

# ANARCHISM

PHIL 4901 / 4903

Spring 2024

W 4:35-7:35pm | RY 247

## Professor Candice Delmas

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Pronouns: she/her

Office hours: M 3-4 ([online](#)) &  
F 2-3 (RP 406)

## Professor Whitney Kelting

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Banksy, *Anarchist Glitter Rat* (date?)

## Overview

Anarchism is one of the least well understood and most repressed political currents of the past century and a half. Anarchism is also a political philosophy, centered on the ideal of freedom and skeptical of the justification of authority, and an ethic and a way of life, which has inspired radical experiments in living and the establishment of utopian communities. Many contemporary social and political movements have strong anarchist currents, such as the Occupy Movement (2011-12), Greece's anti-austerity movement (2010-2012), and the current crypto-anarcho-capitalist movement. Anarchism suffuses resistant practices such as the occupation of "autonomous zones" or "zones to defend" in France since the early 2010s and during the 2020 Black Lives Matter protests in the USA, antifa tactics of collective self-defense, and environmental direct action such as "ecotage." Central to anarchist praxis is building decentralized alternatives to the state as seen in community defense, mutual aid networks, street medicking, skill shares, and anti-carceral responses to harm such as transformative justice. In this course, we will read foundational texts of anarchist thought from the 19th and 20th centuries and put these in conversation with later and contemporary anarchist, socialist, postcolonial, and libertarian thinkers and critical theorists. Property,

work, freedom, revolution, direct action, free love, and abolition (of the family, the prison, the police), are among the topics covered. Assignments include a semester-long engagement with anarchist praxis.

### **Learning outcomes**

1. Critical thinking: Students will improve their skills in understanding, analyzing and criticizing ideas, as well as developing their own, original philosophically grounded arguments.
2. Oral communication: Students will improve their capacity to present and explain, clearly and precisely, some difficult arguments, and to discuss these arguments orally with their peers.
3. Content: Students will gain an in-depth understanding of the history, theory, and politics of anarchism and will master one topic through engaging in an independent research project.
4. Values: The course will encourage students to develop intellectual curiosity and, through experiential learning, students will integrate the theories examined into praxis in reflective ways. Praxis is not merely a concept, but a crucial component of the values shared by nearly all anarchists.
5. Written communication skills: Students will develop and improve their writing and research skills through writing and revising an extended essay, i.e., their capstone projects.

### **NU Attributes**

Demonstrating Thought and Action in a Capstone; Writing Intensive.

### **Requirements**

This seminar is discussion-based and writing-intensive. Assessment for the class includes 5 components, for a total of 100%:

1. Participation (5%)
2. Socratic Pods (8%)
3. Class Facilitation (7%)
4. Praxis (30%)
5. Capstone (50%)

Please refer to the "Seminar Handbook" for detailed instructions concerning each assignment. You must complete *all* of these assignments to pass this course.

### **Grade conversion**

A ≥ 94      A- = 90-93      B+ = 87-89      B = 83-86      B- = 80-82      C+ = 77-79  
C = 73-76      C- = 70-72      D+ = 67-69      D = 63-66      F ≤ 60

## **Appealing grades**

Any student who feels that their assigned grade does not reflect their performance on an assignment can appeal the grade. All appeals must be submitted to the instructors in writing, in the form of a one-page document that clearly explains why you believe that the assigned grade does not reflect your performance. Petitioners must wait at least twenty-four hours after the grade is announced before submitting their appeals. All appeals must be submitted no later than one week after the grade is announced.

## **Academic Integrity**

Please familiarize yourself with [Northeastern's policy on academic integrity](#) and how it will be dealt with: "Academic dishonesty violates the most fundamental values of an intellectual community and undermines the achievements of the entire University." Any incident of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (OSCCR).

The University defines plagiarism as using as one's own the words, ideas, data, code, or other original academic material of another without providing proper citation or attribution. It can occur either accidentally or deliberately. Claiming that one has "forgotten" to document ideas or material taken from another source does not exempt one from plagiarizing. The following require citation:

- Word-for-word quotations from a source, including another student's work.
- Paraphrasing (using the ideas of others in your own words).
- Empirical data.
- Unusual or controversial facts not widely recognized.

