

History of Modern Political Thought

PHIL 456E

Fall 2014

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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00 – 2:30, 4:30 – 5:00 PM

I will be in my office and available during office hours, but you can make appointments to see me at other times. My preference is that we make appointments by email, and have substantive discussions face-to-face.

Course Description

The course offers an examination of prominent political thinkers in western political philosophy, starting with the Early Modern Era. These are philosophers who articulated and defended core ideas that continue to shape both contemporary theory and popular discourse concerning human rights, the social contract, the common good, political oppression, democratic legitimacy, equality, and social justice. Our investigation will be philosophical in character: we will seek to understand the ideas as they were in their context, but also with an eye to critically assessing them. We will also consider some contemporary reflection on the continued significance of these thinkers.

Learning Objectives

The student will:

- Be familiar with some of the central work on political philosophy during the Modern Era
- Develop and be capable of articulating cogent views on several of the topics outlined in the course description
- Demonstrate an ability to write effectively, coherently, and analytically, and with a high degree of argumentative sophistication (C)
- Demonstrate an ability to revise and improve writing in both form and content (C)
- Develop an ability to read and critically consider difficult texts
- Improve ability to reason through and intelligently discuss complex issues
- Demonstrate an understanding of the human experience through the study of philosophy (H)

Readings

Students are expected to show up to class prepared to discuss, and answer questions concerning, the assigned reading. This is a seminar, so there will be a focus on student to student and instructor to student dialogue. The class discussion will center on students addressing the issues raised by the texts. Successful participation in class, then, requires familiarity with the readings for the course.

Aside from the Marx-Engels reader, any edition of the following texts is acceptable.

The required texts for purchase are:

GWF Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History* (Hackett Publishing)

Rousseau, *Basic Political Writings* (Hackett Publishing)

Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Hackett Publishing)

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Hackett Publishing)

The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd Ed (ed. Tucker) (Norton Publishing)

JS Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford)

Anna Stilz, *Liberal Loyalty* (Princeton)

In addition to these texts, many of the readings will be available on electronic reserves (marked “[ER]” on the schedule) through Blackboard.

Requirements and Expectations

Statement from the Binghamton Faculty Senate Executive Committee on expectations for a four credit course: This course is a 4-credit course, which means that in addition to the scheduled meeting times, students are expected to do at least 9.5 hours of course-related work outside of class each week during the semester. This includes time spent completing assigned readings, participating in lab sessions, studying for tests and examinations, preparing written assignments, and other course-related tasks.

The expectations for this seminar are in conformity with this statement.

Grade Breakdown

Participation:	20%
Paper One Initial Draft:	10%
Paper One Revised Draft:	20%
Paper Two:	25%
Final Exam:	25%

Paper Draft and Paper: Students will be required to write two papers, ten to twelve pages each. Students have the option of either developing their own topic or selecting one of the topics distributed by me. Students should expect to invest considerable effort over the course of several weeks into writing each paper.

Paper One is ten to twelve pages, and will be completed in two stages. Paper topics will be distributed, and students will submit a polished draft of the paper two weeks later. *This draft will be graded.* I will then return the paper with substantial comments for revision. Students will have two weeks to revise and resubmit the paper. I will then grade the revised paper, with higher expectations (hence, a final draft which is not substantially revised in light of my feedback would receive a significantly lower grade than the initial draft). The grades of the draft and final version will be computed separately into the final course grade (see grade breakdown above).

Paper Two is ten to twelve pages. Paper topics will be distributed, and students will have at least three weeks to submit the paper. Unlike the first paper, there is no formal process of revision, and only one grade will be assigned to the paper.

In general, a paper will be assessed on the basis of: (1) its ability to identify the relevant material, (2) accuracy and completeness in portraying the material in question, and (3) the development of a well-reasoned critical assessment.

Students are required to submit all drafts to Turnitin on Blackboard. A paper copy should also be submitted to me in person.

Participation: Students will be assessed on their contributions in class. The grade will be based on the frequency with which students provide valuable verbal contributions to the class. Such contributions include informed responses to instructor questions, participation in classroom discussions, and raising relevant and cogent questions.

Final Exam: Students are responsible for all assigned material up to the day of the exam.

Course Policies

Electronics: Without special permission, the use of electronic devices is not permitted during class time.

Attendance: Attendance in class is mandatory. Students should arrive promptly at the beginning of class with the assigned reading for the day in hand. Students are permitted (2) unexcused absence without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will result in the student's final grade being reduced by one-third a letter grade (e.g. a B becomes a B-).

Late Papers: Papers turned in late will be penalized one-third a letter grade per day of lateness.

