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Hours: by appointment

Spring 2008

NPHI 2125

Modern Political Philosophy

65 Fifth Avenue, Room 306, Thursdays 4:00 to 5:50

Course Description

This is an introduction to theories that have shaped our thinking in modern liberal societies about the nature of power, authority, and justice. We will examine the meanings and moral foundations of rights; the idea of a social contract; state sovereignty and individual autonomy; competing conceptions of human nature; the role of reason, nature, and natural law in politics; the concepts of justice, liberty, equality, and democracy; and the emerging tensions between the nation-state and the forces of globalization. Students engage in critical analysis of primary texts by Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Marx, Arendt, and other selected theorists. The relevance of these thinkers and their theories to contemporary social and political issues is a theme throughout.

Assignments and Evaluation

There will be four writing assignments in this course. Three of the papers will be in response to one of a list of questions that I will give out in advance. These assignments will be 1200-1800 words in length, they will each be counted as 30% of your grade, and they will be due at various points throughout the semester. Your lowest grade of the three will be dropped; however, *you are still required to turn in and pass all assigned papers*. If you fail to turn in a paper, you forfeit your right to have your lowest grade dropped, and the missing paper will be averaged into your grade as a zero.¹

The final paper will ask you to write on some topic that is addressed within the course, and will be 2500-3500 words in length. For this assignment, you will be asked to compare one of the theorists we have covered in class to a major theorist we have not covered (subject to instructor's approval). The final paper will be counted as 40% of your grade, and *cannot* be used as a "drop" grade.

All papers must be double-spaced, in 12-point type, with one-inch margins, using a normal-sized font.

Up to 5 additional points may be awarded based on active and thoughtful class participation. Altogether, you can earn a maximum of *105 points*.

The grading scale will be as follows:

94+	A	90-93	A-	87-89	B+
83-86	B	80-82	B-	77-79	C+
73-76	C	70-72	C-	60-69	D

¹ Should you fail to turn in one or more papers, the weights of your grades will be altered in the following way: each short response paper will be weighted at 20% instead of 30%; your final paper will be weighted the same, at 40%.

Late Papers and Incompletes

Late papers will be penalized 1 point for each day past the assigned deadline that it is not turned in (up to a maximum of 10 points). *Extensions will not be given* except in cases of extreme emergency. Late final papers will not be accepted unless the student requests and is assigned an “incomplete” for the course.

Grades of “incomplete” will be assigned at the instructor’s discretion. If the instructor is inclined to offer an incomplete, then the student has a maximum of 4 weeks after the last day of class to complete and submit to the instructor the outstanding work and/or the work agreed upon by the instructor and student. An incomplete becomes an “Unofficial Withdrawal and Failure” (WF) if the work is not submitted in a timely fashion.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and to arrive on time. Two late arrivals will be counted as an absence. More than two unexcused absences may adversely affect your final grade. The instructor is also required to notify the department of any student who misses two consecutive classes.

Plagiarism

Academic honesty and familiarity with proper forms of citation and attribution are expected of all students. The New School adheres to a Zero Tolerance Policy regarding plagiarism. Plagiarism will result in an “F” in the course at the discretion of the instructor and in accordance with the University's policy on plagiarism (see Student Handbook). Students should purchase *A Writer's Reference* by Diana Hacker, available at most book stores, for information on proper citation format.

Students with Disabilities

In keeping with the University's policy of providing equal access for students with disabilities, any student with a disability who needs academic accommodations should contact the office of Student Disability Services. All conversations will be kept confidential. Students requesting any accommodations will also need to meet with Jason Luchs in the office of Student Disability Services, who will conduct an intake, and if appropriate, provide an academic accommodation notification letter. Mr. Luchs's office is located at 79 5th Avenue on the 5th floor. His direct line is (212) 229-5626 x3135. You may also access more information through the University's web site.

Readings

The following six books are required for the course, and will be available for purchase at Barnes and Noble on Fifth Avenue and 18th Street:

- Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*, edited by Edwin Curley. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1994.
- John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*, edited by C.B. Macpherson. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1980.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *Basic Political Writings*, translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.

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- Immanuel Kant. *Perpetual Peace, and Other Writings*, translated by Ted Humphrey. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1983.
- Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*, edited by Lawrence H. Simon. Hackett Publishing Company, 1994.
- Susan Moller Okin et al. *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?*, edited by Joshua Cohen, Matthew Howard, and Martha C. Nussbaum. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999.