Plagiarism is often the result of poor time management: students do not give themselves enough time to complete the assignment and end up plagiarizing deliberately or accidentally. If you are unclear as to whether or not a source requires citation, please consult the Writing Center or email us. When in doubt, give a citation. You will never be penalized for having too many citations, but you may be guilty of plagiarizing if you don't.

## **Academic Dishonesty and Accountability**

We reserve the right to offer an accountability option to students who have exhibited academic dishonesty or other forms of cheating and free riding. This option gives us the choice to limit the failing grade to the assignment or some portion of it, if we believe a student has held themselves accountable for their academic dishonesty. This includes that the process is completed following the rubric, in a timely fashion, and in good faith and honesty. Simply handing something in, however long or hard you may

have spent preparing, does not guarantee that we will enact the accountability reprieve. A reprieve may also impact the strategy we adopt regarding OSCCR.

What is Accountability? (adapted from Gen 5, *Towards Transformative Justice*)

Accountability means we are willing to interrupt problematic behaviors or dynamics and then support a process for transforming those behaviors. Accountability at a minimum requires:

- Acknowledging the harm done even if it is unintended;
- Acknowledging its negative impact on individuals and the community;
- Making appropriate reparations for this harm to individuals and the community;
- Transforming attitudes and behaviors to prevent further harm and contribute toward a better community

If you decide to take the accountability option, you must send us an email indicating that you are going to do so within a day of receiving this option. You will have a week to get your final response to us based on the rubric below. Students can request other formats for delivery of this response. However, in all cases the student must meet with us face to face. By that time, you need to have either handed us the response or arranged a specific time when you will do so. Your response must be handed to us in person. It is your responsibility to arrange a time to hand it to us.

Academic dishonesty is always 100% the responsibility of the person who handed in the assignment; in your narrative if there are points when you feel like someone else is contributing, you need to figure out what choices you made that are at the root of that point of decision. Remember academic dishonesty is never inevitable and never accidental. We are only interested in your honest self-examination and plan for transformation.

#### The Rubric for the Accountability Response:

The following questions must be answered with an eye to illustrating that you have acknowledged your actions and seek to change your behavior moving forward. It should be in Times New Roman, 14-point font, double spaced. Every page must be numbered and have your name and date of turning it in to me in the header.

Questions you need to answer:

- 1] Who is harmed when you cheat on college assignments?
- 2] What is the harm caused?
- 3] How can that harm be fixed, if possible? Here, you can consider what you can do beyond simply holding yourself accountable--which is the bare minimum standard for addressing harm.
- 4] What decisions and attitudes led me to cheat on this assignment? Dishonesty Narrative Rubric: While there is no excuse for plagiarism, there are always a series of

decisions that lead to it. Give a detailed narrative of your decision-making process. All academic dishonesty starts with a student's attitudes and choices often months before the incident in question. It should show each set of decisions that contributed to the result of cheating. It may be useful to see these as points of decision-making and address each as a separate point. Having trouble completing an assignment, not finishing assignments, asking for help, or failing to do a good job are outcomes that can be handled with integrity and honesty. You could have chosen that path and it is useful to see when and where you did not.

5] What could I have done differently? Look at each decision point and determine what choices that you could have made instead. A few examples to get your started: Attitude about Class or about Education; Day-to-day attendance; Keeping up on the workload; Preparing for the assignment; Beginning Work on assignment; Assessing and admitting need in or out of classroom; Asking for help or clarification; and, Honest Acceptance of Outcome of Failures of Doing the Above

6] How will I act differently in this class? [You can think of this as your accountability contract.]

7] How will holding myself accountable impact the way I move forward more broadly?

### **Submissions**

Submit your work on Canvas, not over email. All written submissions should be double spaced, Times New Roman 14-point font. Save and submit your assignments in Word or PDF, not Pages, Notes, or Google Docs. As a Northeastern student, you can get Word and Adobe for free: in myNEU, go to "Tech Marketplace for Students."

