

POLS 4020 POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: HOBBS TO NIETZSCHE, SPRING 2024

INSTRUCTOR

DR. JEREMY KINGSTON
CYNAMON

EMAIL

JKCYNAMON@UGA.EDU

TIME & LOCATION

TUE/THURS
2:20 - 3:35 PM
BALDWIN 301

OFFICE HOURS

TUE/THURS
12:45 - 2:00 PM
413 BALDWIN HALL

GRADING SCALE

100-93 A
92-90 A-
89-87 B+
86-83 B
82-80 B-
79-77 C+
76-73 C
72-70 C-
69-60 D
59-0 F

LIST OF DUE DATES

Assignment #1

February 13th

Assignment #2

March 19th

Assignment #3

April 29th

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course serves as a study of the major themes and developments in modern political philosophy/theory. These are presented not as historical artifacts, but as the ideas that continue to underpin the way we organize political life. In particular, the course focuses on modern understandings of freedom, individuality, reason, desire, and nature. Students should come away from the course with an understanding of the genesis, strengths, and limits of some of our most important political concepts, institutions, and commitments, as well as having developed a more analytically precise vocabulary with which to write about and discuss politics from a normative point of view.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Leviathan, Thomas Hobbes (any edition)
On Liberty, John Stuart Mill (any edition)
Marx-Engels Reader, ed. Robert Tucker (*Norton*)
On the Genealogy of Morals, Friedrich Nietzsche (*Vintage*)

You must have a copy of these texts. It is important that you have the listed edition, if specified. Any other assigned readings or audio/visual materials will be made available to you via ELC.

GRADING BREAKDOWN

ATTENDANCE & PARTICIPATION: 20%

This is not an assignment heavy course. There are no weekly quizzes or reading checks. As such, being successful will require you to *show up* to class having done the reading and be ready to *participate* in the discussion. Points for participation are awarded at my discretion. If you will not be able to make a session and have a legitimate reason (documented illness, athletics, etc.) it is your responsibility to let me know prior to the missed session. Repeated absences will decrease this portion of your grade. If you are uncomfortable speaking in classroom settings, please set up a time to speak with me during the first week of the course and we can come up with alternative arrangements.

ASSIGNMENT #1 REFLECTION PAPER (3-4 PAGES): 25%

You will write one reflection paper exploring the conceptions of freedom found in the writings of Thomas Hobbes and Benjamin Constant. After analyzing their accounts, you will be asked to evaluate them and determine if they omit or overlook anything important about the nature of freedom.

Finally, you will connect one of their views to some issue in contemporary politics. Further instructions will be provided in class.

ASSIGNMENT #2 INTERPRETIVE PAPER #1 (6-8 PAGES): 25%

You will write two interpretive papers in this course. Both papers are meant to be *interpretive & evaluative*. They will require you to reconstruct an argument from the texts we read and evaluate its persuasiveness. Paper prompts will be shared well in advance of the due date and discussed collectively in class. I will also provide detailed instructions for writing successful papers of this type.

ASSIGNMENT #3 INTERPRETIVE PAPER #2 (7-9 PAGES): 30%

You will write a second, slightly longer paper for your final assignment. This paper will also be *interpretive & evaluative*. Like the first, it will require you to reconstruct an argument from the texts we read and evaluate its persuasiveness. Be sure to pay close attention to the feedback you received for your first paper. You will be graded, in part, on your ability to avoid making the same errors again. Paper prompts will be shared well in advance of the due date and discussed collectively in class.

DISABILITY RESOURCE CENTER

If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Disability Resource Center. Additional information can be found here:

<http://drc.uga.edu/>

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Undergraduate students can only withdraw from four courses and receive a withdrawal- passing (WP) grade while enrolled at the University. Students can drop any class without penalty during the drop/add period at the beginning of every semester. Dropped courses during the drop/add period do not qualify as withdrawals. Instructors have the ability to withdraw a student from the class due to excessive absences (see course attendance policy). Please review the policy here: <https://reg.uga.edu/general-information/policies/withdrawals/>

CULTURE OF HONESTY POLICY

You are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures relating to academic honesty. To understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University, please carefully review the policy here:

https://honesty.uga.edu/resources/documents/academic_honesty_policy_2017.pdf

SYLLABUS POLICY

I reserve the right to make changes to the syllabus if necessary. I will give you reasonable notice if something, such as a reading assignment, is to change.

