

PSCI 226: Modern Political Thought

Winter, 2017

RCH 305, Mondays and Wednesdays 4-5:20pm

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Office Location: Hagey Hall 340

Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-4pm and by appointment

Contact Policy: The best way to contact me is via email. You can expect a reply within 48 hours (weekends excluded). Do not forget to include the course code in the subject line of the email. If your question cannot be answered by a short email, please stop by during office hours. If you are unable to come during my regular office hours, send me an email to set up an appointment or feel free to speak with me before or after class.

Course Description:

This course examines key texts in modern political thought (17th-19th century). The modern period is characterized by unprecedented political, technical and social transformations. It sees the emergence of the modern state, the Enlightenment, the French revolution and its aftermath, the rise of liberalism as well as critical perspectives on the political challenges of modernity. Through a careful reading of the works of Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Burke, Marx and Mill among others, we will investigate central themes of modern political thought such as power, sovereignty, state, reason, freedom and society. This course will provide an overview of the social and political context of the period, as well as analytical tools to understand the fundamental political concepts that emerge in the 17th century and that are contested, defended, criticized, and redefined by political thinkers in the 18th and 19th centuries.

In the course of our investigation, we will address several fundamental questions such as: How are individual rights justified in modern political thought? What is the nature of political obligation? What is natural right, and how does it differ from natural law? How can we understand the relationship between morality and politics? What does the modern conception of liberty entail? How should we conceive of the relationship between the individual and society? To answer these questions, we will examine the fundamental doctrines and principles of modern thought, with the aim of assessing their contribution to contemporary uses of political concepts. This course is designed to provide a substantive overview of the major themes in modern political thought and an introduction to the works of the most important thinkers of that period.

Pre-Requisites: PSCI 101 or PSCI 225

Learning Objectives:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Provide an elaborate account of the key concepts used by political thinkers covered in the course and draw parallels with our present-day use of these concepts
- Demonstrate a knowledge of the historical and intellectual context of the period covered
- Expose theoretical and political arguments and assess their strengths and weaknesses
- Develop analytical reading and writing skills and master interpretive tools in approaching past texts
- Formulate a clear and rigorous critical interpretation of the theories seen in class (in the exams and the comparative essay)

University Regulations:

Cross-listed course:

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

Academic Integrity:

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, [Student Discipline](http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71) <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>.

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, Student Petitions <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>. In addition, consult Student Grievances <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes> for the Faculty of Arts' grievance processes.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, Student Appeals <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>.

Academic Integrity website (Arts): Academic Integrity http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html

Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo): Academic Integrity Office <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

Note for students with disabilities: The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1401, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

Using Turnitin.com

Turnitin.com: Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the use of Turnitin in this course.

Note: Although encouraged, submission of the paper on Turnitin is voluntary. Should you choose not to submit your essay on the website, you must then keep all drafts, notes, outlines and submit them along with your essay, as well as prepare an oral presentation of the material.

Technology Policy:

Computers are allowed during class, but I encourage you to turn off your electronic devices in the classroom. Several studies have demonstrated that taking notes by hand improve attention, memory and understanding. Please turn off your cell phone

during class, as it cannot serve any other purpose than to distract you (you can send texts to your friends about modern political thought after class).

Texts:

Books available for purchase at the University of Waterloo Bookstore:

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Hackett

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Hackett

Immanuel Kant, *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace, and History*, Yale University Press

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*, Hackett (2nd Edition)

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays*, Oxford University Press

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Oxford University Press

All texts are required readings. Other editions can be used, provided that they are unabridged.

Other readings for the course are available on LEARN.

Course Requirements:

Mid-Term Exam	25%	In Class: Feb 15 th
Comparative Essay	35%	Due April 3 rd
Final Exam	35%	TBD: Exam Period
Attendance and Participation	5%	

*Students are expected to attend class and to complete the assigned readings. Participation in class and in the discussions is strongly encouraged.

