

Political Science 260 -- Political Ideas

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“[Political theory] provides a common language with which people...communicate with each other.”

– Kirk O’Donnell

Some say that politics is the second oldest profession in the world. Whether or not this is actually true, the roots of political thought do stretch back as far as the written word. Throughout history, political theory has been concerned with the fundamental questions of public life. It addresses such issues as the nature of political authority and the relationship of the state to the individual, as well as the obligations and responsibilities that we as citizens owe to each other. As such, an understanding of the theoretical underpinnings of politics is fundamental to a proper understanding of any of the other various fields of political science.

To that end, this course is designed to facilitate such an understanding through an introduction to political theory. In a whirlwind voyage through time, we will be discussing primary materials reaching from classical antiquity into the 20th century. In the later portions of the class, we will meet and try to bring political theory to bear on issues that face the world today.

Required Texts:

Ball, Terence, and Richard Dagger, *Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal*, 7th Edition, New York, NY: Allyn & Bacon / Longman, 2009
Ball, Terence, and Richard Dagger, *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*, 7th Edition, New York, NY: Allyn & Bacon / Longman, 2009

These two texts should be available from the University Bookstore in a bundled and discounted version. However, please note that they may or may not be available online at a less expensive rate. So long as you have the correct text, I don’t mind how you get it. Earlier editions are around, but there have been changes, so purchase them at your own risk.

Grading Policies:

Thought Papers:	20%
First Exam	20%
Mid-Term Exam:	30%
Final Exam:	30%

Thought papers:

At the risk of sounding too simplistic, these short papers will cover the material. They will be due at the beginning of the first class for which the reading material was assigned. You are limited to one typed page (while I can read small text, please don't make it so small as to be illegible). Anything more than one page *will not be read*. Each paper must cover one assigned reading from the reader. You will be graded on ten papers. Note that there are more than ten readings during the semester. This assignment is designed so that, if you miss points on early thought papers, you can make up those assignments by doing additional papers later. Only the ten highest grades will count towards the final total.

A good portion of the paper will necessarily be summary of the piece you have chosen to write on. However, I would like to see about a quarter to a third of it be your thoughts about the assigned reading in question. Do you think the authors are off in their thoughts? If they aren't right, how are they wrong? If they are right, what is good about their argument? The goal is to demonstrate that you have engaged the material in this way. (Simple criticism isn't the only way to engage the material, just so you know).

Because this sort of reading is something that is learned, I will be grading these in a particular way. The measure will be a 0-to-4 scale. It will be a measure of two separate standards: the summary portion and the critical thinking portion. Each can receive 0, 1, or 2 points. Zero points means that the summary or critical thinking was not there or completely missed the subject. One point indicates the attempt to summarize or to critically engage the material was there, but was still lacking in some way. Two points are an adequate summary or engagement. When any points are missed, I will make sure to add comments to point you in the right direction for future papers.

The last part of this section is a comment on the length. There are two reasons for the one page limit on the length of the paper. The first is that I want to have time to get these back to you in class the next week. The second is to help you practice writing in a succinct style; that ability will stand you in good stead not only on the exams in this class but in your further studies, whether at the University or in the private sector.

Exams:

Exams in this class will be essay in format and will be comprehensive. These exams will cover all the material from the beginning of the class (e.g. each exam will cover all the material from the beginning of the semester). You will need to bring blue books. Do not write your name on them, as we will be shuffling them around.

Arriving late for an exam is highly discouraged, as the exams will likely take much of the period to complete. Those arriving after the first person to complete the test leaves will not be allowed to take or make-up the exam.

General Course Policies:

- **Deadlines and Late work:** Assigned written work is due in class on the date indicated on the syllabus. This is true, regardless of any potential absence on that date. If you know you are going to be away when an assignment comes due, turn it in *before* you leave. I will automatically deduct 10% from your grade for each day it is late (starting 10 minutes after class ends) unless I have valid documentation of a serious illness or emergency. Assignments turned in four days or more after the due date will receive a score of zero.
- **Attendance:** I will not be taking attendance in this class. However, I feel compelled to let you know that the nature of the subject for this class is significant to the question of whether or not you decide to attend regularly. An interaction above and beyond simple readings is truly needed to properly understand the material. To put it simply, you will find it hard to follow the assigned material and pass the exams without the understanding you will develop through attendance and interaction in discussion with your fellow students.
- **Make-up exams:** I only allow a make-up exam if I am notified prior to the scheduled exam and am provided appropriate documentation. Please see the above section on attendance for examples of appropriate documentation. Be aware: makeup exams may be more difficult and certainly will not be the same as the actual exam. The final exam cannot be made up.
- **Extra credit:** Extra-credit assignments, at my discretion, *may* be offered during the semester. However, no opportunities to revise and turn in work again will be offered. Please keep track of your performance as the semester goes on and seek help if necessary before it is too late. There is no guarantee of extra credit opportunities.
- **Academic Dishonesty:** It is unfortunate that this needs to be mentioned, however, please note that cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated; either activity will result in failure of the course for all parties involved and the reporting of the incident to the Dean of Students for further disciplinary action. I take this very seriously. All work is expected to be your own. Copying, borrowing or even paraphrasing text without using quotation marks and appropriately crediting the source is plagiarism. If you have questions about this, come talk to me personally.
- **Incomplete grades:** Incomplete grades (I) may only be assigned if a student has passed the first half of the course and provides me with thorough and appropriate documentation of an extraordinary and substantial illness or emergency which precludes successfully completing the course. If the emergency occurs prior to completing the second exam the student should withdraw rather than asking for an incomplete grade.

