Course Catalog Description

Analysis of the thought of the major contributors, from Plato to the present. Fall semester (301): ancient and medieval political philosophy and the modern break with traditions. Spring semester (302): main currents of modern thought.

Fall 2018 Course Overview

What is the state, and how did “we the people” come to be the legitimate source of power within modern states? This course analyzes the modern state in terms of its sovereign authority, and other key concepts such as the separation of powers (executive, legislative, and judicial) and the rule of law. This course also examines the main theoretical approaches to the analysis of the state and state power: capitalism, socialism, communism, liberalism, and feminism.

Course Outcomes

At the end of the course, the successful student will be able to
- Identify the unit of analysis of modern political history
- Identify new types of political regimes not theorized by ancient authors (POLS 3201)
- Demonstrate familiarity with the major authors, concepts, and arguments in the modern history of political thought
- Identify and explain the main approaches to the analysis of modern political history, including the “isms” which develop in the late modern period (e.g., capitalism, socialism, communism, liberalism, feminism).
- Explain the growth and development of political science as an academic discipline, and situate political theory’s continuing contribution to that discipline
- Engage in persuasive analytical writing, as assessed through substantial, original papers on assigned topics in political theory

Course Goals

This course will develop the students' abilities to think critically and to read analytically.
Prerequisites: RHET 1010, RHET 1020, RHET 1100, RHET 2010, POLS 1001 or POLS 2003

Course Grading Requirements:

Participation in classroom discussions: 15%, including occasional inverted classroom assignments. (A rough participation grade will be posted to Blackboard prior to the midterm. The *final* participation grade may improve or decrease depending on student performance in the second half of the course.)

Weekly reading quiz (4 points per quiz): 15%

Student midterm papers: 25% due in class Oct. 18

Final seminar paper: 25% due in class Nov. 29

Final exam: 20% during exam period

Grading:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94%-100%</td>
<td>“A” grades confirm exceptional, extraordinary effort and results</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90%-93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87%-89%</td>
<td>“B” grades confirm effort exceeding average and high quality work.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84%-86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80%-83%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77%-79%</td>
<td>“C” grades confirm average and satisfactory work.</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74%-76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70%-73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>65%-69%</td>
<td>“D” grades confirm less than satisfactory effort and less than adequate work.</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>65% and below</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>55%-65%</td>
<td>“F” grades confirm far less than sufficient effort and results or may be given in response to a violation of academic integrity.</td>
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Schedule of topics and readings

The instructor reserves the right to alter the schedule of topics and readings if necessary

1. Introduction:

   **Week 1 (Sept. 3 and 6):** Introduction to modern political theory? Benjamin Constant, “On the Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of Moderns”

2. The Birth of the State and of Modern Political Theory

   **Week 2 (Sept. 10 and 13):** Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, “Epistle Dedicatory,” “Letter to Francesco Vettori”; chapters 1-5 (types of states); *The Prince*, Chapter 6 (greatest examples)

   **Week 3 (Sept. 17 and 20):** chapters 7-11 (new princes, crimes, republics, and the Church); chapters 12-15 (military and the new political science); chapters 16-24 (virtues of the ruler); chapters 25-6 (Italian unification).

Is Shakespeare’s wickedest king a model Machiavellian prince?

3. The Lawful State and the Social Contract

Week 5 (Oct. 1 and 4): Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen* (Epistle Dedicatory and Chapter 3); *Leviathan*, Chapter 6-7 on feeling and thinking, Chapter 10-11 on power and purpose; Andrew Sullivan, “I Used to Be a Human Being” (Please note that we may have to reschedule or hold an online class on Oct. 4, as I am traveling for a conference.)

