

PSC 270-01: Introduction to Political Theory (Writing Intensive)
Spring 2007
Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00 – 10:50
Graham 203

Instructor: Professor Carisa R. Showden

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Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 2:00 – 3:30; and by appointment.

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Course Overview:

Political philosophy is the study of the fundamental questions of public life. It covers topics such as human nature, the proper relationship between the state and individuals, the proper relationship between the state and social groups, and the rights and duties that accrue to citizens. In this course, we will examine some of the key concepts of political theory and the ways in which they have been framed and have developed from Plato's time to the present. The course is not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, you should leave this class with a basic understanding of some of the key writings of representative political thinkers from the Western tradition.

With the work of each theorist we read this semester, we will use the following four questions as the framework to guide our discussion and analysis: What is the *scope* of the state?; What is the *authority* of the state?; What are the *ends or purposes* of the state?; and What are the *means* (techniques) the state is to use in achieving its goals? With this framework in mind, you should have a strong grasp by the end of this term of the essential questions asked and various answers posed by eminent political thinkers regarding authority, justice, power, equality, and liberty.

Note Well:

1. This course is *writing intensive*. This means that you will be doing a lot of writing this term, produced in response to many different kinds of writing assignments.
2. Additionally, this is a *reading intensive* course. This means that many of the reading assignments are dense and/or lengthy. You will need to set aside at least 3 hours of reading time for every hour of class time.
 - a. You are expected to do the assigned readings *before* the class in which they will be discussed.
 - b. You may need to review key passages in the assigned readings after we have discussed them in class as well.
 - c. You should also get into the habit of taking reading notes to keep track of the main ideas and important quotes from the assignments.
3. If you are not prepared to commit to a significant amount of reading, writing, and classroom discussion for this course, then you should not enroll in the course this term.

Goals of the Course (Student Learning Objectives):

There are two primary goals for this course:

1. to introduce you to the historical development of key political ideas in Western thought and
2. to develop your critical thinking skills.

To achieve the first goal, we will read and discuss certain representative thinkers of classical and modern political thought. To develop your critical thinking skills, you will be asked to analyze the key concepts we will discuss (liberty, freedom, equality, power, justice, etc.) during class discussions and in your written work. (The specific requirements for each of these activities are discussed after the schedule of readings.)

With these two primary goals in mind, we will work to help you meet the following student learning objectives for this course. By the end of the course you should be able to:

1. Analyze the significance of time and place for the emergence of particular political ideals. Students should have the capacity to assess how and why particular social contexts help to produce certain political ideals and orientations.
2. Discuss and explain the history of key political concepts such as power, authority, justice, equality, and liberty, understanding not just different definitions of each concept, but also how the history of these concepts shapes current political self-conceptions.
3. Analyze the relationship between particular conceptions of the key ideals we discuss and the types of states that embody those ideals, considering specifically the relationship between the ends or purposes of the state and the techniques used to achieve those ends.

Required Texts:

(Note: All books are available at the University Bookstore in the Elliot University Center. If you borrow or purchase different editions than the ones listed here, you are responsible for correlating the page numbers of the readings.)

1. Plato. *Republic*. (1992, 2nd Edition). Translated by G. M. A. Grube. Revised by C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
2. Aristotle. *Politics*. (1998). Translated, with Introduction, by C. D. C. Reeve. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
3. Machiavelli. *Selected Political Writings*. (1994). Edited and Translated by David Wootton. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
4. John Locke. *Second Treatise on Government*. (1980). Edited by C. B. MacPherson. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
5. Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *The Basic Political Writings*. (1987). Translated by Donald A. Cress; Introduction by Peter Gay. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company.
6. John Stuart Mill. *Utilitarianism, On Liberty, Considerations on Representative Government*. (1993). Geraint Williams, ed. Rutland, VT: The Everyman Library.
7. Additional Readings on e-reserve, which is accessible through the course blackboard site. These readings are required and are marked with an asterisk (**) in the schedule of readings below.

Assignments/Course Requirements:

- In-Class Writing and Homework Assignments: **15%**
- Exam One: **10%**
- Exam Two: **10%**
- 4 Micro-Themes: 10% each; **30%** total (lowest microtheme grade is dropped)
- Final Paper: **30%**
 - First Draft: 10% (of Final Paper Grade)
 - Peer Reviews: 10% (of Final Paper Grade)
 - Final Paper: 80% (of Final Paper Grade)
- Class Participation: **5%**

Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings:

Monday, January 8th: Course Introduction
Wednesday, January 10th: NO CLASS MEETING.

