

POT 2002: Introduction to Political Theory (Fall 2018)

Professor Steven Klein
Lectures: Monday Wednesday 10:40 AM-11:30 AM
Office: Anderson Hall 004

E: stevenklein@ufl.edu
Room: CSE A101
Office Hours: Mon 1 – 4

Teaching Assistants:

Nicholas Dzoba, E: ndzoba@ufl.edu, Office: Anderson 10, Office Hours: Tues, 12 -2
Graham Gallagher, E: earth2graham@ufl.edu, Office: Anderson 10, Office Hours: Wed, 11:45-2, Thurs, 3-4
Glen Billesbach II, E: gbillesbach@ufl.edu, Office: Anderson 10, Office Hours: Mon and Fri, 1:30 – 3:30

Discussion Sections:

19618, Thursday, 10:40 AM-11:30 AM: Dzoba, Room: LEI 0142
19621, Thursday, 11:45 AM-12:35 PM: Dzoba, Room: MAT 0009
19619, Thursday, 12:50 PM-1:40 PM: Gallagher, Room: MAT 0006
19620, Thursday, 1:55 PM-2:45 PM: Gallagher, Room: TUR 1101
19622, Friday, 10:40 AM-11:30 AM: Billesbach, Room: TUR 2353
19623, Friday, 11:45 AM-12:35 PM: Billesbach, Room: TUR 2353

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Political theory is the study of the basic concepts, such as freedom, citizenship, rights, and democracy, through which we make sense of the political world. Political theorists examine how those ideas have evolved over time and how we should think about them today. Most fundamentally, political theorists are interested in how we should organize our social and political life. This course will introduce you to the discipline of political theory by way of three central political questions: **Who should rule? When is inequality justified? And when do the ends justify the means?** We will examine political thinkers from a variety of historical periods and intellectual traditions who provide distinctive visions of political life and so different answers to these fundamental questions. In addition to examining the internal cogency of their arguments, we will explore how their ideas have impacted the political world and how they continue to shape contemporary events. Students will learn to engage with writings from unfamiliar contexts, analyze difficult and complex arguments, and produce rigorous written work.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The following texts are available for purchase at the UF Bookstore. **Please purchase and use these specific editions.** Other readings will be available online or through Canvas.

1. Plato, *The Republic* (trans. C. D. C. Reeve), Hackett
2. Niccolò Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings* (ed. and trans. Wootten), Hackett
3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings* (ed. Cress, trans. Wootten), Hackett
4. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (ed. Todd), Oxford
5. Karl Marx, *Selected Writings* (ed. Simon), Hackett
6. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (ed. Blight and Gooding-Williams), Bedford

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Assignments and Grading: Grades for the course will be determined by five components: two analytic papers (20% each); a midterm (20%); a course final (30%); and attendance and participation (10%). The assignment due dates and exam dates are listed in the course calendar below. I will distribute the prompts for the papers beforehand. The midterm will involve short answer questions. The final will have similar questions as well as a long essay, based on pre-distributed prompts. I will distribute further information about my expectations for each assignment. The papers will be graded by your TA using a grading rubric, which will be available on Canvas. The midterm and short-answer part of the final will be randomly assigned to a TA to grade. For additional help on college paper writing, I recommend Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, 3rd edition, W. W. Norton.

For the first analytic paper, you will be required to bring a draft of your introduction to your discussion section one week before the paper deadline (Sept 29th). During the class, you will exchange your introduction with another student and provide each other feedback. **If you do not complete this, we will deduct 5% points from your grade for the first paper.**

Grading Scale: The grading scale for the course is as follows:

94% – 100% = A, 90% – 93% = A-, 87% – 89% = B+, 84% – 86% = B, 80% – 83% = B-, 77% – 79% = C+, 74% – 76% = C, 70% – 73% = C-, 67% – 69% = D+, 64% – 66% = D, 60% – 63% = D-, < 60% = F

Further information on the University of Florida's standard grading point system can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

Late Paper Policy: In the absence of a legitimate excuse, a late paper will lose 10% per day late (including weekends). A legitimate excuse would be, i.e., an illness with a signed doctor's note.

Lecture Attendance: **Attendance at all lectures is mandatory.** You must check in with your section TA either before the lecture begins or immediately after. If you cannot attend a lecture, you must inform your TA *before* the lecture.

Preparation: You should do the reading for a given lecture prior to coming to class on that day. The lectures will only be helpful if you have already reflected upon the readings. This is a quite reading-intensive course, so keep up! I expect us to maintain a respectful, safe environment for individuals to express their views. If you have concerns about this or feel uncomfortable with the classroom environment, please come talk to me.

Teaching Assistants and Sections: We have three stellar Teaching Assistants for this course. They will run your discussion sections and, in close consultation with me, grade your assignments. Attendance and participation in the sections is mandatory and will be graded as part of your participation grade. **Attendance is the minimum for participation grades.** I expect you to come to sections having done the reading and ready to contribute to discussion. Your TA is your point-person for any questions about the readings or assignments. I strongly encourage you to discuss the assignments with your TA well before they are due. These are challenging assignments, and you will benefit from the help. If you end up having a problem with your grade, you must first take it up with your TA (or the TA who graded your work). If you are still unconvinced or feel that you have been treated unfairly then you may talk to me. However, I reserve the right to change the grade in either direction (up or down). But remember: political theory is not easy. Your TA is a valuable resource for your success in the course. S/he can help you to gain a firm grasp of the material in sections, and aid you in the development of your papers. Make use of them.

