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Student Hours: MW 1:30–2:45 PM,
and by appointment
Campus Office: Tahoe 3124

POLS 111: Political Thought II

Modern Political Thought

Section 02: MW 5:30–6:45 PM, Alpine Hall 212

Section 03: MW 3:00–4:15 PM, Alpine Hall 212

Spring 2023

Catalog description

History of political theory, covering some important thinkers and topics from the Early Modern period to the early 20th century.

Course description

This course examines selected authors and themes in Western political thought from the seventeenth century through the nineteenth century. Writers during this period witnessed the emergence of a self-consciously modern worldview, centered around ideals of individual fulfillment, religious freedom, and economic, intellectual, and technological progress. They saw the disintegration of traditional communities, the exploitation of industrial workers, and the rise of modern slavery and colonialism. They argued over topics that remain important today, including individual rights, political obligation, popular sovereignty, private property, religious freedom, social equality, and the nation state. And their writings were shaped by questions of race, class, and gender that are still with us. As in most courses on modern political thought, we will read some famous works by canonical authors, such as Thomas Hobbes and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Unlike many such courses, we will also read some lesser-known works by these authors in which they discuss questions of race, class, gender. We will also read texts by authors often excluded from the political theory canon, such as Mary Wollstonecraft and Sojourner Truth. Throughout the semester, we will seek to understand the course authors in terms of their historical context. We will examine how they responded to issues of their time such as the English Civil War, the French Revolution, the Atlantic slave trade, and the rise of industrial capitalism. Most importantly, we will continually ask how these authors might help us to better understand and cope with political issues that people face today.

This course is organized partly by authors and partly by themes. It is divided into four sections: 1) Liberty and Government; 2) Patriarchy; 3) Racism, Slavery, Colonialism; 4) Capitalism. In the first section, we'll read Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and John Stuart Mill. In the next three sections, we'll read some additional material by those same authors, and we'll also read several additional authors: Olympe de Gouges, Edmund Burke, Mary Wollstonecraft, Sojourner Truth, Immanuel Kant, Thomas Jefferson, Frederick Douglass, Adam Smith, and Karl Marx.

Learning objectives

- Knowledge: You know and remember basic facts about the course authors, their ideas, and their historical contexts.
- Understanding: You can read, interpret, and explain the course texts.
- Analysis: You can differentiate and compare course ideas and authors.
- Application: You can apply the course ideas and authors to contemporary political issues.
- Evaluation and Critique: You can critically assess the course ideas and authors, and you can formulate an argument of your own about them.

How to Contact Me

I'm happy to talk with you outside of class. Please see me after class or come to my student hours listed at the top of the syllabus. You can just stop by my office, no appointment needed! If you cannot make it during my scheduled student hours, email me with a few time slots (day and time) that would fit your schedule. If you'd like to meet on Zoom, click on this link for my appointment page: <https://calendly.com/mark-brown-sac-state/student-hours>. You can also email me with the Canvas messaging system or at mark.brown@csus.edu. I will usually reply to emails on the same day, but generally not before 9:00 AM or after 5:00 PM. I may not reply during the weekend.

Most importantly, if you are ever having trouble with any aspect of the course, or if you would just like to talk over the material, please let me know. Don't wait until the end of the semester!

Course Modality and Late Assignments

We will use the course management system Canvas, which you can find on your [My Sac State](#) page, but this is an in-person course. Our course meetings will not be recorded, and your grade will depend in part on regular in-person attendance and participation (see below).

If you cannot attend class for one of the exams, please let me know as early as possible. If there are serious factors beyond your control, I will be glad to arrange alternative deadlines for you. Late assignments will usually receive a grade penalty of 1/3 letter grade per day, up to a maximum of two letter grades. It's much better to submit work late than not at all. Unless approved by me in advanced, any assignments not submitted by the last day of regular classes will receive a failing grade.