- Friday, January 12th: Plato: *Republic*
Justice: City and Soul (Statecraft and Soulcraft)
 Book I (pp. 1 – 31);
 Book II (pp. 32 – 59).
- Monday, January 15th: Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday—NO CLASS MEETING
- Wed. & Fri. (Jan. 17th & 19th): Plato: *Republic*
Justice, Leadership, and Lies
 Book 3 (pp. 60-69, up to line 392d);
 Book 3 (pp. 86, at 410c – 93);
 Book 4 (pp. 94 – 121).
- Monday, January 22nd: Plato: *Republic*
Leadership: The Philosopher-Kings
 Book 5 (pp. 122 – 156).
Recommended:
 Book 6 (pp. 165, at 492 – 177, up to line 504).
- Wednesday, January 24th: Plato: *Republic*
Noble Myths and Political Education
 Book 7 (pp. 186 – 195, up to line 523);
 Book 7 (pp. 204 at line 532 – 212);
 Book 10 (pp. 279, at 608b – 292).
- Friday, January 26th: Finish Plato Discussion.
 → **Micro-Theme #1 Due (Beginning of Class)**
- Mon. & Wed. (Jan. 29th & 31st): Aristotle: *Politics*
Natural Hierarchies
 Book 1, chapters 1-7 (pp. 1 – 12);
 Book 1, chapters 12-13 (pp. 21 – 25).
Citizenship, Sovereignty, and Constitutions
 Book 3, chapter 1 (pp. 65 – 67);
 Book 3, chapters 4-13 (pp. 70 – 91);
 Book 3, chapter 18 (p. 100).
Recommended:
 Book 2, chapters 1-2 (pp. 26-28);
 Book 2, chapters 4-5 (pp. 30-36).
- Friday, February 2nd: Aristotle: *Politics*
Democracy, Polity (The Middle Constitution), and Regime Change
 Book 4, chapters 1-3 (pp. 101 – 106);
 Book 4, chapters 7-9 (pp. 114 – 117);
 Book 4, chapters 11-12 (pp. 118 – 123);
 Book 5, chapters 1-2 (pp. 134 – 137);
 Book 5, chapters 5-9 (pp. 144 – 158).
Recommended:
 Book 4, Ch. 4 (pp. 106-111)

- Monday, February 5th: Aristotle: *Politics*
The Good Life, Education, and Citizenship
 Book 7, chapters 1-3 (pp. 191 – 197);
 Book 7, chapters 13-15 (pp. 212 – 219);
 Book 8, chapters 1-3 (pp. 227 – 231).
- Wednesday, February 7th: Finish Aristotle Discussion.
- Friday, February 9th: Machiavelli: *Discourses on Livy*
The Republican Machiavelli (Corruption is bad.)
 Introduction (pp. 81 – 82);
 Book One, Preface & chapters 1-8 (pp. 82 – 107);
 Book One, chapters 55 & 58 (pp. 150 – 158);
 Book Two, Preface and chapters 1-2 (pp. 158 – 171).
Optional Reading:
 Wootton’s “Introduction”: pp. xi – xiv, end of ¶3
 Wootton’s “Introduction”: pp. xxx, ¶2 – xxxvii.
- Mon. & Wed. (Feb. 12th & 14th): Machiavelli: *Discourses on Livy*
The Ambiguous Machiavelli
 Book One, chapters 9 – 12 (pp. 107-119);
 Book One, chs. 16 – 18, 21, & 26 (pp. 121 – 132);
 Book One, chapters 29, 32, 34, 42 – 43, 46, 49 – 50, & 53 (pp. 133-149).
- Friday, February 16th: Machiavelli: *The Prince*
The Realpolitik of Princes (Corruption is good?)
 Preface and Chapters 1-10 (pp. 5 – 35);
 Chapters 12-25 (pp. 38 – 77).
Optional Reading:
 Wootton’s Intro: pp. xiv, start of ¶4 – xxx, end of ¶2.
- Monday, February 19th: Finish Machiavelli Discussion.
- Wednesday, February 21st: Locke: *Second Treatise of Government*
The State of Nature and Private Property
 Chapters 1-6 (pp. 7 – 42).
Optional Reading
 Macpherson’s “Introduction”: pp. vii – xix.
 → **Micro-Theme #2 Due (Beginning of Class)**
- Friday, February 23rd: Locke: *Second Treatise of Government*
Creating and Maintaining the Liberal Republic: The Social Contract
 Chapters 7-14 (pp. 42 – 88).
Optional Reading:
 Macpherson’s “Introduction”: pp. xix – xxi.
- Mon. & Wed. (Feb. 26th & 28th): Locke: *Second Treatise of Government*
The Foundations of Liberal Authority, Rights, and Revolutions
 Chapters 15-19 (pp. 88 – 124).