### **Materials**

The materials for this course are available on Canvas. You must **print** the texts and bring them to class (this is indispensable since electronic devices are not allowed). The reading load is often heavy and very often difficult. To stay afloat, plan for a sufficient amount of time to *actively* read the texts (around 3 hours per week). Don't hesitate to come to our office hours if you have any difficulty.

### **Communication**

Please email us directly and email us both (at [c.delmas@northeastern.edu](mailto:c.delmas@northeastern.edu) and [m.kelting@northeastern.edu](mailto:m.kelting@northeastern.edu)) rather than through Canvas, and always indicate the course number in the email subject (ex: "PHIL 4901-4903 question about the Goldman reading"). We will communicate with you through the email address given on Canvas. If this is not the account you usually use, please be sure that you check it regularly during this semester or have that mail forwarded to the account you use.

## **No electronic devices in class**

Research shows that [students perform substantially worse when they use computers to take notes in class](#).<sup>1</sup> The use or display of any mobile computing or communications devices (including computers, recording devices, phones, iPads, or iPods) is banned during class, except when explicitly permitted for ADA-related accommodation. Tuck your cell away; do not leave it on your desk or lap.



Per the “Donut Rule,” if your phone rings in and disrupts class, you are hereby contractually bound to bring donuts to the next class.

## **Content Warnings, Collaboration, Anti-Oppression and Classroom Culture**

Our classroom functions as a community of learners, and as such, it’s vitally important that it be inclusive and respectful. For this to be the case, we all have a role to play. Some students will be very familiar with systems of oppression such as racism, ableism, cissexism, classism, and others, through personal experiences of inequity and discrimination, while this may be new ground for others. We ask all students to be attentive to oppression and inequity, and to learn from students most impacted. We also want to be very clear that students who are more impacted are NOT here to teach their classmates and do not owe anyone an education. There are no tokens in our classroom, and we want our classroom to be a safe place to bring all of your identities.

We ask that you all listen to one another, respect one another, and include one another. Mutual respect is key to a welcoming environment. In the classroom, it has two main parts:

- 1) Treating all students and the professors with respect. This involves daily attendance with preparation so one can participate in discussions effectively; turning in all assignments and doing so on-time; bringing a seriousness of purpose to your examination of the materials and issues; being an attentive listener when others are speaking (including not doing other things on your computer or phone while others are speaking); being open to new ideas, evidence, arguments, and points of views; and being receptive to constructive feedback.
- 2) Upholding one's responsibilities to other students by being prepared to discuss material each pod and class meeting and by bringing a seriousness of purpose to your examination of the materials and our discussions.

Relevant here is a quote from James Baldwin: “We can disagree and still love each other, as long as your disagreement is not rooted in my oppression and denial of my humanity and right to exist.” We will differentiate respectful disagreement from denial

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/views/2018/12/12/what-research-tells-us-about-using-technology-classroom-opinion>

of others' experiences or humanity. We're in this together, and we all bear responsibility for making our classroom inclusive, welcoming, and committed to not perpetuating harmful systems of oppression.

Racism and other systems of oppression are part of the air that we all breathe, and we are all responsive to our environment. Micro-aggressions are inevitable when we are all breathing poisoned air, and so let us all be accountable, and use these instances as learning opportunities. Essentially, when someone expresses feeling harmed by another person, we will believe them, and address the impact, not the intent, with the assumption that the person who caused harm did so unintentionally and can and will learn from the situation. Please feel free to approach us in person, by email or anonymously if there is anything along these lines that we should address.

The course will feature readings and discussions that may include descriptions of explicit violence, brutality, offensive language and indirect references to these things. The presence of these in the course are not intended to desensitize nor are they intended to promote these positions. If, at any time, a student feels uncomfortable with the material or the class discussion, please feel free to step out of the classroom or stop the reading. This is particularly important for those who may have direct experience of forms of violence; please care for yourself first. If you want to discuss any of these with us, we are available for these discussions whether you are a person who feels uncomfortable or a person who is unsure why something may be difficult for another student. We cannot speak for an individual's experience, but we may be able to place something in a broader political and social context and suggest further readings that may help you broaden your understanding. Please approach us rather than a student who has excused themselves, unless they have explicitly given you permission to pursue a conversation on the matter.