- Dropping: While given the right to do so by University policy, I do not drop students from the roll. Such decisions are solely at the student's discretion. If you wish to drop this class, make sure to do so properly.
- Cell-Phones: While I would prefer that students not bring cell phones to class at all, I do recognize the need in some cases (examples might include a student with a spouse who is expecting or someone who is a medical professional and on-call). However, ringers (*or even cell phones with loud vibrate settings*) going off at random during class will not be tolerated. Please do not have your phone on during class. If you have an appropriate need, please discuss this with me before the cell phone goes off. If not, I *will* assume that the call is for me and answer the cell phone appropriately. Please note that if they ring in any way during an exam, you *will* be asked to turn in your exam at that point.
- Students with Disabilities: Qualified students with disabilities needing appropriate academic adjustments should contact me personally as soon as possible to ensure your needs are met in a timely manner. Handouts are available in alternative formats upon request.

Class Schedule: Assignments and Assigned Readings

1-19 Pass out and review Syllabus

Ideology

Chapter 1 – PI

Carver, “Ideology: The Career of a Concept” – Reader

1-26 Democracy

Chapter 2 – PI

Euripides – Democracy and Despotism – Reader

Pericles – Funeral Oration – Reader

Aristotle – Democratic Judgment and ‘Middling’ Constitution – Reader

Adams – What is a Republic? – Reader

de Tocqueville – Democracy and Equality – Reader

Mill – Democratic Participation and Political Education – Reader

Allen – Democracy and the Power of Education – Reader

2-2 Conservatism

Chapter 4 – PI

Burke – Society, Reverence and ‘the True Natural Aristocracy’ – Reader

de Maistre – Conservatism as Reaction – Reader

Ortega y Gasset – Revolt of the Masses – Reader

Oakeshott – On Being Conservative – Reader

Bork – Modern Liberalism and Cultural Decline – Reader

- 2-9 Liberalism
Chapter 3 – PI
Hobbes – The State of Nature and the Basis of Obligation – Reader
Locke – Toleration and Government – Reader
Jefferson – The Declaration of Independence – Reader
Smith – Private Profit, Public Good – Reader
Mill – Liberty and Individuality – Reader
- 2-16 Review and Exam. We will review for the first hour or so, then take the exam.
- 2-23 Early Socialism and Communism
Chapter 5 – PI
More – Utopia – Reader
Marx & Engels – The Communism Manifesto – Reader
Karl Marx – On the Materialist Conception of History
- 3-2 Socialism and Communism After Marx
Chapter 6 – PI
Lenin – Revisionism, Imperialism, and Revolution – Reader
Leon Trotsky–The Permanent Revolution – Reader
Mao – On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship – Reader
Bellamy – Looking Backward – Reader
Yates – Can the Working Class Change the World? – Reader
- 3-9 Fascism
Chapter 7 – PI
de Gobineau – Civilization and Race – Reader
Mussolini – The Doctrine of Fascism – Reader
Rocco – The Political Theory of Fascism – Reader
Hitler – Nation and Race – Reader
- 3-16 Spring Break, no class.
- 3-23 Liberation Ideologies
Chapter 8 – PI
King – Letter from Birmingham Jail – Reader
Biko – Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity – Reader
Wollstonecraft – A Vindication of the Rights of Women – Reader
Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions – Reader
Corvino – Homosexuality: The Nature and Harm Arguments – Reader
Alfred – Indigenist Pathways of Action and Freedom – Reader
Gutierrez – Liberation Theology – Reader

- 3-30 Radical Islam
 Chapter 10 – PI
 Qutb – Milestones – Reader
 Khomeini – Islamic Government – Reader
 bin Laden *et al.* – Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders – Reader
- 4-6 Review and Exam. We will review for the first hour or so, then take the exam.
- 4-13 Modern Relevance: Economic Globalization
 Micklethwait and Wooldridge – The Hidden Promise of Globalization
 Buchanan – Globalization Is Economic Treason
- 4-20 Modern Relevance: The “War on Terror”
The National Security Strategy of the United States of America
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/nsc/nss.html>
Talk of the Nation, September 23rd, 2002
<http://www.npr.org/programs/totn/transcripts/2002/sep/020923.conan.html>
- 4-27 Modern Relevance: Liberties in the Face of Security Threats
 Bill of Rights of the United States – Reader
<http://www.npr.org/programs/specials/liberties/>
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/terrorism/july-dec02/liberty_9-10.html
 Reread Mill – Liberty and Individuality – Reader
- 5-4 Review Week. We may use this week in a couple of possible ways. Review is an option; a make-up week in case we miss a week or get behind is another. A simple extension of our earlier discussions might work here, too. This will all become more apparent as we get closer.

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 11, 1945-2145, regular classroom

Important University dates:

- Martin Luther King Holiday – 1/18
 Last day to add/change courses – 1/29
 Last day to drop without a grade – 2/5
 Last day to change grading options – 2/12
 Spring Break – 3/14 – 3/21
 Last day to withdraw without approval of dean – 4/16
 Last day to withdraw with approval of dean – 5/7
 Finals Week – 5/10 – 5/15
 Last day to remove an incomplete grade – 5/14
 Spring Commencement – 5/16