Academic Honesty: Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct will be dealt with harshly in accordance with Harpur College policies. The **Student Academic Honesty Code** can be found at: <http://bulletin.binghamton.edu/integrity.htm>.

Schedule of Readings

The following plan is subject to revision - I will inform the class of any changes as we go. Listed on the left are the dates of the lectures, on the right are the readings that will be discussed on those dates. Readings with “[ER]” next to them are available on electronic reserves on Blackboard.

Date:	Reading:
Sep. 2	Introduction to the course
Sep. 4	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , 3-5, 27-35, 50-63, 74-105 (Introduction, chs. 6, 10, 11, 13-16)
Sep. 9	<i>Leviathan</i> , 106-132, 136-145, 172-189, 203-210 (chs. 17-21, 26, 28)
Sep. 11	<i>Leviathan</i> , 210-233 (chs. 29-30) Susanne Sreedhar, “Limited Obedience to an Unlimited Sovereign,” in <i>Hobbes on Resistance</i> (2010) [ER]
Sep. 16	Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , 1-65 (chs. 1-8)
Sep. 18	Hume, “Of the Original Contract” [ER] A John Simmons, “The Lockean State of Nature” in <i>On the Edge of Anarchy</i> (1993), 13-39 [ER]
	Paper One Topics Assigned
Sep. 23	<i>Second Treatise</i> , 65-124 (chs. 9-19)
Sep. 30	Rousseau, <i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 29-69 (<i>Discourse on Inequality</i> , Part I)
Oct. 2	<i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 69-92, 112-116 (<i>Discourse on Inequality</i> , Part II, Note xii)
	Paper One First Draft Due
Oct. 7	<i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 155-191 (<i>On the Social Contract</i> , Books I & II)
Oct. 9	<i>Basic Political Writings</i> , 191-252 (<i>On the Social Contract</i> , Books III & IV)
	Paper One Draft Returned
Oct. 14	Kant, “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?” [ER] Anna Stilz, <i>Liberal Loyalty</i> , 3-56
Oct. 16	<i>Liberal Loyalty</i> , 57-110
Oct. 21	Hegel, selection from <i>Phenomenology of Spirit</i> , 104-119 [ER] Hegel, <i>Introduction to the Philosophy of History</i> , 3-56 (chs. 1-3)
Oct. 23	<i>Philosophy of History</i> , 57-84, 99-106 (chs. 4-5, Appendix selections from <i>Phil of Right</i>) Jeffrey Gauthier, “Slaves without Fear: Hegel and the Feminism of Simone de Beauvoir” in <i>Hegel and Feminist Social Criticism</i> (1997), 119-136 [ER]
	Final Paper One Draft Due
Oct. 28	Adam Smith, selections from <i>Wealth of Nations</i> [ER] <i>Marx-Engels Reader</i> , 16-25, 53-65
Oct. 30	<i>Marx-Engels Reader</i> , 66-93, 143-145 Catharine MacKinnon, “Desire and Power” in <i>Feminism Unmodified</i> , 46-62 [ER]
Nov. 4	<i>Marx-Engels Reader</i> , 147-200
Nov. 6	<i>Marx-Engels Reader</i> , 203-217, 302-329

Nov. 11	<i>Marx-Engels Reader</i> , 473-500, 525-541
Nov. 13	Mill, <i>On Liberty and Other Essays</i> , 131-158, 176-201 (<i>Utilitarianism</i> , chs. 1, 2, & 5) Paper Two Assigned
Nov. 18	<i>On Liberty</i> , 5-61 (<i>On Liberty</i> , chs. 1 & 2)
Nov. 20	<i>On Liberty</i> , 62-103, 471-501 (<i>On Liberty</i> , chs. 3 & 4, <i>Subjection of Women</i> ch. 1)
Nov. 25	<i>On Liberty</i> , 503-582 (<i>Subjection of Women</i> , chs. 2-4)
Dec. 2	<i>On Liberty</i> , 225-234, 238-256 (<i>Representative Government</i> , selection chs. 2 & 3) Carole Pateman, "Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, and G.D.H. Cole: A Participatory Theory of Democracy" from <i>Participation and Democratic Theory</i> (1970) [ER]
Dec. 4	Mill, selections from <i>Principles of Political Economy</i> [ER] Paper Two Due
Dec. 9	John Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i> (Revised Edition), 3-30, 52-56 [ER]
Dec. 11	Rawls, 102-105, 109-112, 118-123, 130-160 [ER]
FINAL EXAM HELD IN ACCORDANCE WITH OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY EXAM SCHEDULE	
