

**Attila Tanyi**  
***John Stuart Mill's Political and Moral Philosophy***  
**University of Konstanz**  
**Winter 2011/2012**

**Course requirements.** The course will be completed by a 5-15 page long paper (Times New Roman, 12, 1.5) written by the student on topics that are related to the course (length depending on whether the student completes a Hausarbeit or an Essay). Topics must be discussed with the course instructor and must have his permission. During the course student presentations will also be possible (they will be compulsory if the number of students will not be higher than the number of occasions). The idea for these presentations, however, is not that the student gives a lecture to the other participants of the course, but that he/she guides us through the text, by summarizing the author's position and making critical remarks and commentaries.

**Course material.** Since we will read one book, it is important that we have the same edition. The one we will use is *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill. On Liberty, The Subjection of Women, and Utilitarianism*, Modern Library Paperback Edition, New York: Random House, 2002. The book is not available in the Library but can be purchased online – on Amazon.de and Abebooks.de - for under 5 EUR.

**Background and overview reading.** For those who want to read something on Mill's philosophy before the start of the course, the relevant *Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy* entry is recommended. The semester apparatus of the course as well as the material available online in ILIAS will contain secondary material on Mill's philosophy. These databases will be available by the start of the course in October.

**Grading.** The final grade will be composed of three parts: seminar participation and attendance (15%), seminar presentation (15%), final paper (70%). My grading policy for student papers is the following: for a grade between 1 and 2, the student must present an original idea in some (convincing) detail, in addition to giving a good and correct summary of Mill's relevant discussion; for a grade between 2 and 3, the student must prove to have a competent grasp of Mill's relevant arguments by giving a good summary, pointing out the weak points, perhaps making suggestions how to overcome such weaknesses; for a grade between 3 and 4, the student must show that he/she understands Mill's text.

**Course schedule.** We will read three essays by John Stuart Mill. We will read "Utilitarianism" in full, most of "On Liberty", and parts of "The Subjection of Women" (most probably in this order). As for the organization of the seminar, each session will begin with a student presentation (unless there are outstanding problems left over from the previous session), which will be followed by open discussion.

(*Note.* There are altogether 15 occasions to meet in the semester. However, one falls out due to national holiday, and another because it is next week's introductory seminar. This leaves us with 13 occasions to meet. Below I have listed 12, which gives us some leeway when scheduling discussion during the semester.)

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

(*Note.* Title of essay is listed first, then follow chapter numbers and page numbers (the latter are given in brackets).)

All references are to the following edition of Mill's essays: *The Basic Writings of John Stuart Mill. On Liberty, The Subjection of Women, and Utilitarianism*, Modern Library Paperback Edition, New York: Random House, 2002

**Seminar 1.** *On Liberty*, Chapter I (3-16)

**Seminar 2.** *On Liberty*, Chapter II (17-36)

**Seminar 3.** *On Liberty*, Chapter II (36-56)

**Seminar 4.** *On Liberty*, Chapter III (57-76)

**Seminar 5.** *On Liberty*, Chapter IV (77-96)

**Seminar 6.** *The Subjection of Women*, Chapter I (123-152)

**Seminar 7.** *The Subjection of Women*, Chapter IV (205-239)

**Seminar 8.** *Utilitarianism*, Chapter I/II (233-245)

**Seminar 9.** *Utilitarianism*, Chapter I/II (245-259)

**Seminar 10.** *Utilitarianism*, Chapters III and IV (260-276)

**Seminar 11.** *Utilitarianism*, Chapter V (277-287)

**Seminar 12.** *Utilitarianism*, Chapter V (287-301)