

POLS 3000 – Introduction to Political Theory
Primarily Asynchronous Sessions
Monday-Friday 9:00-11:15 EDT (select sessions only)

Instructor

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Course Objective

This course is intended to be a broad introduction to the study of political philosophy, focusing heavily on the Western tradition. Its purpose is to explore various answers to a broad set of questions central to political theory. What is human nature? What purposes should states seek to achieve? How should states be structured? How should we conceive of the relationship between states and individuals? We will explore different ways of answering these questions through reading a collection of canonical political thinkers.

The course has the following objectives, which students will meet through preparation for class, written work, and online participation:

1. To read and analyze texts dealing with some of the most important problems and theories in political philosophy.
2. To explore and analyze how political theories are formulated.
3. To explore and analyze how different political theories relate to each other.
4. To explore and analyze the ways in which works of political philosophy may inform, illuminate, and enrich contemporary political discussions.

Texts

All texts are available as pdf's in the "Course Content" section on the class' eLC page.

Grading

This course will be graded on the following plus/minus grading scale.

A=94-100, A-=90-93, B+=87-89, B=83-86, B-=80-82, C+=77-79, C=73-76, C-=70-72, D= 60-69, F=<60

Course Requirements

Exams

There will be both a midterm and a final exam consisting of a 4-5 page (double spaced, 12 point font) response to your choice of sets of provided prompts. **Each will constitute 30% of the final grade.**

Papers

Discussion and analysis are important aspects of philosophy-based courses. To facilitate discussions and questions, each student is required to turn in **three 2-3 (double spaced, 12 point font) page papers covering works encountered in the course which will account for 30% of the total grade.** There are seven opportunities to write, and you may choose any three from Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx and Mill. The due dates for each are listed on the calendar, and no late assignments will be accepted. You may use secondary sources, but the primary focus should be the assigned text. Pay close attention to overall themes, conflicts, unanswered questions, the strength of arguments, relevance to modern situations, etc. You are free to use any content you create for these assignments on your midterm and/or final.

Online Participation

Since we are not meeting in person, online participation is a required component of the course. **For 10% of your total grade, you are required to make 20 substantive comments on modules over the course of the class.** There are 16 modules covering content, so this averages a little more than a comment per module. Comments can include reactions to readings or my lectures, questions, responses to others' comments, connections to outside information, etc.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All students at the University of Georgia agree to abide by the following code when they sign the admissions application: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." For more information, check the following link:

http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm

Calendar

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary and will be announced.

Day	Topic and Reading	Assignment
Friday, June 5	Intro/Constant - "Liberty of the Ancients Compared..."	read text
Monday, June 8	Plato - <i>The Republic</i> - Books 1-5	read books 1-2, 7-10
Tuesday, June 9	Plato - <i>The Republic</i> - Books 6-10	Plato Paper Due*
Wednesday, June 10	Machiavelli - <i>The Prince</i> - Chapters 1-12	read chapters 1-26
Thursday, June 11	Machiavelli - <i>The Prince</i> - Chapters 13-26	Machiavelli Paper Due*
Friday, June 12	Hobbes - <i>Leviathan</i> - Chapters 1-13	read chapters 1-18
Monday, June 15	Hobbes - <i>Leviathan</i> - Chapters 14-31	Hobbes Paper Due*
Tuesday, June 16	Locke - <i>2nd Treatise</i> - Chapters 1-7	read chapters 1 - 19
Wednesday, June 17	Locke - <i>2nd Treatise</i> - Chapters 8-19, Midterm Posted	Locke Paper Due*
Thursday, June 18	Midterm Work Day	Live Q&A - 9:00-11:00
Friday, June 19	Midterm Due (Saturday, June 20)	Midterm Due
Monday, June 22	Rousseau - <i>Social Contract</i> - Book 1	read books 1-3
Tuesday, June 23	Rousseau - <i>Social Contract</i> - Books 2-4	Rousseau Paper Due*
Wednesday, June 24	Marx - <i>Communist Manifesto</i> - Chapters 1-2	read chapters 1-4
Thursday, June 25	Marx - <i>Communist Manifesto</i> - Chapters 3-4	Marx Paper Due*
Friday, June 26	Mill - <i>On Liberty</i> - Chapters 1-2	read chapters 1-5
Monday, June 29	Mill - <i>On Liberty</i> - Chapters 3-5	Mill Paper Due*
Tuesday, June 30	Rawls - <i>Theory of Justice</i> Summary, Final Posted	read text
Wednesday, July 1	Final Work Day	Live Q&A - 9:00-11:00
Thursday, July 2	Final Due (Sat 4)	Final Due

*3 papers required