GOVT / PHIL 206A WI: Political Theory
Spring 2014
Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays 9:20-10:20 A.M.
Hepburn Hall Room 011

Professor: Christopher D. Buck
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Office Location: Hepburn Hall Room 213
Office Hours: M/W 3:30-5 P.M.
and by appointment

Course Description:
A study of the answers that philosophers from Plato to Marx have given to the question, “How should political life be organized?” This question leads us to consider the related problems of justice, power, equality, freedom and human nature. The course also includes discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of liberal democracy.

Learning Objectives:

• Introduce students to key concepts in political theory
• Teach students how to engage in close readings of challenging texts
• Encourage students to think critically about the arguments made by political theorists
• Assist students in improving their written communication skills
• Enable students to formulate their own answers to the enduring questions of political theory
Course Requirements:

Attendance: You are expected to attend each class session and arrive on time. If you miss a class session, then your final grade will be penalized .1 points (on a 4 point scale). This penalty will be waived, however, if you write an adequate 1-page (300-500 words) response to the assigned reading for the class session you missed and submit this response by the next class session. Guidelines for reading responses can be found in the “Handouts” section of the Sakai site. Missing class and showing up late to class sessions will have a negative impact on your participation grade.

Class Preparation (15%): You are expected to read all of the materials assigned for this course. To assist you in reading these challenging texts, I will post study questions for each reading assignment on the “Study Questions” section of the Sakai course site.

Studying political theory can be an intrinsically valuable activity, but there will also be external incentives for reading the assigned texts before each class session in the form of reading quizzes throughout the semester. In addition, you will need to post one brief (3-5 sentences long) reaction to a puzzling passage from each of the assigned books (8 reactions over the course of the semester) that explains why you found the selected passage confusing to the “Puzzling Passages Forums” on the Sakai site. These posts also enable me to tailor class sessions to your specific concerns. Your reaction should do the following:

1) Quote or paraphrase a specific passage you find puzzling and provide a page citation.
2) Explain why you find the passage puzzling.
3) Offer an interpretation of the passage that attempts to make sense of it.

Class Participation (10%): I intend to devote a significant portion of class time to discussing the assigned texts, and expect active participation from all students. This includes listening attentively to other students when they are speaking.

Please bring the assigned editions of the required texts to class and be sure to turn off and stow all electronic devices before the beginning of each class session.

Papers (10%, 25%, 25%, 15%): You will be responsible for writing four papers (1 paper 2-3 pages long and 3 papers 5-6 pages long) over the course of the semester. Since this is a writing intensive course, you will be required to revise the second and third papers. In all of these papers you are expected to draw on the course readings to make an argument in response to a question. These questions will be handed out at least one week in advance of the paper deadlines. In order to receive a passing grade in the course, you must submit all four papers.

Your papers should be typed using a standard 12-point font (such as Cambria or Times New Roman). The body should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins all around. Please don’t forget to use page numbers.

Late papers will be penalized .25 grade points (on a 4 point scale) per day late.
**Accommodations:**

I am more than happy to grant accommodations to students with documented special needs. Please provide me with a note from John Meagher, the Director of the Disability and Accessibility Services Office, at the beginning of the semester.

**Academic Dishonesty:**

The following statement is taken from the Academic Honor Council Constitution. The complete version of the Constitution can be found at the following address: [http://www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academic_honor_policy.pdf](http://www.stlawu.edu/acadaffairs/academic_honor_policy.pdf)

1. It is assumed that all work is done by the student unless the instructor gives specific permission for collaboration.
2. Dishonesty in writing assignments consists of handing in or presenting as original work which is not original, where originality is required.

The following constitute examples of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism: Presenting as one’s own work the work of another person—words, ideas, data, evidence, thoughts, information, organizing principles, or style of presentation—without proper attribution. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing or summarizing without acknowledgment by quotation marks, footnotes, endnotes, or other indices of reference (cf. Joseph F. Trimmer, A Guide to MLA Documentation).
2. Supplying information to another student knowing that such information will be used in a dishonest way.
3. Submission of or presentation of work (papers, journal abstracts, oral presentations, etc.) which has received credit in a previous course to satisfy the requirement(s) of a second course without the knowledge and permission of the instructor/supervisor/mentor of the second course.
4. Knowingly making false statements in support of requests for special consideration or special timing in the fulfillment of course requirements.

Claims of ignorance and academic or personal pressure are unacceptable as excuses for academic dishonesty. Students must learn what constitutes one's own work and how the work of others must be acknowledged. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty by the Academic Honor Council may have a letter placed in his or her permanent file.

**Responsibilities of Faculty:**

If the instructor believes a student knowingly represented the work of others as her or his own, and in this way was intentionally dishonest, then the instructor must treat the case as an instance of cheating. In this and all other instances of academic dishonesty, intentional or unintentional, the instructor may choose to assess what s/he deems to be appropriate penalties and inform the student involved that s/he has the right to appeal the case to the Academic Honor Council. The instructor is required to file a report with the Dean of Academic Affairs. This letter will become part of the student’s internal file, and may be shared externally at the discretion of the Dean of Academic Affairs.
STUDENTS FOUND GUILTY OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY ON AN ASSIGNMENT WILL RECEIVE NO CREDIT FOR THE ASSIGNMENT.