### **Recording**

You may not record and share our meetings. This prohibition is to create a learning environment where students and faculty can feel comfortable expressing their opinions in class without the possibility of their contribution to class being reproduced and replayed without their consent. This applies equally to all praxis contexts.

### **Gender inclusivity**

Language is gender-inclusive when we use words that affirm and respect how people describe, express, and experience their gender. Please let us know your preferred pronouns and names. We will honor students' gender identities and gender expressions.

In philosophy, gender-neutral writing is the accepted practice recommended by the American Philosophical Association. Appropriate language use includes, for example:

“humanity,” “humankind,” “people,” or “they.” You can also alternate between the feminine and masculine pronouns. You should avoid the term “man” as the universal for “human beings,” as it no longer communicates the generic sense of “everyone” or “anyone.” If you are unfamiliar with the idea of gender inclusive language, it may be helpful to read: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/gender-inclusive-language/> When quoting writers who utilize non-inclusive language, leave their words in the original (“Man by nature desires to know”). Gender specific language is, of course, appropriate when referring to a gender class such as “men” or “women.”

### **Title IX**

Northeastern is committed to providing equal opportunity to its students and employees, and to eliminating discrimination when it occurs. In furtherance of this commitment, the University strictly prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, religious creed, genetic information, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, national origin, ancestry, veteran, or disability status. The Northeastern University [Title IX policy](#) articulates how the University will respond to reported allegations of sexual harassment involving students, including sexual assault, and provides a consolidated statement of the rights and responsibilities under University policies and Title IX, as amended by the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013.<sup>2</sup>

### **Accessibility needs**

Northeastern is fully committed to creating a community characterized by inclusion and diversity. As part of this commitment, it upholds the American with Disabilities Act as Amended of 2008 and the American with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of Rehabilitation Act, referred to collectively as the ADA. The ADA requires Northeastern to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities unless doing so would create an undue hardship, compromise the health and safety of members of the university community, or fundamentally alter the nature of the university’s employment mission. Students seeking information regarding ADA accommodations should review the University’s ADA Information and Resources Procedure available [here](#).<sup>3</sup>

### **FACT (Faculty Advisor Communication Tool)**

We will be using this tool to alert advisors of any students who are having difficulty meeting the expectations for the course as described in the syllabus. This is intended to help students who may benefit from additional support. A FACT report is not

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Title\\_IX\\_Policy.pdf](http://www.northeastern.edu/policies/pdfs/Title_IX_Policy.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.northeastern.edu/oidi/compliance/americans-disabilities-act-ada/>




punitive in any way. It does not affect your grade and does not go on your transcript. It only alerts you and your advisor that you might need some additional support. If you think you might need extra help, please talk to us and/or your college advisor.



**Other concerns**

Life at college can be very challenging. Students can feel isolated, overwhelmed, lost, anxious, or depressed. Sometimes they experience relationship difficulties and low self-esteem. We care about your success in this course, and we care even more about your success in life. University Health and Counseling Services is staffed by experienced, professional psychologists and counselors, who are attuned to the needs of college students. Their services are free and confidential. Find out more at [Find@Northeastern](#) and [here](#). As a Northeastern student, you can set up a free [Headspace](#) account, a meditation app that can help you learn how to breathe and manage your stress, anxiety, and insomnia (though it does not replace counseling). Please let us know if you encounter challenges that impede your progress in the course, so we can find ways to mitigate those. If there is something going on in your personal life that is interfering with your performance in this class, the sooner you let us know, the better. If you tell us asap, then we are in a position to work with you. This is crucial on any portion of the course where you are working in a group because as a community, we need to be clear and honest about our capacities to those who are relying on us. You do not need to share private information for us to have this conversation.


**Class Schedule**




It may change, perhaps more than once: make sure you always refer to the latest draft and up-to-date Canvas modules. Keeping up to date with the class schedule and assignments due is your responsibility.