Policy on Academic Integrity: All students are required to abide by the University of Florida's Academic Honesty Guidelines, which may be viewed at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>. Most obviously, this means cheating on exams and plagiarism on papers is completely unacceptable. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to: submitting entire papers written by others, submitting portions of papers written by others, copying text without quotations and proper citation, or paraphrasing text without proper attribution in a footnote. In general, I would discourage you from using any outside sources or materials. The assignments are designed so you can complete them just using the readings from the class. In addition to harming your professional career, academic dishonesty will destroy your ability to learn from this class. **If you ever have any questions about whether something counts as academic dishonesty, please contact me.** I am happy to clarify these rules further.

Accommodations: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Please come see me as soon as possible regarding this matter.

Evaluations: You will be required to complete an evaluation of this course. I will also circulate a mid-term feedback form. Your evaluations constructive advice is essential for improving the class. The evaluation will be available at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Electronic Devices: The most important part of this class is active listening and participation. **You are required to turn off your cell phone and put it away (bag, pocket, etc). You may not have a cell phone out during class.** While you may use a computer, I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand. Overall, you will get much more out of this course if you are focused and present.

Lectures, Reading, and Discussion Schedule:

Aug 22 (W): What is political theory?

Part I. Who Should Rule?

Aug 27 (M): "Pericles's Funeral Oration," from Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (c. 431-430 BCE)

Available: <http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/education/thucydides.html>

Aug 29 (W): Plato, *Republic* (c. 380 BCE), Book I, Book II (up to 368d)

Sept 3 (M): LABOR DAY – NO CLASS

Sept 5 (W): Plato, *Republic*, Book II (368e to 376d), Book III (from 412a), Book IV (up to 434d), Book V (from 471c)

Sept 10 (M): ROSH HASHANAH – NO CLASS

Sept 12 (W): Plato, *The Republic*, Book VI, Book VII (up to 521b), Book VII (from 555b)

Sept 17 (M): Machiavelli, *Discourse on Livy*, Book I, Chapters 29, 34, 49, 53-55, 58, Book II, Preface, Chapter 1-3, Book III, Chapters 1, 3

Machiavelli, *Discourse on Livy*, Book I, Chapters 29, 34, 49, 53-55, 58, Book II, Preface, Chapter 1-3, Book III, Chapters 1, 3 ****First Paper Topics Distributed****

Sept 19 (W): YOM KIPPUR – NO CLASS

Discussion Sections: Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (1762), Book I and Book II

Sept 24 (M): Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, Book III and Book IV, Chapters 1-2

Sept 26 (W): Hamilton and Madison, *Federalist Papers* (1788), no. 1, 9, 10, 14-17, 39

Available: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1404>

Sept 29 (F): **Paper Introductions Due**

Oct 1 (M): Hamilton and Madison, *Federalist Papers*, no. 47, 49-51, 53, 55-57, 62-63

Part II. When is inequality justified?

Oct 3 (W): Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), Chapters 1-6 ****First Paper Due ****

Available: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm>

Oct 8 (M): Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 7, 9-12, 14, 18

Oct 10 (W): Rousseau, *A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755), Preface; Part I; notes 9, 15

Oct 15 (M): Rousseau, *A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II; note 16

Oct 17 (W): Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pgs. 298-313, pgs. 331-335; Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Man* (1790), pgs. 1-14

(For Burke readings, read from the paragraph beginning “Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state...” to the paragraph ending “... dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral denominations.” And from the paragraph beginning “It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France...” to the paragraph ending “...under the hoofs of a swinish multitude.”)

Burke Available: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/15679/15679-h/15679-h.htm#REFLECTIONS>

Oct 22 (M): ** Midterm **

Oct 24 (W): Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), Introduction, Chapters 1-2, 4

Oct 29 (M): Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Chapters 6, 9, 12-13

Oct 31 (W): Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (1844), selection (pgs. 2-21)

Nov 5 (M): Karl Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (1844), sections on “Alienated Labor,” “Private Property and Communism,” *The Communist Manifesto* (1848) ****Second Paper Topics Distributed****

Nov 7 (W): Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folks* (1903), The Forethought, Chapters 1-3, 6,

Nov 12 (M): VETERANS DAY – NO CLASS

Nov 14 (W): Du Bois, *Souls of Black Folks*, Chapters 8-10, 14, The Afterthought

Part III. When do the ends justify the means?

Nov 19 (M): Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513), Dedication, Chapters 1-3, 5-9, 11 ****Second Paper Due****

Nov 21 (W): THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

Nov 26 (M): Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapters 15-19, 21-23, 25-26

Nov 28 (W): Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, pg. 32-39 (ending at "...acts of political expropriation."), 76-94 (starting at "We may inquire...") (available on Canvas)

Dec 3 (M): Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (1963)

Available: https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html

Dec 5 (W): Wrap-Up and Review

Final Exam: Tuesday, Dec 11th, 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM, CES A101