Required Texts (Available for purchase at the Brewer Bookstore and on reserve at ODY):

ISBN: 0872201368
LC Call Number: JC71.P35 1992b

ISBN: 0199538735
LC Call Number: JC71.A41 B3 2009

ISBN: 0226500446
LC Call Number: JC143.M38 1998

ISBN: 0872201775
LC Call Number: JC153.H65 1994

ISBN: 0915144867
LC Call Number: JC153.L85 1980

ISBN: 0872201503
LC Call Number: JC179.R813

ISBN: 9780141441474
LC Call Number: JC585.M762 2006

ISBN: 039309040x
LC Call Number: HX39.5.M374 1978

Course Schedule:

Monday, January 20: Introduction
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., “I Have a Dream” Speech

I. ANCIENT POLITICAL THOUGHT

Wednesday, January 22: Defining Justice
Course Syllabus
Article I of the Academic Honor Council Constitution (available in the “Assignments” section of Sakai)
Plato, Republic, Book I, pp. 2-31

***AHC CONSTITUTION MUST BE SIGNED ONLINE BY FRIDAY, JANUARY 24***

Friday, January 24: The Challenge Posed to Socrates, the Ideal City, and the Myth of the Metals
Plato, Republic, Book II and an excerpt from Book III, pp. 33-59, 88-93
Monday, January 27: The Happiness of the Guardians and Justice in the City and the Soul
Plato, Republic, Book IV, pp. 95-121

Wednesday, January 29: Socrates’ Three Shocking Proposals
Plato, Republic, Book V, pp. 122-156

Friday, January 31: The Allegory of the Cave
Plato, Republic, excerpt from Book VII, pp. 186-193
W.E.B. Du Bois, “Of the Coming of John” (on Sakai)

Monday, February 3: The Corruption of the Ideal City and Soul
Plato, Republic, Book VIII, pp. 213-240

Wednesday, February 5: The Wretched Tyrant and Socrates’ Response to the Challenge
Plato, Republic, Book IX, pp. 241-265

***FIRST PAPER IS DUE THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 6***

Friday, February 7: NO CLASS (Prof. Buck will be attending a conference)

Monday, February 10: The Household and the Political Association
Aristotle, Politics, Book I, Chapters 1-7 and 12-13, pp. 1-20, 33-37

Wednesday, February 12: Aristotle’s Critique of the Republic and His Theory of Citizenship
Aristotle, Politics, Book II, Chapters 1-5 and 7, Book III Chapters 1-5, pp. 38-51, 56-61, 84-97

Friday, February 14: Aristotle’s Classification of Constitutions and His Account of Justice
Aristotle, Politics, Book III, Chapters 6-18, pp. 97-132

Monday, February 17: Actually Existing Constitutions
Aristotle, Politics, Book IV, Chapters 1-13, pp. 133-165

Wednesday, February 19: Causes of Conflict and Stability, Political Ideals, and Education

II. THE SHIFT FROM ANCIENT TO MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

Friday, February 21: The Acquisition of Principalities
Machiavelli, The Prince, Dedicatory Letter, and Chapters I-VI, pp. 3-25

Monday, February 24: Spectacular Violence and Learning Not To Be Good
Machiavelli, The Prince, Chapters VII-XVIII, pp. 25-71

Wednesday, February 26: Fortune and Virtue, the Prince and the People
Machiavelli, The Prince, Chapters XIX-XXVI, pp. 71-105
Friday, February 28: Machiavelli on Republics
Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, Book I Chapters 2-10 & 57-58 (on Sakai)

***FIRST VERSION OF SECOND PAPER IS DUE MONDAY, MARCH 3***

III. MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT AND SOCIAL CONTRACT THEORY

Monday, March 3: Speech and the Passions

Wednesday, March 5: PEER REVIEW SESSION

Friday, March 7: Power and the State of War

Monday, March 10 to Friday, March 14: SPRING BREAK!!!

Monday, March 17: Exiting the State of War and the Rights of the Sovereign

Wednesday, March 19: Liberty and Authority

Friday, March 21: The Sovereign’s Use of Civil Religion

Monday, March 24: The State of Nature Revisited
Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Preface and Chapters I-IV, pp. 5-18

***FINAL VERSION OF SECOND PAPER IS DUE WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26 ***

Wednesday, March 26: Locke’s Theory of Property and Paternal Power

Friday, March 28: The Origins, Ends, and Organization of Political Society

Monday, March 31: The Uses, Abuses, and Dissolution of Governmental Power

Wednesday, April 2: The Republic of Geneva and Two Kinds of Inequality

Friday, April 4: Back to the State of Nature
Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part One, pp. 18-44

Monday, April 7: Humanity’s Fall From Grace
Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part Two, pp. 44-71
IV. RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY

Wednesday, April 9: The Harm Principle
Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-21

Friday, April 11: Liberty of Thought and Discussion

Monday, April 14: PEER REVIEW SESSION

Wednesday, April 16: NO CLASS (Prof. Buck will be attending a conference)

Friday, April 18: NO CLASS (Prof. Buck will be attending a conference)

Monday, April 21: Individuality and the Limit of Society’s Authority
Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters 3 and 4, pp. 64-105

Wednesday, April 23: Applying the Harm Principle

***FINAL VERSION OF THIRD PAPER IS DUE THURSDAY, APRIL 24***

Friday, April 25: Political and Human Emancipation

Monday, April 28: Alienated Labor
Marx, Excerpts from “1844 Manuscripts,” *Marx/Engels Reader*, pp. 70-93

Wednesday, April 30: Historical Materialism

Friday, May 2: The Aims of the Communist Party and Glimpses of a Post-Capitalist Future

***FOURTH PAPER IS DUE FRIDAY, MAY 9***