

MODERN POLITICAL THEORY

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Spring 2019
311 Bradley Hall
Mondays & Wednesdays, 10:00-11:20 AM

Instructor: Shu-Shan Lee, Ph.D.

E-mail: sl1619@scarletmail.rutgers.edu

Office: 718 Hill Hall

Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays, 11:30 AM-1:00 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an overview of classic texts in modern political theory, focusing specifically on the obstacle to, and enabling conditions for, pursuing individual freedom. Throughout the semester, we will consider the following questions: Why do I have the right to liberty? How does the U.S. Constitution protect it? Should I sacrifice my freedom for the sake of public goods? How does the patriarchal society inhibit women's freedom? What is the tension between freedom and economic inequality? To what extent can a society justly suppress individual freedom? And how does the issue of color in the United States compromise African-Americans pursuit of liberty and happiness.

It is important to note that the objective of the course is not merely to understand some of the core texts in the history of modern political thought. To succeed in the class, you also need to demonstrate your ability to critically analyze the readings and to apply the theoretical arguments to contemporary political issues in each major assignment mentioned below.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

1. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Penguin).
2. John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government and a Letter Concerning Toleration* (Yale).
3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and the First and Second Discourses* (Yale).
4. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Penguin).
5. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Yale).
6. Friedrich Nietzsche, *"On the Genealogy of Morality" and Other Writings* (Cambridge).
7. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Oxford).

These books are also easily available in online stores (e.g., www.amazon.com, www.bn.com, www.abebooks.com). In addition to these books, required readings include several short essays. They are available on Blackboard.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learning the importance of listening to and being tolerant of different viewpoints.
2. Gaining core knowledge of modern political theory.
3. Acquiring the skills to apply theoretical knowledge to current and past political issues.
4. Practicing oral and written skills in order to convey political ideas to others.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

1. **Class Participation (15%):** You must attend classes. However, you will not receive a grade of “A” simply by coming to each seminar. In addition to reading and analyzing your texts, you need to demonstrate the ability to listen to others and to contribute to a dialogue in real time.

You are allowed two unexcused absences without penalty. Each additional unexcused absence will be penalized as follows: penalties for absences will be applied at the rate of 5 points per class. For example, if you have an 89 final average with 4 unexcused absences, your final participation grade will be $89 - 20 = 69$.

2. **Five Pop Quizzes (5 X 3% = 15%):** These quizzes are unannounced. They are designed to challenge your understanding of the assigned readings for the day. I will give five pop quizzes over the semester, and the grade for which is either “satisfactory” or “unsatisfactory.” You will secure 3 points for each “satisfactory” mark. For example, if you have two “satisfactory” and three “unsatisfactory” quizzes, your final grade for this part of your evaluation is $(2 \times 3 \text{ points}) + (3 \times 0 \text{ point}) = 6 \text{ points}$.
3. **Two Essays (2 X 25% = 50%):** You are required to write two essays. These papers are to be 3-4 pages long (12 point font, double spaced). The cover page should not be included in the 4-page limit. The first must discuss course materials from Week 2 to Week 7. The second must address materials from Week 10 to Week 14. The deadline for the first essay is 5 PM, Friday, March 15. The second essay is due at 5 PM, Monday, May 13. You must submit your essays to Turn-It-In on Blackboard.

Penalties for lateness will be applied at the rate of 15 points per day after the due date, up to a maximum of three days late. (For example, if you have an 89 for a writing assignment and it was submitted two days late, your final grade for this assignment will be $89 - 30 = 59$). After three days, the work will be counted as a non-submission (i.e., 0 point for this part of your evaluation).

A good essay usually presents theoretical depth, empirical relevance, and personal reflection. Please find below the additional grading rubric for the two essays.