In calculating your workload for the semester, please consider that this course requires at least six hours per week outside of class. (See the Sacramento State [Credit Hour Policy](#)).

Non-Graded Activities

Weekly study questions: Study questions for each week are on Canvas. They are intended to focus your attention on key points in the reading. *I recommend printing out the study questions and using them to guide your reading.*

Reading, lecture, discussion. The more actively engaged you are in this course, the more you'll learn, and the livelier and more enjoyable it will be for everyone. To ensure that everyone feels welcome in this course, we will strive to create an inclusive classroom environment that facilitates robust discussion and disagreement in a supportive context of mutual respect. In addition to regular attendance and participation, this course requires a lot of reading, some of it quite difficult, so be sure to set aside sufficient time to complete the reading *before* we're scheduled to discuss it in class. While you're reading, write down specific questions, including basic questions of understanding, and then ask your questions during class. Your questions might be about a difficult passage in the reading, a point from the study questions, or how the reading relates to current events.

Graded Activities

Attendance and participation (10 percent): This course requires active engagement. I expect students to arrive on time and stay for the entire class. Attending class will also help you to do well on the quizzes, exams, and other assignments. More fundamentally, attending class will give you a chance to both teach and learn from your fellow students. Repeated tardiness will affect your grade, but if you arrive late

please enter quietly and take a seat. If you ever need to leave early, please let me know before class and sit near the door.

You will receive two participation grades during the semester; the average will be your final participation grade. To accommodate diverse students, participation grades will be based on a variety of indicators, including the extent to which students: a) attend class regularly and on time, prepared to discuss the course material; b) offer thoughtful questions or comments about the assigned readings; c) actively participate in class discussion, group work, writing exercises, and other activities during class.

You may miss three classes without penalty. If you feel ill, please don't come to class. I will excuse absences for serious and non-work-related reasons (e.g., illness, family emergency, military duty, jury duty, religious holiday) and only with documentation. Please complete the Excused Absence Request page, which you can get from me in class or in the "Resources" module on Canvas. When you return to class, please also see me in person to discuss what you missed.

Weekly in-class quizzes (10 percent): Quizzes will be held on 14 weeks during the semester, usually on Wednesdays, as posted on Canvas. They will be open-book, pass/fail, and they will be graded collaboratively in class. They will include both factual and interpretive questions about the reading and lectures since the last quiz. The focus will be on the main ideas, not minor details. To do well on the quizzes you should complete the reading, review the study questions, ask questions in class, and take good notes. Missed quizzes cannot be made up, but I will drop your lowest three scores. Many of the quiz questions will reappear on the exams.

Reflective essay (20 percent): The essay assignment will give you a chance to explore a particular author or idea from the course. A draft will be due in Week 10, with the final essay due in Week 11. An assignment page will be posted on Canvas, and details will be discussed in class.

In-Class Midterm (30 percent) and Final Exam (30 percent): The exams will ask you to demonstrate a clear understanding of the main ideas from the course readings, lectures, and videos. The midterm exam will cover the first half of the course; the final exam will cover the entire course. They will include multiple-choice questions, short-answer questions, and an essay question. You will need a blue book (any size) and a Scantron form no. 882-E. The exams will be closed-book, but you may bring one single sheet of 8.5" x 11" paper with notes on both sides, in your own handwriting. You must then submit the notes with your exam. The questions will be adapted from the quizzes and study questions.

Course Grades

Final letter grades for the course will be calculated as follows: A (100% to 94.0%), A- (<94.0% to 90.0%), B+ (< 90.0% to 87.0%), B (< 87.0% to 84.0%), B- (< 84.0 % to 80.0%), C+ (< 80.0% to 77.0%), C (< 77.0% to 74.0%), C- (<74.0% to 70.0%), D+ (<70.0% to 67.0%), D (<67.0% to 64.0%), D- (64.0% to 60.0%), F (<60.0%).

