Name: Rafael Martins
Department/program: Philosophy – Graduate Program (PhD)
Date of Submission: Spring 2017
Course name and number: PHIL 180 Introduction to Social and Political Philosophy
Average enrollment/section and number of sections:
Average: 120 students
4 sections, 30 students each, distributed between 2 GTAs
Total enrollment/semester: 120 with potential for 300+
Semester/s offered: Every year, both Fall and Spring semesters
PHIL 180 is part of KU Core:
It satisfies Goal 5 Learning Outcome 1 and Goal 3 Arts and Humanities

Information on the current textbook:
Title: Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts 3rd edition
Author: Steven M. Cahn
Publisher: Oxford University Press
Year: 2015
Cost: $52
ISBN-10: 0190201088
https://www.amazon.com/Political-Philosophy-Essential-Texts-3rd/dp/0190201088/ref=pd_sbs_14_t_0?_encoding=UTF8&psc=1&refRID=JAVH0J4ZP9S77T5DH

Estimated savings by switching to an open textbook: approx. $6300/semester based on current 120 enrollment average.
Narrative OER Plan

1. Context

Philosophy courses are 99% based on engagement with texts (i.e. reading texts, discussing them, and writing about them). In classroom, a philosophy instructor may present some empirical data or show a movie clip on YouTube in order to make his points more vivid, but in the end of the day, that what ultimately matters for grading is the student’s ability to engage with texts, viz. understand existing interpretations of the text, isolating the text’s main argument(s) and analyze it, agree or disagree with the argument, theory, or point at stake, argue why s/he (the student) is assuming such position, and, lastly, consider possible objections.

Ideally, students should read the texts before class so that they can engage in fruitful discussion with the instructor and colleagues. This discussion in classroom is absolutely essential for understanding the texts and/or at least getting prepared for the exams.

However, and very unfortunately, I could not emphasize more that the top #1 challenge in 100-level courses in philosophy is to make students read the assigned texts. Usually, the large majority finds all the ways to pass the course without even touching the texts. They end up relying merely on class notes, or, even worse, on their friends’ past semester exams/class notes and suspicious websites like [http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/](http://www.sparknotes.com/philosophy/)

This state of affairs may sometimes be aggravated by the fact that virtually all students who usually enroll in PHIL 180 are not from majors in humanities. That can be detrimental because many of these students are not super interested in philosophy, and that can work as one more reason for not buying the textbook. Given the number of obstacles, objective and subjective, which prevent students from having the text in their hands, I would go as far to say that a realistic instructor should go to class assuming that less than 10% of the students have read the text.

Notwithstanding, I very firmly believe that students must have direct contact with the primary source or learning: the texts in themselves. So, to get around the problem, namely, that virtually nobody reads the texts that I assign, I display/project sections of the text and read with the students, collectively, line by line of the most important passages, arguments, etc. straight on the textbook itself. No PowerPoint.

This strategy offers one guarantee and has at least two virtues. The guarantee is that students are inescapably exposed to the text, unless they leave the room. The first virtue is that while discussing the text in class (which, I believe should be the primary aim of the class, and not mere exposition of the material), there is no way to forget or be unsure about what the author really wrote, because obviously the text is enlarged on the screen right in front of everyone. The second virtue is seen on their exams: their essays/papers are much better written, with more depth and detail. However, this
strategy is yet very limited because it still is the case that the class time is the only moment when those students who have not purchased the book get in contact with the text. They have not read it before class, and will not read it for the next either. This state of affairs ends up turning most of the class time into mere exposition of the material, since students are not prepared to discuss it.

Therefore, my aim with this project is to increase the number of students who really read the texts assigned for PHIL 180, by breaking the financial barrier that deprives them from accessing quality textbooks. Obviously, other obstacles will remain. But at least students will have free access to the material. If then they do not read it, reasons will be elsewhere.

2. Current Textbook

The current textbook is just a compilation of the most essential classics of moral and political philosophy. First problem is that around 62% of this book is not used in the course. The book contains 39 chapters. Each chapter contemplates a different philosopher and provides selected excerpts from that philosopher’s most important writings. But, the semester time frame allows instructors to teach around 15 chapters at best, which is only 38% of the book. So, it is not reasonable to require students to buy material that will not be used in the course. Secondly, it is even more unreasonable to require students to pay for a material already declared public domain. That being the case, plus the centrality of the textbook for a philosophy course as I have shown above, it is absolutely necessary that we replace the current textbook urgently.

3. Project

3.1. Research the public domain and prospect the best versions of the texts contained in the currently assigned textbook (and the best translations¹, when is the case). Call these primary sources.

3.2. Compile those materials; edit them in accordance with how they are usually taught in classrooms.

3.3. Add explanatory introduction. Make point on adaptability and future additions and remix.

3.4. Create and build a textbook in PDF

3.5. Deposit PDF into KU ScholarWorks. Make it available for download, print and read online. All-devices-friendly. Creative Commons licensed

¹ Please see Section 5.2.
4. Outcomes

4.1. Quantitative
A. Enlarge the percentage of students who actually engage with the most classical and influential schools of thought of western civilization.
B. Make PHIL 180 more popular within KU Core.
C. Solidify current enrollment average
D. Increase enrollment average

4.2. Qualitative
A. Enhancement of in-class discussions since more students will have read the text.
B. Significant improvement of students' papers and essay-style exams in logical reasoning, depth, and breadth.
C. Since the large majority of students who usually enroll in PHIL 180 come from non-humanities departments, this initiative is going to boost the spirit of scientific interconnectivity and intellectual labor cooperation among KU students.

4.3. Analysis of Outcomes
A. Track number of views and downloads of the material from KU ScholarWorks
B. Survey enrollment averages, including drop, fail, and withdraw rates by overall numbers and by major prior and after the adoption of the new free material.
C. Request students to fill out brief anonymous survey about material, virtues and aspects to improve.

5. Copyright Assistance

5.1. Consultancy

I will consult with members of the Shulenburger Office of Scholarly Communication & Copyright on copyright and licensing issues.

5.2. Copyright in Translations of Public Domain Writings

Translations from another language into English are considered "derivative works", even if the original work, which was translated, is in the public domain, and therefore are subject to copyright protection (as expressed in 17 U.S.C. 101). Translations meet the standard for creative expression because there are often many different ways to translate terms, which requires creativity and particular selection on the part of the translator.
Given the state of legal affairs, I will follow the plan below, where 1 and 2 are preferable over 3:

A. identify suitable translations published prior to 1923, which puts those translations into the public domain.
B. find openly licensed translations that are more current.
C. get permission from rights holders of translations to use parts of their works in what will be an openly licensed compilation.

6. Funding
I request $3000 to supplement my summer TA salary. This funding would enable me to dedicate part of the summer to this project and have the resulting textbook ready for use in the Fall of 2017.
Working in moral and political philosophy, and on background issues in the philosophy of mind, he is the author of a number of books, including On the People's Terms, which won the David and Elaine Spitz prize for 2014, and The Birth of Ethics, which appeared in 2018. Permissions. Request permission to reuse content from this site. Preface ix. Part I Doing Political Philosophy 1. 1 Realism and Moralism in Political Theory 3 Bernard Williams. 2 What Do We Want from a Theory of Justice? 13 Amartya Sen. 3 Utopophobia 26 David Estlund. 4 Political Political Theory: An Inaugural Lecture 37 Jeremy Waldron. Part II State and Society 53.