

Political Science 210

Introduction to Political Theory

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Class: M/W 8:30-10:18
O. Hrs: W 10:30-11:30
2114 Derby Hall

This course is an introductory survey designed to familiarize students with the scope, concepts, and methods of political theory. The readings are organized thematically, but we will explore each concept through the lens of both historical and contemporary thinkers. We examine a series of provocative attempts by the “Great thinkers” to make sense of the most fundamental political questions that confront us as human beings: are there any trans-historical and cross-cultural “fundamentals” of human nature? If so, how do they constrain the possibilities of political affiliation? If not, does “anything go” or are there other ways to stabilize our social and political relations? How are we to understand history and the ways that our own society fit into it? Though this course is fundamentally about “theory,” it frequently engages related questions of practice with special reference to recent political events.

Course Requirements

There are four main course requirements:

1. *Participation.* Each member of the class is expected to participate each session in discussion. Participation will count for 25% of the final course grade.
2. *Quizzes.* There will be a number of short, unannounced quizzes to check for understanding. These will not be hard for students who keep up with the readings. The quizzes will count for 15% of the final grade.
3. *Midterm.* There will be an in-class midterm accounting for 20% of the final grade.
4. *Final Exam or Paper.* Students will have the option of taking a cumulative final exam or writing a paper (approx. 7-8 page paper). The final exam or paper will count for 40% of the final grade.

Course Materials: All course materials and readings will be available on Carmen.

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/resource_csc.asp).

I require electronic copies of your paper and other materials because they will be run through a software program designed to detect plagiarism from the web, as well as a database of papers turned in at OSU. I

do this *not* because I do not trust you. I believe that the vast majority of students are honest. I even believe that most students who plagiarize do so, not because they are generally dishonest, but because they panic in the end of term crush. I check for plagiarism to reassure students who do their own work that they are not chumps, and to help students who are tempted to plagiarize under pressure to avoid compromising their academic careers and their personal integrity.

Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

GEC Social Science Expected Outcomes

Social science develop students’ understanding of the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; of the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and of the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.
2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in the contexts of human existence (e.g., psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political), and the processes by which groups, organizations, and societies function.
 3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

Schedule of Readings for Class Meetings

March 24th *Introduction*

March 26th *Political Theory & the Modern Politician*
 Weber: Politics as a Vocation
 H. Clinton: Announcement Speech
 McCain: Announcement Speech
 Obama: Announcement Speech

March 31st *Justice I*
 Rawls: from A Theory of Justice
 Nozick: from Anarchy, State, Utopia

April 2nd *Justice II*
 Sandel: from Liberalism & the Limits of Justice

April 7th *Political Theory & Religion*
 St. Augustine from The City of God
 St. Thomas Aquinas Politics & Law

April 9 th	<i>Politics, Religion, & Toleration</i>	
	Martin Luther	The Christian in Society
	John Calvin	God and Political Duty
	John Locke	Letter Concerning Toleration
	John Kennedy	Speech on Religion
	Mitt Romney	Speech on Religion
April 14 th	<i>The Limits of Toleration</i>	
	Marcuse	Repressive Tolerance
April 16 th	<i>Democracy I</i>	
	Madison et. al.:	from The Federalist Papers
	Tocqueville:	from Democracy in America
April 21 st	<i>Representation and the Critique of Democracy</i>	
	Burke:	Speech to the Electors of Bristol
	Schumpeter:	from Socialism, Capitalism, and Democracy
April 23 rd	<i>Democracy II: Deliberation</i>	
	Dewey:	The Problem of Method
	Habermas:	The Public Sphere
	Fishkin:	Giving the People Voice
April 28 th	Midterm	
April 30 th	<i>The Case Against Democracy: Totalitarian Politics</i>	
	Carl Schmidt	from The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy
	Alfredo Rocco	from The Political Doctrine of Fascism
	Benito Mussolini	from The Doctrine of Fascism
	Josef Stalin	from The Foundations of Leninism
	Milovan Djilas	from The New Class
May 5 th	<i>Equality</i>	
	Rousseau:	Discourse on Inequality
	Burke:	Reflections on the Revolution in France
	Walzer:	In Defense of Equality
May 7 th	<i>Power</i>	
	Gaventa:	from Power & Powerlessness

May 12 th	<i>Freedom I</i> John Stuart Mill: Isaiah Berlin:	from On Liberty Two Concepts of Liberty
May 14 th	<i>Freedom II</i> Habermas:	Three Normative Models of Democracy
May 19 th	<i>Class & Political Theory</i> Marx: Reagan: Edwards:	Various Selections Against Class Warfare The Two Americas
May 21 st	<i>Gender & Political Theory</i> de Beauvoir: Wollstonecraft: de Pizan	from The Second Sex Vindication of the Rights of Women The City of Ladies
May 26 th	<i>Race & Political Theory</i> Fanon: M. L. King Jr.: Malcom X: Obama:	from The Wretched of the Earth Letter from Birmingham Jail The Ballot or the Bullet Speech on Race in America
May 28 th	<i>Identity and Unity: The Politics of Recognition</i> Taylor: Habermas:	The Politics of Recognition Struggles for Recognition