GRADING, INCOMPLETES, & LATE ASSIGNMENTS POLICY

-If you have questions about a grade you received in the course, find a time to come speak with me in office hours. If, after talking, you would like to formally request a re-grade you may do so. Formal grade appeals must be made in writing and I will re-grade your entire assignment. Your grade can go up or down.

-A final grade of “Incomplete” will only be given in this course under exceptional circumstances and is solely at my discretion. If an incomplete is given, it is the student’s responsibility to complete the necessary requirements as early in the following semester as possible.

-Late assignments will be docked 5 percent per day (half letter grade), for each day they are late (including weekends). If you need an extension, talk to me ahead of time.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS RESOURCES

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

- UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) or crisis support (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>).

- If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (<https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga>) for a list of free workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center.

COURSE SCHEDULE

DATE & ASSIGNMENTS	SUBJECT	READING
January 9 th	Introduction & Expectations	No reading
January 11 th	What is Modernity?	<i>What is Enlightenment?</i> , Immanuel Kant (full text)
January 16 th	Benjamin Constant: Two Models of Freedom	<i>Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns</i> , (full text)
January 18 th	Thomas Hobbes: Social Atomism	<i>Leviathan</i> , (Chapters 5, 6, 10-12)
January 23 rd Introduce Assignment #1	Hobbes: State of Nature, Social Contract, & Freedom as Liberty	<i>Leviathan</i> , (Chapters 13-16, 21)
January 30 th	Mary Wollstonecraft: Natural & Social Kinds	<i>On the Vindication of the Right of Woman</i> , (Introduction; Chapter 5, Section 1; Chapter 13, Section 6)
February 1 st	Jeremy Bentham: Utilitarianism	Optional: <i>A Fragment on Government</i> , (Preface)
February 6 th	Ralph Waldo Emerson: Expressive Individualism	<i>Self-Reliance</i> , (full text)
February 8 th	John Stuart Mill: Liberalism	<i>On Liberty</i> , (Chapter I) Optional: <i>On Liberty</i> , (Chapter II)
February 13 th Assignment #1 Due	J.S. Mill: Freedom as Self-Expression	<i>On Liberty</i> , (Chapters III, IV)
February 15 ^h	J.S. Mill: Colonialism	<i>Civilization</i> , (excerpts)

DATE & ASSIGNMENTS	SUBJECT	READING
February 20 th	Immanuel Kant: Freedom as Self-Legislation	<i>Groundwork For the Metaphysics of Morals</i> , (pp. 58-69)
February 22 nd	Friedrich Schiller: Freedom as Play	<i>On the Aesthetic Education of Man</i> , (Letters 3, 5, 6)
February 27 th	G.W.F. Hegel: The Master-Slave Dialectic	<i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> , (paragraphs 178-196)
February 29 th Introduce Assignment #2	How to Write a Political Theory Paper	No reading
March 12 th	Kant contra Hegel: Is Freedom Compatible with Dependence?	Excerpts from Kant and Hegel on ELC
March 14 th	Karl Marx: Social Theory	<i>Theses on Feuerbach</i> , (pp. 143-145 in M-E Reader)
March 19 th Assignment #2 Due	Marx: Alienation	<i>1844 Manuscripts: "Estranged Labor,"</i> (pp. 70-81 in M-E Reader)
March 21 st	Marx: Freedom as Conscious Mastery	<i>Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right: Introduction</i> , (pp. 53-65 in M-E Reader)
March 26 th	Marx: Ideology & The Limits of Philosophy	<i>The German Ideology</i> , (pp. 146-155 in M-E Reader)
March 28 th	Marx: Communism	<i>The Communist Manifesto</i> , (pp. 473-483, 499-500 in M-E Reader)
April 2 nd	Marxist Feminism	<i>Communism and the Family</i> , Alexandra Kollontai
April 4 th Introduce Assignment #3	Friedrich Nietzsche: Introduction	<i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> , (pp. 3-23)
April 9 th	Nietzsche: Good/Bad & Good/Evil	<i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> , (Essay 1, Sections 1-17)
April 11 th	Nietzsche: Guilt & Bad Conscience	<i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> , (Essay 2, Sections 1-17, 22-25)
April 16 th	Nietzsche: Ascetic Ideals	<i>On the Genealogy of Morals</i> , (Essay 3, Sections 1, 11, 13, 27-28)
April 18 th	Nietzsche: Freedom as Radical Self-Creation	<i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> , (Sections 21, 23, 29) & <i>Will to Power</i> (Sections 890, 904, 928, 933)
April 23 rd	Comparing Theories of Freedom	No reading
April 25 th	Modernity as an Unfinished Project	No reading
Assignment #3 Due April 29th		