

POLI 2060, Fall 2020, MWF 10:30 - 11:20; 12:30-1:20 via Zoom

Alex Donovan Cole

Stubbs 231

IKWTM (T[]ML)

Virtual Office Hours by Appointment

Course Summary

POLI 2060 is a General Ed course designed to introduce students to the main thinkers and themes of Western political thought. This course involves history, philosophy, and literature, but is not a history, philosophy, or literature course. Political Theory's essence resides in thinking. Not only thinking like the great minds of the tradition of political philosophy, but as citizens engaged with topics of vast public importance: justice, order, speech, reality itself.

However, I would like to emphasize the notion that political thinking does not merely reside in intellectual arguments or logic, but in literary and mythic renderings of the world. The German novelist, Günter Grass, calls myth "Enlightenment's wayward child," but suggests that its content is "quintessential." We will take this idea seriously throughout this course and visit some cinematic depictions of the political. The goal is not to merely regurgitate the teachings of some of the most important political thinkers, but to understand and apply their ideas to non-political media and concepts.

Evaluation & Attendance

Because of the online synchronous nature of this course, attendance is not regularly taken, but a graded equivalent can be given. Each week, I will post a short, five question quiz from that week's readings and lectures. These quizzes will constitute 15% of your final grade, so one ought to take them seriously. Exceptions include weeks with tests and when assignments are due. Further, many of the multiple choice responses on tests will be derived from these earlier quizzes. So, it would be very prudent to regularly communicate with me via email or other means. Test dates TBD, but will follow the structure of the syllabus.

Grading breakdown follows:

- Weekly quizzes: 15%
- First Test (Multiple Choice): 10%
- Second Test (Multiple Choice) :20%
- Third Test (Multiple Choice & Short Answer): 25%
- Final (See below): 30%

Part Four: The Social Contract, America, and the Black Experience

ADA Compliance

The University is committed to making reasonable efforts to assist individuals with disabilities in their efforts to avail themselves of services and programs offered by the University. To this end, Louisiana State University will provide reasonable accommodations for persons with documented qualifying disabilities. If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations in this course, you must present a letter to me from Disability Services in 115 Johnston Hall, indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

LSU Integrative Curriculum Statement

Integrated learning allows students to make simple connections among ideas and experiences and across disciplines and perspectives. The LSU Integrative Learning Core (ILC) curriculum is designed to develop student abilities to transfer their learning to new situations, and demonstrate a sense of self as a learner. A fundamental goal of the ILC is to foster students' practical and intellectual capacities associated with integrative learning in preparation for high competence and functionality in their post-baccalaureate careers. This course fulfills the BOR Area of Social/Behavioral Sciences and provides students experience with the ILC proficiency of Inquiry and Analysis.