4. **One Essay Proposal Presentation (20%):** You are required to present a proposal for one of your two essays. I will split the students into two groups alphabetically by the first name. The first group will present during week 7 and Week 8, and the second group will be presenting

during week 15 and week 16. Each presenter must place forty hardcopies of the presentation outline on the desk next to the class entrance and set up his/her PowerPoint before the class begins. You have five minutes to finish your presentation. During the presentation, your PowerPoint should include:

- a. the topic of the essay
- b. the thesis of the essay
- c. the course materials relevant to the essay
- d. the empirical cases and evidence selected for the essay
- e. the importance of the topic

Please find below the additional grading rubric for the presentation.

GRADING RUBRICS

Essays:

A+	<p>Excellent</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> Your thesis was clear, insightful, and even exciting. All ideas in the paper flowed logically. Your arguments were identifiable, reasonable, and sound. You had excellent transitions. Your paragraphs had solid topic sentences, and each sentence was clearly related to that topic sentence. You cited adequately.</p> <p><u>Analysis:</u> You provided concrete empirical cases and precise evidence from your readings to support most arguments. You integrated theoretical discussion, empirical significance and personal reflection in an outstanding manner. Your analysis posed new ways to think of the material.</p>
A	<p>Good</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> Your thesis was clear and insightful. All ideas in the paper flowed logically. Your arguments were identifiable, reasonable, and sound. You had excellent transitions. Your paragraphs had solid topic sentences, and each sentence was clearly related to that topic sentence. You cited adequately. However, you had a few unclear topic sentences and arguments.</p> <p><u>Analysis:</u> You provide concrete empirical cases and precise evidence from readings to support most arguments. You integrated theoretical discussion, empirical significance and personal reflection well. Your arguments showed independent thought.</p>
B	<p>Acceptable</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> Your thesis was clear, but not original. Your arguments were generally clear and appropriate, although they wandered occasionally. You had a few unclear transitions,</p>

	<p>and some of your paragraphs were without strong topic sentences. You had some inadequate citations.</p> <p><u>Analysis:</u> You provided empirical cases and evidence from readings to support most arguments, but the cases and evidence appeared weak. Your arguments usually made sense, although some gaps in logic existed. You did a solid job of synthesizing course materials but did not show your independent thought.</p>
C	<p>Borderline</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> Your thesis was unclear and vague. You provided little structure for the paper (e.g., insufficient transitions, few topic sentences, and little logic). You had some inadequate citations. Your paragraphs were not organized coherently.</p> <p><u>Analysis:</u> Your points often lacked supporting evidence, or you used evidence inappropriately. Your quotations were poorly integrated into sentences. You gave a quote, but then failed to analyze it or showed how it supports your argument. Your arguments were unclear and sometimes illogical. You did not show your independent thought.</p>
D	<p>Needs Help</p> <p><u>Structure:</u> Your thesis was difficult to identify, or it was a simple restatement of an obvious point. Your paragraphs showed little structure. Your transitions were confusing and unclear. The paper was a loose collection of statements, rather than a cohesive argument. The citation was used incorrectly.</p> <p><u>Analysis:</u> You failed to support statements, and the evidence you gave was poorly analyzed, poorly integrated into the paper, or simply incorrect. Your arguments were impossible to identify. You did a poor job synthesizing course materials, and you did not develop your own independent thought.</p>

Presentations:

A+	<p>Excellent</p> <p>The presenter was well prepared, and had a masterful command of the topic. The arguments were well organized and supported with evidence. The PowerPoint itself was well done. The presentation style was excellent (e.g., eye contact, engagement, time management).</p>
A	<p>Good</p> <p>The presenter was well prepared, and had a masterful command of the topic. The arguments were well organized and supported with evidence. The PowerPoint itself was well done. But the delivery (e.g., eye contact, engagement, time management) could have</p>

	been better.
B	<p>Acceptable</p> <p>The presenter was prepared, and had a good command of the topic. The presentation was clearly organized and supported with initial evidence. The PowerPoint itself was appropriate. Presentation style could be improved.</p>
C	<p>Borderline</p> <p>The presenter had an adequate command of the topic. The student could have been better prepared. Your delivery could use more practice. Your arguments, evidence, and PowerPoint could be improved.</p>
D	<p>Needs Help</p> <p>As a presenter, you were not prepared with the content and arguments. Your ideas were disorganized, and your presentation style was not engaging or conducive to increasing the audience's understanding. You made little effort to design the PowerPoint.</p>

