

Introduction to Political Theory

POLI 2060

Classroom: 101 Tureaud

Class Days: Monday-Wednesday-Friday

Class Time: 12:30 - 1:20

Mr. Stephen Wolfe

Office: 330 Stubbs Hall

Office hours: 2-4 MW & by appointment

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Course Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce undergraduates to Western political thought. The intent is not only to satisfy certain historical curiosities or make a leap toward being well-read in the Western political canon, but to investigate the timeless and enduring questions of political philosophy from the pre-Socratic philosophers to the present. The philosophers we study are not merely representatives of their time, but participants in the timeless quest to distinguish truth and error and to become lovers of wisdom. With their insights, we hope to participate in this quest as well.

The primary objective of this course is that students are exposed to great texts in Western political philosophy. We will raise questions concerning justice, the role of virtue, ethics and piety in political order, whether political life is natural, the best regime, and many other issues. One particular focus will be the role of culture, religion, and law in the formation of political institutions. Unique for a political theory course, the students will read two authors often considered part of the conservative tradition (Burke and Scruton), though the course is balanced with an extensive discussion of liberalism using John Locke and a lecture on and frequent references in other lectures to the thought of Karl Marx.

There will be class discussion and analysis of (1) the various forms of ad hominem and tu quoque fallacies (e.g., *ad hominem* and *tu quoque* fallacies) and labels socially useful for denouncing another. (2) the use of socially powerful language might be justified in the public sphere, but not in the academy. Of course, respect to one another is a basic duty in the academic environment.

As a social science general education elective this course is designed to acquaint you with various views of human nature, as well as how human beings organize themselves into political societies, real and imagined. You will be expected to achieve an understanding of the informing

When the quiz is complete, the student will hand his or her quiz to the student at his or her left, right, front, or back (determined by the instructor) and the student will grade the quiz. Students will grade only one quiz. After the quiz is passed, no one is permitted to change answers. The grader will make no marks other than a mark for a false answer and the oT or her

Notice on Attendance

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance will be recorded using the quizzes. There will be no quiz make-ups, **even in the case of excused absences**. There will be no automatic lowering of the uvwfgpvøu itcfg fwg vq o wnvkrng cdugpegs. However, missing class entails losing all the points in the quiz for that day, and the absent student will not be afforded any additional opportunity to take the quiz. The student will also be less prepared for the mid-term and final examinations. It behooves the student to attend class.

Students must bring the assigned book to class.

Fundamental Points

Cheating and Collusion: Students suspected of cheating or colluding on quizzes or exams will immediately be brought to the dean for disciplinary action. Students, of course, are free to study with each other.

Classroom Conduct: Disruptive actions, including talking out of turn, texting, passing notes, not paying attention, etc. will not be tolerated. Be attentive and courteous to your instructor and your colleagues.

Electronics: Laptops, phones, I-Pads, e-readers, and other electronic devices may not be used, unless they are either for the purpose of taking notes or reading the assigned books.

Friday, September 4 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 1-25 (Book I)

Week 3:

Monday, September 7 **NO CLASS** ó Labor Day

Wednesday, September 9 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 26-41 (Book II)

Friday, September 11 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 42-66 (Book III)

Week 4:

Monday, September 14 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 67-89 (Book IV)

Wednesday, September 16 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 90-114 (Book V)

Friday, September 18 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 115-134 (Book VI)

Week 5:

Monday, September 21 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 135-162 (Book VII)

Wednesday, September 23 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 163-187 (Book VIII)

Friday, September 25 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 188-209 (Book IX)

Week 6:

Monday, September 28 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 210-235 (Book X)

MEDIEVAL AND EARLY PROTESTANT POLITICAL THOUGHT

Wednesday, September 30 Nwvjgt cpf Ecnxkp: Xcp Ftwpgp öRtgewtuqtu qh vjg Tghqt o gf Vtcfkvkqp,ö *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms* p. 21-62 [On Moodle]

Friday, October 2 Luther, *On Secular Authority* [On Moodle]

Week 7:

Monday, October 5 Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* 2.2.12-15; 4.20.1-32 [On Moodle]

Wednesday, October 7 **Mid-Term Examination**

MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Friday, October 9 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 3-33 (Ch. 1-7)

Week 8:

Monday, October 12	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , p. 34-71 (Ch. 8-18)
Wednesday, October 14	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , p.71-105 (Ch. 19-26)
Friday, October 16	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , p. 6-37 (Ch. 1-7)
Week 9:	
Monday, October 19	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , p. 38-74 (Ch. 8-12)
Wednesday, October 21	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , p. 74-105 (Ch. 13-16)
Friday, October 23	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , p. 106-127, 453-468 (Ch. 17-19, 46)
Week 10:	
Monday, October 26	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , p. 267-302 (Ch. 1-5)
Wednesday, October 28	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , p. 303-330 (Ch. 6 & 7)
Friday, October 30	NO CLASS ó Fall Holiday
Week 11:	
Monday, November 2	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , p. 330-363 (Ch. 8-11)
Wednesday, November 4	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , p. 364-397 (Ch. 12-16)
Friday, November 6	Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , p. 397-428 (Ch. 17-19)
Week 12:	
Monday, November 9	Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> , p. TBD.
Wednesday, November 11	Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> , p. TBD.
Friday, November 13	Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> , p. TBD.
Week 13:	
Monday, November 16	Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> , p. TBD.
Wednesday, November 18	Paine, <i>Rights of Man</i> , pg. 8-43 [On Moodle]
Friday, November 20	Marx, öGuvtcp igf ncdqt,ö <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts</i> , pg. 28-35 [On Moodle]

CONVERSATION WITH THE TRADITION

Week 14:

Monday, November 23 Scruton, *The Meaning of Conservatism*, p. 1-16, 111-126

Wednesday, November 25 NO CLASS ó Thanksgiving Holiday

Friday, November 27 NO CLASS ó Thanksgiving Holiday

Week 15:

Monday, November 30 Scruton, *The Meaning of Conservatism*, p. 17-37

Wednesday, December 2 Scruton, *The Meaning of Conservatism*, p. 38-63

Friday, December 4 Scruton, *The Meaning of Conservatism*, p. 64-86, 174-181

Final Exam:

Thursday, December 10 FINAL EXAM (12:30 – 2:30)