Academic Honesty, Plagiarism, Recordings

Please review the University's [Academic Honesty Policy](#). Plagiarism may be defined simply as presenting someone else's work – or some *thing's* work, in the case of ChatGPT and other AI tools – as though it were your own. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity and university policy. Plagiarism will be punished in proportion to the severity of the case, but it is likely to result in a failing grade for the course. It may also lead to additional penalties, including expulsion from the University. If you are not sure what plagiarism is, please ask me or consult the [library plagiarism website](#).

Audio or video recordings of lectures or class discussions are not allowed without the instructor's permission. Distribution of recorded course lectures to anyone not enrolled in the course is not allowed without the instructor's permission.

Course Drops

Students can drop the course online during the first two weeks. The last day to drop with approval of both the instructor and department chair is the census date of February 17. Further information on drops and withdrawals is [available here](#).

Student Advising

To meet with a faculty or peer advisor, see the [political science department's advising page](#). To review political science major requirements, see the [Political Science Major Advising Form](#). For GE advising and any questions that go beyond the political science major, see the [SSIS Student Success Center](#).

Student Health & Support Services

[Services to Students with Disability \(SSWD\)](#): Sacramento State is committed to ensuring an accessible learning environment where course or instructional content are usable by all students and faculty. If you believe that you require disability-related academic adjustments for this class, please immediately contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) to discuss eligibility. A current accommodation letter from SSWD is required before any modifications, above and beyond what is otherwise available for all other students in this class will be provided.

[Student Health and Counseling Services](#): Your physical and mental health are important to your success as a college student. Student Health and Counseling Services (SHCS) in The WELL offers medical, counseling, and wellness services to help you get and stay healthy during your time at Sac State. SHCS offers: Primary Care medical services, including sexual and reproductive healthcare, transgender care, and immunizations; urgent care for acute illness, injuries, and urgent counseling needs; pharmacy for prescriptions and over-the-counter products; mental health counseling, including individual sessions, group counseling, support groups, mindfulness training, and peer counseling; athletic training for sports injury rehabilitation; wellness services, including nutrition counseling, peer-led health education and wellness workshops, and free safer sex supplies; violence and sexual assault support services. Most services are covered by the Health Services fee and available at no additional cost.

[Crisis Assistance & Resource Education Support \(CARES\)](#): If you are experiencing challenges with food, housing, financial or other unique circumstances that are impacting your education, help is just a phone call or email away. The CARES office provides case management support for any enrolled student.

[Title IX](#): The University requires faculty and staff to report any personal disclosures of sexual misconduct including rape, dating/domestic violence and stalking to the Title IX Coordinator. Students who do not wish to report their experience to me or the Title IX Coordinator may speak to someone confidentially by contacting Student Health and Counseling Services.

University Information and Policies

- [Drop and Withdrawal Policy](#)
- [Grading Policy](#)
- [Sacramento State Academic calendar](#)

- [Hornet Honor Code](#)
- [Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

Campus Resources

- [Odyssey Mentoring Program](#)
- [Peer and Academic Resource Center](#)
- [Academic Advising](#)
- [Support Centers and Programs](#)
- [Reading & Writing Center](#)
- [University Library](#)

Technical Assistance

- [Information Resources and Technology \(IRT\)](#)
- [Laptop Checkout](#)
- [Zoom for Students](#)
- [Canvas for Students](#)
- [Schedule a Consultation](#) for assistance with Canvas and other academic technologies
- [Submit a Ticket](#) to report a problem to Information Resources and Technology Support

Course Schedule. Most of the required course texts are in *The Broadview Anthology*. All other required texts are available on Canvas.