Guideline for Comparative Essays:

You will be required to write one long comparative essay (7-8 pages or MAXIMUM 3 000 words including footnotes) that should be submitted **on the due date** as a **hard copy** at the beginning of the lecture. The essay should also be submitted on Turnitin.com before 8 pm on the same day. **Due *Monday April 3rd, last day of class***

The essay will consist of a comparison of two authors seen in class. The paper should focus on two specific texts that will serve as the basis of the comparative analysis. **No outsiders**

sources or complementary readings allowed. The possible topics and details of the final assignment will be distributed during the first lecture, giving you ample time to reflect on your essay as the course progresses.

Tests & Examinations:

Mid-Term Exam: (In Class: February 15th)

A mid-term exam, which counts for 20% of your final grade, will cover materials seen thus far in the class. The format will be short answers and one short essay question.

Final Exam (Exam Period: TBD)

A comprehensive final exam (35%) is scheduled during the exam period and will cover all lectures and mandatory readings. The Department will announce the date and time of the final exam in February; you are required to be available during the whole exam period (April 7th-April 25th). Travel plans are not acceptable grounds for deferring final examination time.

Participation and Attendance:

It goes without saying that attendance to class is required. Active participation in class is encouraged; this includes raising questions related to the readings and general questions about the issues discussed in class. If you did not have the opportunity to ask your question, you can email it to me and we will get to it in the next class. This also counts as participation. If you are present in class, have demonstrated that you have done the assigned readings and contribute to the discussion in the ways mentioned above, you should receive the full 5 points.

Late Penalties:

2%/day, including weekends. Papers that have not been submitted eight days after the deadline will not be accepted. Extensions will be granted upon presentation of medical certificate or other appropriate document only. It is important to note that extensions **will not be granted** for computer-related problems.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction

Jan 4th: Introduction

General introduction, Distribution and presentation of the syllabus

*No assigned reading

Week 2: Thomas Hobbes (I)

Jan 9th: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I, Introduction and Chap: 6

Jan 11th: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I, Chap: 13 to 16

Week 3: Hobbes (II)

Jan 16: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part II, Chap: 17 to 20

Jan 18: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part II, Chap: 21-22, 26 and 29-30

Week 4: John Locke

Jan 23rd : Locke. *Second Treatise*, Chap: 1-10

Jan 25th: Locke, *Second Treatise*, Chap: 11 to 15 and 18

Week 5: Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Jan 30th: Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Preface and Part I

Feb 1st: Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II

Week 6: Rousseau (II)

Feb 6th: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I and II

Feb 8th: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book III and IV

Week 7: The Enlightenment: Kant and Herder

Feb 13th: Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" and
"Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Perspective"

Feb 15th: *IN-CLASS: MIDTERM EXAM*

Reading Week – February 20-24 – NO CLASSES

Week 8: Kant and Herder (II) and Critique of the French Revolution: Burke

Feb 27th: Kant, "Towards Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch" (p. 67-92)
Herder, "Ideas Toward a Philosophy of the History of Man", in *Theories of History*, p. 34-49.

March 1st: Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (selections)

Week 9: Karl Marx

March 6th: Marx, Selections from "The German Ideology" (in Marx, *Selected Writings*, Oxford University Press)

March 8th: Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*

Week 10: Reflections on Liberty: Constant and Mill (I)

March 13th: Benjamin Constant, *The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns*, Speech delivered in 1819 at the Athénée Royal of Paris

March 15th: Mill, *On Liberty*, Chap. 1-2

Week 11: Mill (II)

March 20th: Mill, *On Liberty*, Chap. 3-4

March 22nd: Mill, *On the Subjection of Women*, Chap. 1-2

Week 12: The Radicalization of Modernity: Nietzsche

March 27th: Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Preface and Aphorisms 1-11, 214-227 and 257-268.

March 29th: Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface and First Treatise

April 3rd : **Review Session **Final Essay due at the beginning of class****