OTHER IMPORTANT POLICIES

1. *Write a grade appeal letter.* If you think that a grade you have received is unfair, you may appeal. To request a review, you must provide me with a 1-page written statement (12-point font, double-spaced) explaining why you deserve a better grade.
2. *No extra credit.* I will not offer extra credit to anyone for rounding up their grades or for making up missed assignments under any circumstance.
3. *Academic Integrity.* As an academic community dedicated to the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge, Rutgers University is committed to fostering an intellectual and ethical environment based on the principles of academic integrity. Academic integrity is essential to the success of the University's educational and research missions, and violations of academic integrity constitute serious offenses against the entire academic community. The entire Academic Integrity Policy can be found here:
<http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/academic-integrity-policy/>

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

Give yourself an adequate amount of time to read in advance of each class. It is imperative for you to come to lectures prepared. Doing the readings is the first and most important requirement if you are to succeed in this course. Please also note that you are required to bring the assigned textbooks for the day to class.

Week 1	<p>Wednesday (Jan. 23)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Introductory Lecture: No Reading
Week 2	<p>Monday (Jan. 28)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i>, Introduction, and Chapters 6-16. <p>Wednesday (Jan. 30)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i>, Chapters 17-21, 24, and 27-29.
Week 3	<p>Monday (Feb. 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i>, Chapters 1-9. <p>Wednesday (Feb. 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i>, Chapters 11-16, and 18-19.
Week 4	<p>Monday (Feb. 11)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>The Federalist Papers</i>, No. 9-10, 47-51, and 67-73, on Blackboard. <p>Wednesday (Feb. 13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Thoreau, Resistance to Civil Government, on Blackboard.
Week 5	<p>Monday (Feb. 18)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rousseau, <i>The Social Contract</i>, Books 1-2. <p>Wednesday (Feb. 20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Rousseau, <i>The Social Contract</i>, Books 3-4.
Week 6	<p>Monday (Feb. 25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i>, Dedication, Introduction, and Chapters 1-3. <p>Wednesday (Feb. 27)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i>, Chapters 4 and 12.
Week 7	<p>Monday (Mar. 4)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Miss Representation</i>, a 2011 documentary film.

	<p>Wednesday (Mar. 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Essay Proposal Presentation
Week 8	<p>Monday (Mar. 11)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Essay Proposal Presentation <p>Wednesday (Mar. 13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ First Essay Proposal Presentation
	First Paper Due on 5 PM, Friday, March 15
Week 9	Spring Recess
Week 10	<p>Monday (Mar. 25)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>, Chapters 1-3. <p>Wednesday (Mar. 27)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>, Chapters 4-5.
Week 11	<p>Monday (Apr. 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Engels, Working Class Manchester, on Blackboard. ➤ Marx, Estranged Labour, pp. 70-78, on Blackboard. <p>Wednesday (Apr. 3)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Marx, Manifesto of the Communist Party, on Blackboard. ➤ Marx, Critique of the Gotha Programme, on Blackboard.
Week 12	<p>Monday (Apr. 8)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morality: First Essay. <p>Wednesday (Apr. 10)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morality: Second Essay.
Week 13	<p>Monday (Apr. 15)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>, Forethought and Chapters 1-3. <p>Wednesday (Apr. 17)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>, Chapters 4-6.
Week 14	<p>Monday (Apr. 22)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Du Bois, <i>The Souls of Black Folk</i>, Chapters 7-After Thought. <p>Wednesday (Apr. 24)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>Waging a Living</i>, a 2006 documentary film.

Week 15	<p>Monday (Apr. 29)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Second Essay Proposal Presentation <p>Wednesday (May 1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Second Essay Proposal Presentation
Week 16	<p>Monday (May 6)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Second Essay Proposal Presentation
	<p>Second Paper Due on 5 PM, Monday, May 13.</p>