(NOTE: Several of the above books are available in several editions. *When you purchase your books, please make sure it is the edition listed on the syllabus.* It will be much harder to follow the readings in class if everyone has a different version with different page numbers. However, if you already own an edition of any of these books, you need not purchase a new one.)

There will also be a course packet, which will be available at East Side Copy on West 13th Street between Fifth Avenue and University Place.

Finally, copies of all course material will be on reserve in the library. Also on reserve will be various recommended readings, which you will be asked to use in your papers.

Week-by-Week

January 24: Introduction

January 31: Hobbes

Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, “The New Science”

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, introduction and chapters 4 (§§12-13), 5, 6 (§§1-7), 7, 10 (§§1-18), 11, 13, 14, 15 (§§1-3 and the rest if you have time), 16 (§§13-14) (*recommended: the remainders of the above chapters*)

⌘ Further Reading:

Stephen Toulmin, *Cosmopolis: The Hidden Agenda of Modernity*, pp. 45-56, 69-80 (read the entire chapter if you have time) (reserve reader)

J.B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy*, pp. 58-100 (reserve reader)

Reinhard Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, introduction and chapter 1 (book on reserve)

Timothy R. Quigley, “Philosophical Background to the Modern World” (available online at <http://homepage.newschool.edu/~quigley/mpp/spring06/syllabus.html>)

February 7: Hobbes (cont’d)

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chapters 17-19, 21, 29, 31 (§§11-12) (*recommended: chapters 24, 28, 30-31*)

⌘ Further Reading:

Sheldon Wolin, *Politics and Vision*, chapter 4 (reserve reader)

William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity*, chapter 2 (book on reserve)

Reinhard Koselleck, *Critique and Crisis*, chapter 2 (book on reserve)

February 14: Locke

John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chapters 1-7

⌘ Further Reading:

Jeremy Waldron, "John Locke: Social Contract versus Political Anthropology" (reserve reader)

Paper One Due: Tuesday, February 19 at 6pm

February 21: Locke

John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chapters 8 (§§95-99, 113-122), 9, 11, 15, 18, 19 (§§211-232, 239-243)

⌘ Further Reading:

Richard Ashcraft, "Locke's Political Philosophy" (reserve reader)

February 28: Rousseau

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (skip the letter; begin on page 33)

⌘ Further Reading:

Jeremy Jennings, "Rousseau: Social Contract and the Leviathan" (reserve reader)

William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity*, chapter 3 (book on reserve)

J.B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy*, chapter 21 (reserve reader)

March 6: Rousseau (cont'd)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Bks. I-II (all), Bk. III (chs. 1, 10-15), Bk. IV (ch. 1)

⌘ Further Reading:

William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity*, chapter 3 (book on reserve)

J.B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy*, chapter 21 (reserve reader)

March 13: Kant

Immanuel Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?"

Immanuel Kant, "Toward Perpetual Peace"

⌘ Further Reading:

Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant's Theory of Peace" (reserve reader)

Onora O'Neill, "The Public Use of Reason" (reserve reader)

Elisabeth Ellis, *Kant's Politics*, chapters 1 and 3 (book on reserve)

SPRING BREAK: No class on March 20

Paper Two Due: Monday, March 24 at 6pm

March 27: Marx and Engels

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology* (recommended: “Theses on Feuerbach”)

⌘ Further Reading:

Bruce Haddock, “Hegel’s Critique of the Theory of the Social Contract” (reserve reader)

Lawrence Wilde, “Marx against the Social Contract” (reserve reader)

William Connolly, *Political Theory and Modernity*, “Second Interlude” (book on reserve)

April 3: Marx and Engels (cont’d)

Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

⌘ Further Reading:

Terrell Carver, editor, *The Cambridge Companion to Marx* (book on reserve)

April 10: Fanon

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, “Concerning Violence”

Paper Three Due: Monday, April 14 at 6pm

April 17: Arendt

Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, “The Decline of the Nation-State and the End of the Rights of Man”

April 24: The Public Sphere

Jürgen Habermas, “The Public Sphere”

Nancy Fraser, “Rethinking the Public Sphere”

James Bohman, “The Public Spheres of the World Citizen”

May 1: Multiculturalism

Susan Moller Okin et al, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?*

May 8: Benhabib

Seyla Benhabib, “The Philosophical Foundations of Cosmopolitan Norms”

Seyla Benhabib, “Democratic Iterations: The Local, the National, and the Global” in Seyla Benhabib et al, *Another Cosmopolitanism*

Final Paper Due: Monday, May 12 at 6pm