Day	Topic	Readings
1/10	Introduction(s)	Lucy E. Parsons, " <a href="#">The Principles of Anarchism</a> " (~1905-1910) Pëtr Kropotkin, " <a href="#">Anarchism</a> " (1910) Emma Goldman, " <a href="#">Anarchism: What It Really Stands For</a> " (1910)  Listen to: <i>The Gray Area with Sean Illing</i> , " <a href="#">Taking Anarchism Seriously</a> " with Sophie Scott-Brown (50 min.) (2023)

1/17	Philosophical Anarchism	<p>Plato, <i>Crito</i>, selections (399 BCE)</p> <p>R. P. Wolff, <a href="#">In Defense of Anarchism</a>, Part I, "The Conflict Between Authority and Autonomy" (1970)</p> <p>A. J. Simmons, "Political Obligation and Authority" (2002)</p> <p>Michael Huemer, <a href="#">The Problem of Political Authority</a>, Part I, chap. 1, 1.1-1.5 (2013)</p>
1/24	Marxism and Anarchism	<p>Mikhail Bakunin, <i>Marxism, Freedom, and the State</i>, "<a href="#">The State and Marxism</a>" (1867-1872); "Critique of the Marxist Theory of the State" in <a href="#">Statism and Anarchy</a>" (1873)</p> <p>Errico Malatesta, "<a href="#">Anarchism, Socialism, and Communism</a>" (1923)</p> <p>Kuwasi Balagoon, <i>A Soldier's Story</i>. "Where Do We Go From Here?"; "The Left" and "Anarchism" in <i>Letters from Prison</i> (2001)</p>
1/31, 909 RP	Anarcho-Syndicalism	<p> <b>Virtual Guest Talk by JEAN-CHRISTOPHE ANGAUT</b> (Professor of Philosophy, École Normale Supérieure de Lyon, France)</p> <p>James Guillaume, "<a href="#">Federalism</a>" (1871) and "<a href="#">Ideas on Social Organization</a>" (1876)</p> <p>Emma Goldman, "<a href="#">Syndicalism: The Modern Menace to Capitalism</a>" (1913)</p> <p>Rudolf Rocker, "<a href="#">Anarcho-Syndicalism: Theory and Practice</a>" (1938)</p> <p>Readings from the barricade: Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, <a href="#">Sabotage</a>, chap. 8, 9, 12 and 14 (1917)</p>
2/7, 310 RP	Religion and Anarchism	<p> <b>Virtual Guest Talk by JASON LYDON</b> (Prison abolitionist organizer): "Theology for Penal Abolition"</p> <p>Bakunin, <i>God and the State</i>, chap. II (1871)</p> <p>Leo Tolstoy, "<a href="#">Reason and Religion</a>" (1894); "<a href="#">On Anarchy</a>" (1900)</p>

		<p>Anon. "<a href="#">The Aims and Means of the Catholic Worker</a>" (2019)</p> <p>Dorothy Day, <i>On Pilgrimage</i>, "December" (1948)</p>
2/14	Revolution and Violence	<p>Errico Malatesta, "<a href="#">A Revolt is not a Revolution</a>" (1889); "<a href="#">Matters Revolutionary</a>" (1890); "<a href="#">Anarchism and Violence</a>" (1925)</p> <p>Emma Goldman, "<a href="#">Address to the Jury in U. S. versus Emma Goldman and Alexander Berkman</a>" (1917)</p> <p>Nestor Makhno, "<a href="#">The Anarchist Revolution</a>" (1920s)</p> <p>Hoods4Justice, "<a href="#">Nonviolence Rhetoric Divides Us All</a>" (2016-2017)</p> <p>Readings from the barricade: Lucy Parsons, "<a href="#">A Word to Tramps</a>" (1884)</p>
2/21	Disobedience and Direct Action	<p>Henry David Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government" (1878)</p> <p>Benjamin Franks, "<a href="#">Direct Action Ethic</a>" (2003)</p> <p>James Ingram, "<a href="#">Anarchism: Provincializing Civil Disobedience</a>" (2021)</p> <p>Lorenzo Kom'boa Ervin, <a href="#">A Draft Proposal for an Anarchist Black Cross Network</a> (1994)</p> <p>Readings from the barricade: Sprout Distro, "<a href="#">A Civilian's Guide to Direct Action</a>" Sprout Distro, "Direct Action Tactics"</p> <p>Capstone Prep Step 1: Select Topic</p>
2/28	Feminarchism	<p>Voltaireine de Cleyre, "<a href="#">Sex Slavery</a>" (Unknown)</p> <p>Emma Goldman, "<a href="#">Marriage and Love</a>" (1914)</p> <p>Sadiya Hartman, <i>Wayward Lives, Beautiful Experiments</i>, selections (2021)</p> <p>Readings from the barricade: <a href="#">Riot Grrl Manifesto</a> (1991)</p> <p>Capstone Prep Step 2: Topic Overview</p>