(Look on the next page!)

Friday, March 2nd: **Exam One**

Monday, March 5th - Friday, March 9th: SPRING BREAK

Mon. & Wed. (March 12th & 14th): Rousseau: *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*
The Corruption Of Civilization
Entire *Discourse* (Parts One and Two) (pp. 1 – 21).

Friday, March 16th: Rousseau: *Inequality Discourse & On the Social Contract*
Inequalities and the Foundations of Political Right
Discourse on the Origin of Inequality selections (pp. 33- 38; pp. 58-60,
through first paragraph of Part Two)
Social Contract, Book One, chapters 1-4 (pp. 141 – 147).

Monday, March 19th: Rousseau: *On the Social Contract*
The Social Contract and The General Will
Book One, chapters 5-9 (pp. 147 – 153);
Book Two, chapters 1-4 (pp. 153 – 159).
Optional Reading
Gay's "Introduction" (pp. vii - xvii).
→ **Final Paper Draft #1 Due at the Beginning of Class**

Wednesday, March 21st: Rousseau: *On The Social Contract*
The Law, The Legislator, The Sovereign, and The Government
Book Two, chapters 6-12 (pp. 160 – 172);
Book Three (pp. 173 – 203).

Friday, March 23rd: Rousseau: *On The Social Contract*
Civil Religion
Book Four, chapters 1-2 (pp. 203-207);
Book Four, chapter 8 (pp. 220-227).

Monday, March 26th: Mill: *Utilitarianism*
Utilitarianism and Justice
Chapter 2 (pp. 6 – 27);
Chapter 5 (pp. 61 – 67).
Optional Reading:
Chapter 5 (pp. 43 – 52);
Williams' "Introduction" (pp. xix – xxxii).
→ **Micro-Theme #3 Due (Beginning of Class)**

Wed. & Fri. (March 28th & 30th): Mill: *On Liberty*
Liberty and Its Conditions
Chapters 1-2 (pp. 69 – 90, end of first ¶);
Chapter 2 (pp. 102, at last ¶ - 105);
Chapter 2 (pp. 113 – 123);
Chapters 3-4 (pp. 123 – 153);
Chapter 5 (pp. 178 – 181).

- Mon. & Wed. (April 2nd & 4th): Mill: *On Representative Government*
Representative Government & Its Conditions and Dangers
 Chapters 2-4 (pp. 198 – 245);
 Chapter 6 (pp. 261 – 276).
Optional Reading:
 Williams’ “Introduction” (pp. xxxvi – xxxviii.)
- Friday, April 6th: SPRING HOLIDAY; NO CLASS MEETING
- Monday, April 9th: Mill: *On Representative Government*
Representative Government: Suffrage For Whom?
 Chapter 8 (pp. 299 – 317).
 → **Final Paper Draft #2 Due Today (Paper Swap for Peer Review)**
- Wednesday, April 11th: Charles Taylor: “What’s Wrong With Negative Liberty?”**
- Friday, April 13th: Taylor discussion, continued.
 → **Micro-Theme #4 Due (Beginning of Class)**
- Mon. & Wed. (April 16th & 18th): Robert Nozick: “Distributive Justice”**
- Friday, April 20th: Michael Walzer: “In Defense of Equality” **
 → **Peer Reviews Due Today**
- Monday, April 23rd: Walzer discussion, continued.
- Wed. & Fri. (April 25th & 27th): Hanna Pitkin: “Obligation and Consent, II”**
- Monday, April 30th: Catch-Up Day. No Assigned Readings.
- Tuesday, May 1st (University follows Friday Schedule): **Exam Two**
- Friday, May 4th: **Final Paper Due** not later than 3:00 p.m.

