, available at InPrint (downstairs in the UCC)
2. Web-based readings, accessible via course web site: http://sdarcy.edublogs.org/442f

Grade Components

1. Five Comment Sheets:
   Each Comment Sheet is worth 10% of the final grade (for a total of 50%). Each is to be single-spaced, and a maximum of one page in length (Times New Roman font, size 12, with standard one-inch margins). These are to be submitted no later than the beginning of the first class in which the relevant reading is to be discussed. Each Sheet should summarize the argument of the reading, and also offer critical commentary of some kind, indicating a thoughtful engagement with the material.

2. Final Examination
   Worth 40% of final grade.
   Written as scheduled by the Registrar during the December examination period

3. Class Participation
   Worth 10% of final grade. Based on overall assessment by the instructor, taking attendance, pre-class preparation, and quality of classroom presentations and contributions into account. Each student will make one brief presentation in class, details of which will be announced in the first class.
Prerequisite Information
Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites. If you do not have the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from the Dean to enroll in this course, you will be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

A Note on Plagiarism
Plagiarism is an academic offence and will be treated as such. Students who are in doubt as to the nature of this offence should consult their instructor, Department Chair, or the Dean’s Office, as well as the Huron University College Statement on Plagiarism, available at the reference desk in the Huron College Library and at: <http://www.huronuc.on.ca/pdf/FASSonPlagiarism.pdf>.

In addition, students may seek guidance from a variety of current style manuals available at the Reference Desk in the Huron University College Library. Information about these resources can be found at: <http://www.huronuc.ca/library/research_guides_and_handouts/>

Plagiarism detection software will be used in this course. Students will be required to submit their written work in electronic form.

Statement on Technology
It is not appropriate to use technology (such as, but not limited to, laptops, PDAs, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and is distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

Course-related Resources
The following web site directs students to resources related to this course:
http://sdarcy.edublogs.org

This site makes available an electronic version of this syllabus, information about this course, links to philosophy web sites, a link to a guide to documenting sources in philosophy papers, and other potentially useful sites.
Tentative Schedule of Readings

Note that this tentative schedule is subject to change and that changes will be announced in class.

10 September: Introduction to the Course; Some Basic Concepts
   - Reading: Peter Suber, “Civil Disobedience” <www.earlham.edu/~peters/writing/civ-dis.htm>
   - Reading: Kenneth E. Himma, “Philosophy of Law” <http://www.iep.utm.edu/l/law-phil.htm>

17 September: Legal Obligation
   - Reading: Plato, Crito [Course Pack]

24 September: A First Look at Some Controversial Cases; Acts and Omissions (Engels Thesis)
   - Reading: Peter Singer, “Ends and Means” [Course Pack]

1 October: A Conceptual Framework for Analyzing Civil Disobedience
   - Reading: John Rawls, “A Theory of Civil Disobedience” [Course Pack]

8 October: *** No Class ***

15 October: Radical Disobedience
   - Reading: Bruce Pech, “Radical Disobedience” [Course Pack]
   - Film: Tear Gas Holiday

22 October: Classical Civil Disobedience: Gandhi and King
   - Reading: Mohandas K. Gandhi, “The Practice of Satyagraha” [Course Pack]
   - Reading: Martin Luther King, Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” [Course Pack]

29 October: Militant Protest and “Rioting”
   - Reading: John Clarke, “Fighting to Win” [Course Pack]
   - Reading: Bryan Palmer, “The Riot Act” [handout]
   - Reading: Frances Fox Piven & Richard Cloward, “Structuring of Protest” [Course Pack]

5 November: An Ethical Case for Sabotage
   - Reading: Dave Forman, “Strategic Monkeywrenching” [Course Pack]
   - Reading: “Planning and Executing a Hit” <http://www.radio4all.org/aia/act_hit.html>

12 November: When, If Ever, is Revolutionary Action Justified?
   - Reading: John Locke, “The State and the State of Nature” [Course Pack]
   - Reading: Joanne Naiman, “Looking Towards the Future” [Course Pack]

19 November: When, if Ever, is Terrorism Justified?
   - Reading: Bat-Ami Bar On, “Why Terrorism is Morally Problematic” [Course Pack]
   - Reading: Burleigh Taylor Wilkins, “Can Terrorism Be Justified?” [Course Pack]

26 November: The Sanctuary Movement
   - Reading: “Church Haven for Illegal Aliens” www.time.com/time/printout/0,8816,1645169,00.html
   - Reading: Michael Walzer, “Membership” [Course Pack]
   - Reading: Joseph Carens, “Aliens and Citizens” [linked from sdarcy.edublogs.org/442F]

3 December: Assisted Suicide
   - Reading: “Curtains for Dr. Death” <http://time-proxy.yaga.com/time/archive/preview/0,10987,990638,00.html>