

* Call for Papers *



“What is Liberalism?”

7th Annual “What is...?” Conference

Department of Philosophy, University of Oregon

Saturday, May 25th, 2013 - Knight Library Browsing Room

Deadline for submissions: Friday, April 19th, 2013, 5pm

The Graduate Philosophy Club at the University of Oregon is now accepting submissions for the Philosophy Department’s annual “What is...?” conference. This year's conference will take up the question “What is Liberalism?” and submissions are solicited from any interested University of Oregon philosophy undergraduate or graduate student.

Topic description: The word "liberalism" is often bandied about by philosophers of many stripes—mainstream political theorists, post/de-colonial theorists, latino/a philosophers, feminists, queer theorists, philosophers of law and politics, moral philosophers, etc.—but the meaning of the term hardly seems to transcend disciplinary or even intra-disciplinary boundaries. Hence, despite the volumes written on liberalism, there seems to be little to no agreement about what it actually “is”. Some questions that may need to be answered in order to form a coherent, stable picture of liberalism include: what, if any, are the central tenets of liberalism? Is liberalism a purely political project, or does it have a normative thrust, as well? Does liberalism too easily elide its metaphysics? Does our failure to give a coherent definition of liberalism call into question the strident critiques of it from the far left and the far right? Can liberalism be a liberatory philosophy?

Submissions should be prepared for twenty minutes reading time (or approximately 3000 words). While abstracts will be considered, completed papers are preferred. Please do not include any identifying information in your submission. A box for submissions will be available in the Philosophy Department office (PLC 338) beginning April 1st. Please submit three copies of your submission, along with a cover sheet indicating your name, title of the paper, and whether you are an undergraduate or graduate student. The deadline for submissions is 5pm, Friday, April 19th, 2013. As in past years, if the submission pool allows, we hope to have two undergraduate, two graduate, and two faculty presentations. And, as usual, coffee and lunch will be provided for all those in attendance at the conference itself.

Please direct any questions or concerns to this year’s conference organizers: David Craig (dcraig@uoregon.edu), Lauren Eichler (leichler@uoregon.edu), Shannon Hayes (shannonh@uoregon.edu), or Cara Bates (cbates@uoregon.edu)