	1. Why and How to Study the History of Political Thought
Week 1 Jan. 23/25	David Miller, "Why Do We Need Political Philosophy?" in <i>Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction</i> (2003), excerpt, pp. 1-15. James Baldwin, "Why I Stopped Hating Shakespeare," in <i>The Cross of Redemption: Uncollected Writings</i> (New York: Vintage, 1964/2010), pp. 65-69. <u>Joshua Landy, "Should We Abandon the Cannon?" <i>Philosophy Talk</i>, August 12, 2019.</u>
	2. Liberty and Government
Week 2 Jan. 30/ Feb. 1	Thomas Hobbes Introduction to Hobbes in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 71-77. Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 77-78, 83-93, 105-112, 122-128. (Intro., chap. 11-14, 17-18, 21.)
Week 3 Feb. 6/8	John Locke Introduction to Locke in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 155-160. Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 160-166, 174-194, 202-206, 215-220, 224-225. (Preface, Chap. 1-3, 6-9, 14-15, 19 [par. 211-230, 240-242])
Week 4 Feb. 13/15	Jean-Jacques Rousseau Introduction to Rousseau, in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 275-279. Rousseau, <i>Social Contract</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 328-344, 349-351, 360-367, 378-383. (Bk. I; Bk. II, chap. 1-7, Bk. III, chap. 1, 10-18, Bk. IV, chap. 8.)

Week 5 Feb. 20/22	John Stuart Mill Introduction to Mill in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 560-566. Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , excerpts in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 566-591.
	3. Patriarchy
Week 6 Feb. 27 Mar. 1	Olympe de Gouges Olympe de Gouges, Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen, in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , 449-453. Joseph Zizek, "Justice and Gender in Revolution: Olympe de Gouges Speaks for Women," in <i>Feminist Moments: Reading Feminist Texts</i> , ed. Katherine Smits and Susan Bruce (Bloomsbury Academic, 2016), pp. 43-50. Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen (1789).
Week 7 Mar. 6/8	Edmund Burke and Mary Wollstonecraft Introduction to Burke in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 495-496. Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> and "On 'Geographical Morality,'" in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 497-501. Introduction to Wollstonecraft in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 454-457. Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 457-494.
Week 8 Mar. 13	Sojourner Truth Truth, "Ain' I a Woman?" in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 630-632. Videos of Truth's speech by Alice Walker (YouTube) and six Afro-Dutch women (Sojourner Truth Project) Nell Irvin Painter, "Sojourner Truth in Life and Memory: Writing the Biography of an American Exotic" <i>Gender & History</i> vol. 2 no. 1 (Spring 1990): 3-16.
Mar. 15	IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM
	4. Racism, Slavery, Colonialism
Week 9 Mar. 27/29	Locke and Slavery Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 167-168, 206-208, 211. [Chap. 4, 16 (par. 175-183, 196.)] Locke, "The Fundamental Constitutions of Carolina" (1669), sections 98, 101. William Uzgalis, "John Locke, Racism, Slavery, and Indian Lands," in <i>Oxford Handbook of Philosophy and Race</i> (2017).
Week 10 Apr. 3/5	Immanuel Kant and Thomas Jefferson Introduction to Kant in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 392-398. Kant, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 398-406. Kant, "On the Different Races of Human Beings" Jefferson, Declaration of Independence, in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 431-433. Jefferson, <i>Notes on the State of Virginia</i> , excerpts.

Week 11 Apr. 10/12	Frederick Douglass Douglass, "To My Old Master," "What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?"
	5. Capitalism
Week 12 Apr. 17/19	Locke and Rousseau on Property Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> , chap. 5 (par. 25-41, 47-51), in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 168-172, 173-174. Rousseau, <i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> , excerpts in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 284-294, 298-317.
Week 13 Apr. 24/26	Adam Smith Introduction to Smith in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , p. 384 Smith, <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> , in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 385-391.
Week 14 May 1/3	Karl Marx Introduction to Marx and Engels in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 648-657. Marx and Engels, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> , Part 1-2, 4, in <i>Broadview Anthology</i> , pp. 695-705, 710.
Week 15 May 8/10	Course Summary and Review
	IN-CLASS FINAL EXAM Section 02: Monday, May 15, 5:15pm - 7:15pm Section 03: Monday, May 15, 3:00pm - 5:00pm