3/6	* SPRING BREAK *	
3/13	Queer Anarchism	<p>★ <b>Guest Visit by SOPHIE LEWIS (activist and writer) and VICKY OSTERWEIL (activist and writer)</b> Readings TBD</p> <p>Readings from the barricade: Crimethinc, <a href="#">"The Fight for Gender Self-Determination"</a> (2022)</p> <p>Capstone Prep Step 3: Bibliography</p>
3/20	Latin American and Caribbean Anarchism	<p>★ <b>Q&amp;A with STEPHANIE RIVERA BERRUZ</b> (Associate Professor of Philosophy, Marquette University)</p> <p>Luisa Capetillo, <i>A Nation of Women</i>, selections ([1911] 2021)</p> <p> Listen to: <i>Conversations on Anarres</i>, <a href="#">The Anarchist Ethics of Ricardo Flores Magon</a> with Sergio Gallegos (49 min.) (2022)</p> <p>Capstone Prep Step 4: Outline</p>
3/27	Anarchism, Community, and the Arts	<p>★ <b>Round Table with AARON GARRETT</b> (Professor of Philosophy, Boston University) &amp; <b>BRIAN MOEN</b> (Ph.D Candidate, Philosophy, Boston University)</p> <p>Mark Mattern, <a href="#">Anarchism and Art: Democracy in the Cracks and on the Margins</a> (2019)</p> <p>Michael Scrivener, "The Anarchist Aesthetic" (1979) "A Video Retrospective of The Living Theatre" (esp. "Frankenstein" (5:28-11:40), "Signals Through the Flames" (42:46-54:20), "Resistance" (59:50-1:08:00))</p>

		<p>Readings from the Barricade:          Bread &amp; Puppet, "<a href="#">Why Cheap Art? Manifesto</a>" (1984)          Frans Masereel, "<a href="#">The City</a>" (1925)</p>
4/3	<p>Self-Defense,          Mutual Aid, and          Prison and Police          Abolition</p>	<p>Pëtr Kropotkin, <a href="#">Mutual Aid</a>, Introduction, chap. 7 and 8 (1902)          Alexander Berkman, <a href="#">Prisons and Crime</a> (1906)          INCITE!, "<a href="#">Community Accountability Working Document</a>" (2003)          Critical Resistance, "<a href="#">Reformer Reforms versus Abolitionist Steps in Policing</a>" and "On the Road with Abolition"          Pod Mapping activity led by Whitney Kelting   Listen to: <i>For the Wild</i>, <a href="#">Mariame Kaba on Moving Past Punishment</a> (73 min.) (2023) and/or <i>Intercepted</i>, <a href="#">Ruth Wilson Gilmore Makes the Case for Abolition</a> (Part 1, 54 min.; Part 2, 31 min.) (2020)</p> <p>Readings from the barricade:          Wayland Coleman, selections from his statements from prison          Devin Zane Shaw, "7 Theses on the Three-Way Fight"</p> <p>Capstone Prep Step 5: Conference Drafts Due</p>
4/10 & 4/17		<p>Capstone Conference</p>
4/23		<p>Capstone paper due</p>