**Classics in Ethics and Political Philosophy**

**JCI Scholars Program**

**Spring 2016**

**Judith Lichtenberg**

**Mondays 2:45-4:45**

In this course we will study several classic texts in Western moral and political philosophy. Readings will be distributed in class a week before they are due. The course will be run as a seminar. Together, we will try to understand these texts, to investigate the questions they raise, and to attempt to find answers to those questions.

**Texts**

Plato, *Apology* and *Crito* (in *The Trial and Death of Socrates*).

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, selections.

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism*, selections.

Another work to be announced—what we decide to read will depend on our evolving interests and what questions arise naturally out of the previous readings.

We will spend about two classes on each work.

**Requirements**

The most important requirements are regular attendance and participation. Please make sure to do the assigned reading before class, to better understand what’s going on and to contribute to discussion in an informed way. You’ll notice that there are not usually many pages assigned. But philosophical texts are difficult and must be read more slowly and carefully than those you may encounter elsewhere, even in other college-level courses. It will usually be helpful to read them more than once.

Two short papers (500-750 words each). Details to be announced.

Judith Lichtenberg is professor of philosophy at Georgetown University. Before coming to Georgetown she taught at the University of Maryland College Park. She specializes in ethics, political philosophy, and the philosophy of law. She has written about international and domestic justice, moral psychology, nationalism, war, and higher education, and is currently teaching and writing about crime, punishment, and mass incarceration. Her most recent book is *Distant Strangers: Ethics, Psychology and Global Poverty* (2014).