Assignments & Course Requirements in Detail:

1. In-Class Writing and Homework Assignments: Throughout the semester, you will be asked to complete a variety of small assignments designed to facilitate depth of understanding of the texts, promote engagement with the material in different ways, and/or develop the basic building-blocks of good writing. These smaller assignments also should help both you and me assess how well you are understanding the material on an on-going basis, providing fairly regular feedback where no single assignment affects the final course grade too severely.

2. Exams: In-class, short essay format exams will ask you to explain and analyze the major themes of the works we have read, bringing to bear your understanding of the assigned readings, the lectures, and the class discussions. You will need to bring two blue books to the exams. Exam One

will cover Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, and Locke. Exam Two will cover the readings from Rousseau through the end of the course.

3. Microthemes: These are short, typed papers that require you to answer detailed questions about the readings in a succinct yet thorough manner. Micro-themes build skills that are essential for critical reading and effective writing. The skills that go into writing successful micro-themes (separating central from secondary arguments, accurate summarizing, paying attention to the parts of an argument you both like and don't like) are critical skills for writing successful longer papers. In this way, they are also—like rough drafts—means through which you can develop the building blocks of persuasive and engaging writing. These papers are short but very important for both the substance and mechanics of your writing. Work hard on them. (Additional instructions on the microthemes can be found on Blackboard. You will receive the specific questions you are to answer two or three class periods prior to their due dates.)

4. Final Paper: The final paper is designed to help you learn how to construct and analyze arguments in political philosophy. This assignment will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the course material and your critical thinking skills. The paper will be graded for both content and form. Thus, the quality of your analysis will be the most important factor in determining your grade, but your demonstration of writing skills will directly affect your grade as well. (See the grading guide below for more details.) You will be offered a (limited) choice of topics on which to write your essay.

To receive high marks on the final paper, not only must you write a polished and sophisticated final product, but you must also demonstrate that you have written thoughtful early drafts, and that subsequent drafts directly respond to feedback received from me and your peers through the peer-review process. Additionally, the thoughtfulness and quality of your reviews of your peers' papers will be a component in *your* final paper grade. You are not responsible for whether or not your peers respond to your comments, but you *are* responsible for providing them with engaged feedback.

Note well: failure to complete *either* the first or second draft will result in a one-letter grade drop in your final paper grade. Failure to complete *both* early drafts will result in a **zero** for the final paper grade. **Revising is a critical part of the final paper project.**

Finally, as the paper swap for the peer-review process requires you to be in-class to exchange your papers, if you are *absent* for the initial paper swap, you will receive a ZERO for the peer review portion (10%) of your final paper grade.

5. Class Participation:

- When you don't read in advance, don't engage with the ideas expressed by the writers, the instructor, and the other students, or when you attend class only sporadically, both your learning and your classmates' learning is greatly inhibited. Additionally, class becomes really boring.
- So you are expected to show up, to pay attention, and to prepare the readings in advance of the class period for which they are assigned. As many of the readings are quite challenging, I strongly encourage you to take notes as you read and bring them to class for reference during discussions. (For a guide to effective note-taking, please see the document on our course Blackboard page called "A Note on Notes.")
- I take attendance and note participation daily.
- Obviously, if you aren't here, you can't participate.
- That said, just showing up and staying awake isn't enough to earn participation points. Participation points are earned by paying attention, asking questions, contributing to class

discussion in a way that demonstrates that you have completed the reading, responding politely to your classmates' questions, etc.

- Rudeness (to me, to other students, or both) will result in a "0" for the day. Other things that will hurt your participation grade:
 - Text messaging.
 - Doing crossword puzzles.
 - Reading the newspaper.
 - Doing homework for other classes.
 - Talking, rolling your eyes, passing notes, etc. while one of your classmates is speaking.
 - Being late. (If persistent lateness becomes an issue, the classroom door will be locked promptly at 10:00.)
 - Not bringing books and/or notes to class. (BRING your books to class!)
 - Sleeping. (If you're that tired, you're better off staying home and getting real rest.)

Honor Code:

I expect all students in this course to abide by both the letter and spirit of the university's academic integrity policy. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted. The full text of the Academic Integrity Policy can be viewed at: <http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Policy/HonorPolicy.html>.

Specifically pertinent to this course is the following infraction: "Plagiarism: Intentionally or knowingly representing the words of another, as one's own in any academic exercise." Do NOT engage in plagiarism. If caught, you will fail (receive a zero for the assignment).

If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, please see me *immediately*.