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GOVT 111: Political Thought II
Modern Political Thought
Tues./Thurs., 3:00-4:15, Amador 260

Description and Goals

This course examines selected authors and themes in Western political thought from the sixteenth through the nineteenth century. This period saw the emergence of a self-consciously “modern” worldview, centered around ideals of individual fulfillment, religious freedom, and economic, intellectual, and technological progress. It was also characterized by the disintegration of traditional communities, the exploitation of industrial workers, and for many, a sense of alienation and loss. Thinkers writing during this time developed ideas about individual rights, political obligation, popular sovereignty, private property, religious freedom, and social equality, and the nation state that are still prevalent today. We will read key works by six influential authors: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, and Mill. There will also be a companion textbook that provides introductions, interpretative essays, and study questions on each author. Students who successfully complete this course will have: 1) learned about the value, purpose, and limits of political theory; 2) actively engaged the main ideas of each of the selected authors; 3) improved their capacity to analyze and evaluate difficult texts in both writing and discussion.

Required Texts

The following required texts have been ordered through the campus bookstore. You may buy your books elsewhere, but it is *very important that you have the editions listed below and bring them to each class*, as we will often look up specific passages during class discussions. Additional required texts will be available on the course WebCT site.

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated, with introduction by David Wootton, Hackett, 1995.
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck, 2nd ed. Cambridge UP, 1996.
- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Hackett, 1980.
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*, trans. Donald A. Cress. Hackett, 1987.
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, ed. Phil Gasper. Haymarket Books, 2005.
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays*, ed. John Gray. Oxford UP, 1991.

Requirements and Grading

1) Attendance and Participation (10%). Much of the reading assigned in this course is quite difficult, so you will need to take an active approach to understanding the texts. Students are expected to attend class having read (and sometimes re-read) *all* of the assigned reading, prepared to ask questions and engage in discussion. There will be occasional in-class exercises, worksheets, and group projects that will contribute to your grade. I will also take attendance on randomly selected days throughout the semester. You may miss two classes without penalty. Any additional absences require a serious and appropriately documented excuse.

2) Seven Response Papers (20%): To facilitate discussion, students should prepare for class by writing brief responses to at least three of the study questions distributed in class prior to each week's reading. You are required to submit seven such Response Papers during the course of the semester. Response Papers will be graded on a ten-point scale. You may choose any seven weeks to submit a paper, but you may submit only one paper per week (either Tues. or Thurs.). *Response papers may only be submitted in class, and only during the week in which we discuss the reading they address.* Response papers should: (a) concisely and thoughtfully answer three or more study questions of your choice, and (b) provide at least one quote from the relevant primary text(s) to substantiate one or more of your answers. Response papers must be typed, single-spaced, with standard margins and 12-point font. No extra credit papers will be accepted.

3) One analytical essay (25% paper + 5% rough draft and peer review = 30%). Students will be asked to draw on the course texts to analyze one of the key issues of the course in an essay of approximately 7 pages. A rough draft of at least 5 pages is due April 26. Drafts will be collected and distributed back to the class on the same day for in-class peer review—that is, we will devote part of class to students reading and commenting on each other's papers. Both drafts and peer review comments will be graded pass/fail. *If you do not complete a rough draft by the due date, you cannot participate in the peer review process and you will not receive credit for the draft or peer review.* Essay topics, grading criteria, and guidelines for peer review will be distributed in class. Final essays are due May 3. After I grade and return the essay, you may submit a rewrite, in which case your final essay grade will be the average of the original and the rewrite. Rewrites must be submitted with the original, and they must be completed no later than the day of the final exam. I strongly encourage you to meet with me during office hours to discuss your rough draft and/or your final essay. Late final essays will be penalized by 5% for each day they are late.

4) Two exams (20% each= 40%). The exams will be in-class, closed-book, non-cumulative. Each of the exams will ask you to write short answers to questions derived both from the study questions and from class lectures and discussions. There will be no additional study guide beyond the study questions.

Grades and late assignments: Final grades will be calculated according to the traditional scale: A > 93%...A- > 90%...B+ > 88%...B > 83%...etc. Students who have a serious and appropriately documented excuse to miss a class, paper due date, or exam must contact me beforehand or immediately afterward. *There will be no extra credit assignments.*

Additional Matters

Your feedback on the course schedule, classroom discussions, and any other aspect of the course is always welcome. *If you are having trouble with any aspect of the course, or if you would just like to talk over the material, I strongly encourage you to either stop by during my office hours or make an appointment to see me.* If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to the CSUS Office of Services to Students with Disabilities (SSWD), Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester.

Finally, it should go without saying that all the work you submit for this class must be your own. If you are not sure what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me or consult the library plagiarism information website at <http://library.csus.edu/content2.asp?pageID=353>. Plagiarism will be punished in proportion to the severity of the case, but any plagiarism is likely to result in a failing grade for the course and may lead to additional administrative penalties, including expulsion from the University.

Tentative Course Schedule

Assignments marked with an asterisk (*) will be available on the course WebCT site.

Jan. 30 **Introduction: Themes in Modern Political Theory**

MACHIAVELLI

Virtù, Cruelty, and Human Nature

Feb. 1 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chap. 1-11.

Honesty, Deceit, and Fortune

Feb. 6 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chap. 12-26.

Feb. 8 ...previous class continued

HOBBS

Materialism, Power, and Human Nature

Feb. 13 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Dedication, Intro., Chap. I-VII, X-XI

Feb. 15 ...previous class continued

The State of Nature and Natural Law

Feb. 20 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chap. XIII-XV.

Feb. 22 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chap. XVI-XXI.

Authorization, Sovereignty, and the Social Contract

Feb. 27 *Skinner, "Hobbes and the Purely Artificial Person of the State"

Mar. 1 ...previous class continued

LOCKE

The State of Nature and the Social Contract

Mar. 6 Locke, *Second Treatise*, Chap. I-IV, VI-IX.

Mar. 8 *Hume, "Of the Original Contract"

Contract, Consent, and Resistance

Mar. 13 Locke, *Second Treatise*, Chap. X-IXX.

Mar. 15 ...previous class continued

Mar. 20 Locke, *Second Treatise*, Chap. V.

*Waldron, "Two Worries about Mixing One's Labor"

*Tavani, "Locke, Intellectual Property Rights, and the Information Commons"

Mar. 22 MIDTERM EXAM

Spring Break

ROUSSEAU

Apr. 3 Rousseau, *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*, entire.

Apr. 5 ...previous class continued

The General Will

Apr. 10 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Bk. I-II.

Apr. 12 *Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty"

Government, Persuasion, and Coercion

- Apr. 17 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Bk. III.
Apr. 19 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Bk. IV, chap. 1-3, 8.

MARX

- Apr. 24 Editor's Introduction in *The Communist Manifesto*, ed. Gasper, pp. 9-31
Marx, *Communist Manifesto*, entire, pp. 37-89.
Apr. 26 ESSAY ROUGH DRAFT DUE FOR IN-CLASS PEER REVIEW
May 1 Marx, on alienation and additional writings, in *Communist Manifesto*, ed. Gasper,
pp. 149-163.
May 3 FINAL ESSAYS DUE

MILL

Utilitarianism, Free Expression, and the Harm Principle

- May 8 Mill, *On Liberty*, Chap. 1-3.
May 10 *Dworkin, "Paternalism"

Social Authority and Paternalism

- May 15 Mill, *On Liberty*, Chap. 4-5.
May 17 ...previous class continued, and review for exam.
May 22 FINAL EXAM: 3:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.