Week 6 (Oct. 8 and 11): Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chapter 13-15 on natural laws, Chapter 16-18 on the sovereign authorization; Chapter 21 on liberty; Chapter 29-30 on sovereign power and its limits


4. Criticisms of the Social Contract


Course drop date (undergraduate): October 25


5. New Questions: The Economics of Politics


Week 12 (Nov. 19 and 22): Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts of 1844* (excerpt); *Theses on Feuerbach*; *Communist Manifesto* (excerpt)

6. Modern Utilitarianism, Managerialism, and Liberalism


7. Conclusion and Course Summary:

Week 15 (Dec. 10): Liberalism’s Critics: Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (excerpt); Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History and the Last Man” (excerpt)

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**Required books (for purchase by students):**

1. Author: Niccolò Machiavelli
   Title: The Prince, translated Harvey Mansfield
   Publisher: University of Chicago Press
   ISBN-10: 0226500438
2. Author: Shakespeare  
Title: Richard III  
Publisher: Signet  
ISBN-10: 0451526953
3. Author: Thomas Hobbes  
Title: Leviathan, ed. Richard Tuck  
Publisher: Cambridge University Press  
ISBN-10: 0521567971
4. Author: John Locke  
Title: Two Treatises of Government, ed. Peter Laslett  
Publisher: Cambridge University Press  
ISBN-10: 0521357306
5. Author: Jean-Jacques Rousseau  
Title: The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings, ed. Victor Gourevitch  
Publisher: Cambridge University Press  
ISBN-10: 0521424453
6. Author: Karl Marx  
Title: The Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert Tucker  
Publisher: W.W. Norton & Co.  
ISBN-10: 039309040X
7. Author: John Stuart Mill  
Title: On Liberty and Other Writings, ed. Stefan Collini  
Publisher: Cambridge University Press  
ISBN-10: 0521379172

Assessment and Attendance policy

Electronic devices and Classroom Demeanor:

The use of electronic devices such as cellphones and laptop computers is prohibited. There is a reason for this. (See Mueller and Oppenheimer, “The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand Over Laptop Note Taking,” Psychological
In a nutshell, laptop note-takers “performed significantly worse on the conceptual questions” and wrote notes that had “more verbatim overlap with the lecture.” The use of cellphones or laptops in class, or distracting or egregiously discourteous behavior, including arriving late, may result in a mark of absent for that class.

**Mid-Term and Final Essays:**

The midterm paper will be approximately 8-10 double-spaced pages in length, and the final paper will be 10-12 pages in length. Each paper will address one assigned question that will allow students to use their “toolbox” of concepts and theoretical approaches to an important theme in the history of political thought. You will be called upon to defend a thesis, and to support that thesis using evidence.

**Exam:**

The final exam will be cumulative. You will receive an overview of the structure of the exam one week before the exam. It will consist of short answer questions, a section of passage-recognition, and synoptic essay questions. Make-up exams will be granted only in the case of documented medical emergencies or comparable circumstances.

Attendance may be taken each class. Two weeks of unexcused absences will drop your final grade one full “letter.” If you have three weeks of unexcused absences (6 classes), you have not completed the course and will receive a failing grade. Students will be informed of this status by email after the third week of absences. Written work that is due in class, or tests that are taken in class, cannot be made up or taken at a later date in the case of unexcused absences. Please see the AUC attendance policy ([http://catalog.aucegypt.edu/content.php?catoid=27&navoid=1333](http://catalog.aucegypt.edu/content.php?catoid=27&navoid=1333)).

**Policy on Academic integrity**

Academic integrity includes a commitment neither to engage in nor tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Prohibited acts include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting another persons' work as one's own, using Internet or other sources without citation, fabricating field data or citations, stealing examinations, tampering with the academic work of another student, facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty, etc.

Plagiarism will result in a zero grade for the assignment in question. Cheating during an examination will result in a zero grade for this examination. Further action, according to university regulations, may also be implemented.

You should be aware that all written work might be submitted to “Turnitin.com”, the detection prevention software.
The University's statement on academic integrity, from which the above statement is drawn, is available online at:
http://www.aucegypt.edu/academics/integrity/Pages/default.aspx