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POLS 4650/5650
Thurs. 3:10-6:00
CR 209
Final: Thurs, May 5, 7:00-9:00pm

UNIVERSITY OF WYOMING
MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT
Spring 2011

Course Description:

What is modernity? This course seeks to offer some preliminary answers to this question through the reading of some of the core political thinkers of the 17th to the 19th centuries. Over the course of the semester we will examine how different authors sought to appropriate natural science for the study of politics, society, and human nature; examine some of the similarities among modern thinkers, especially as compared to ancient thinkers; explore some of the general themes common to modern thinkers, particularly those contributing to liberalism; and seek to understand how modern theorists critiqued and built upon one another's thought. Our studies will focus on the concept of the individual and his or her relation to larger communities particularly through concepts such as freedom, rights, obligation, and justice. By the end of the semester, this inquiry should provide students with a stronger foundation for thinking through some of the challenges facing contemporary liberal democracies. While there will be some lecture, for the most part, this course is discussion based and will require significant student participation.

Required Readings:

Thomas Hobbes. 2010. *Leviathan*. New Haven: Yale University Press. ISBN: 9780300118384

John Locke. 1988. *Two Treatises of Government*. Edited by Peter Laslett. Student Edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 0521357306

Jean-Jacques Rousseau. 2002. *The Social Contract and The First and Second Discourses*. New Haven: Yale University Press. ISBN: 9780300091403

David Hume. 1978. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. 2nd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **ISBN-10:** 0198245882 **ISBN-13:** 978-0198245889

Kant, Immanuel. 2002. *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*. New Haven: Yale University Press. ISBN: 9780300094879

Mill, John Stuart. 2002. *On Liberty*. New Haven: Yale University Press. ISBN: 9780300096101

Nietzsche, Friedrich. 2009. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **ISBN-10:** 0199537070 **ISBN-13:** 978-0199537075

If you are purchasing your books somewhere other than the UW Bookstore, please purchase the above editions.

Course Requirements:

Participation: 10%

In addition to introducing you to the substantive material, this course also seeks to improve your critical thinking skills and to develop your ability to communicate ideas and deliberate with others. This course is designed to be a discussion seminar-- each student will bear a significant burden in ensuring the success of the course. Course participation includes preparation, attendance, verbal participation, and course assignments.

Attendance is required— students are allowed one absence. For each following unexcused absence the student's participation grade will drop one third of a letter grade (i.e. from an A to an A-). Students are also allowed to miss one participation assignment. Failure to complete a participatory assignment (after the one excused) will result in a one-third of a letter grade reduction to the participation grade. The participation grade is then subject to additional adjustments (either up or down) depending upon the student's verbal participation in the course.

Exams: 60%

There will be two in-class examinations, each worth 30% of your course grade, with some combination of multiple choice, identification, and essay questions. A blue book is required.

First Exam: Thursday, Feb 17

Second Exam: Thursday, Apr 7

Writing Assignment: 30%

In this course, students will be required to write a 12-15 page research paper worth 30% of the course grade. The paper will examine a core concept of political theory through both the primary works of theorists covered in the course and secondary works on the topic. Toward this end, students must submit a "Secondary Article Review"; a Draft Thesis and Literature Review; and a Final Research Paper. A more detailed paper handout that specifies my expectations for the assignments will be distributed in the coming weeks.

Due Dates: Failure to submit any one of the final paper assignments on time will result in a ten point deduction to the final paper. Late final papers **WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.**

Secondary Article Review, Due: In class, Thursday, Feb 3

Draft Thesis, Literature Review Due: In class, Thursday, Mar 17

Final Paper, Due: Thursday, May 5, to E-Companion Drop Box

Grading: All written assignments and exams will be graded using the following scale:

93-100	A	77-79	C+
90-92	A-	73-76	C
87-89	B+	70-72	C-
83-86	B	67-69	D+
80-82	B-	63-66	D
		60-62	D-
		< 60	F

Participation assignments may use this scale but more often will be assessed as either acceptable/unacceptable. Students will be informed of the grading method to be used for each assignment.

Academic Honesty: Academic dishonesty (including plagiarism and all other offenses listed under University Regulation 802 rev 2) will not be tolerated. Any violations of University policy will be handled through University procedures explained at <http://www.uwyo.edu/a&s/AppealsDishonesty/GuidelinesDishonesty>

Accommodations for persons with documented disabilities require student registration with University Disability Support Services (UDSS) in SEO, room 330 Knight Hall, 766-6189, TTY 766-3073. Please make every effort to register and inform me of your needs as soon as possible.

No electronic devices (excepting silenced cell phones) will be allowed in class unless first approved by the instructor.

Tentative Course Schedule:

Week One

Thurs. Jan, 13: Introductions

Week Two:

Thurs. Jan 20 Power and Order

Required: Hobbes, *Leviathan*: Introduction (9-10), ch. 10-11 (53-66), ch. 13-15 (76-98), ch. 17- 21 (85-135) ch. 26, 29-30 (159-175, 192-213)

Participation

Assignment: Bring in two (TYPED) questions for class discussion.

Week Three:

Thurs. Jan 27 The Social Contract

Required: Locke, *The Second Treatise*: para 1-131, and para 169-243

Participation

Assignment: In-class exercise

Week Four:

Thurs. Feb 3 Human Nature, Revisited

Required: Rousseau: *The Second Discourse*, entire (pp. 69-148)

Participation

Assignment: Bring in two (TYPED) questions for class discussion

Final Paper Assignment: Secondary Article Review, due

Week Five:

Thurs. Feb 10 The Social Contract, Reconsidered

Required: Rousseau: *The Social Contract*, Bk I, Bk II, Bk III, Bk IV ch.1-3, 7-9

Participation

Assignment: Quotation Interpretation: Choose a quotation and interpret it—giving its significance for the larger reading—in one, single-spaced, typed page (your interpretation should range from ½ to a full page).

Week Six:

Thurs. Feb 17 First Exam

Week Seven:

Thurs. Feb 24 Human Nature, again

Required: Hume, “Of the Original contract,” “Of the Origin of Government” on E-Companion; Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*: Bk II, Part I, sections I-III, section 7, and sections X-XII; Bk II, Part II, sections I-II, V, VII, XII; Bk II, Part III, sections I-II

Participation

Assignment: Quotation Interpretation: Choose a quotation and interpret it—giving its significance for the larger reading—in one, single-spaced, typed page.

Week Eight:

Thurs, Mar 3 Liberty and Justice

Required: Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*: Bk III, Part I, sections I-II, Bk. III, Part II, sections I, V-X, Bk. III, Part III, sections I, III

Participation

Assignment: Ten Concepts (in class exercise)

Week Nine:

Thurs, Mar 10 Freedom and Autonomy

Required: Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, entire (3-79)

Participation

Assignment: Bring in two (TYPED) questions for class discussion.

Week Ten:

Thurs, Mar 17 Liberty in Mass Society
Required: Mill, *On Liberty*, entire (67-175)

Participation

Assignment: Five main points of the reading summarized and typed in no more than two single spaced pages.

Final Paper Assignment: Draft Thesis, Literature Review Due, Meet in Research Groups

Week Eleven:

Thurs, Mar 24 SPRING BREAK

Week Twelve:

Thurs, Mar 31 A Philosophy of the Future
Required: Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, entire (1-181)

Participation

Assignment: Choose one of Nietzsche's aphorisms (pp. 58-73) and interpret it in one single-spaced, typed page

Week Thirteen:

Thurs, Apr 7 Second Exam

Week Fourteen:

Thurs, Apr 14 What is Modernity?
Required: Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" (1784) found at:
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/kant-what-is.html> ; Foucault, "What is Enlightenment?" (1978) found at:
<http://philosophy.eserver.org/foucault/what-is-enlightenment.html>

Participation

Assignment: Bring in two (TYPED) questions for class discussion.

Final Paper Assignment: PAPER WORKSHOP: Individual Meetings

Week Fifteen:

Thurs, Apr 21 What is Modernity?
Required: Visual Representation

Participation

Assignment: Write a one-page, single spaced essay that relates some aspect of the film to ideas covered in the course. Submit to E-companion drop box by Thursday, Apr 28.

Week Sixteen

Thurs, Apr 28 Independent Research for Final Paper

Week Seventeen:

FINAL PAPER DUE: Thurs, May 5, TO E-COMPANION DROP BOX

ADDENDUM TO POLS 4650/5650

MODERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: 5650

ADDITIONAL GRADUATE STUDENT REQUIREMENTS

In addition to those assignments and expectations outlined in the syllabus above, graduate students taking this course will have the following responsibilities:

- 1. Writing Assignment: For the research paper, graduate students will be expected to write a 15-20 page paper.**
- 2. For exams, graduate students will be expected to provide a higher level of sophistication in their responses.**
- 3. In class participation, graduate students will be expected to perform at a higher level and to work assiduously at fostering robust, and civil, discussion.**