

POLS 2496, Sections 005 and 007 – Introduction to Political Philosophy

Fall 2019

Gladfelter Hall - 441

Course Days and Times:

Section 005 - Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:50 AM

Section 007 - Tues/Thurs 11:00 AM - 12:20 PM

Instructor: Matthew Stein

E-Mail: Matt.Stein@temple.edu

E-mails in which a reply is requested (or seems helpful) will usually be responded to within 24 hours on weekdays, and within 48 hours on weekends.

- Please note: I **strongly** advise that you contact me via e-mail rather than through Canvas' inbox/conversation system. I am alerted when I receive e-mails and (like most of you) I check my e-mail with some regularity. I do not necessarily check Canvas as frequently and Canvas does not inform me that someone has sent a message. I will respond to Canvas inbox messages, but you should expect a longer delay in my reply as compared to e-mail replies.

Office Hours and Location: Tuesday/Thursday 12:30-1:30 PM; Gladfelter 421 or by appointment. I *should* be in my office during that time period, but there are times when department events that I am required to attend may take place during my scheduled office hours. Contact me ahead of time to ensure that I'll be holding office hours on a given day, but I should nearly always be available at the scheduled time.

My office is in Gladfelter Hall, room 421.

Course Overview:

Given that this course is an "Introduction to Political Philosophy," I am under the assumption that all students are novices in the field with no exposure to political theory or political philosophy.

When considering "political philosophy," it is important to break the term into its two components. First is "political" which is natural, given the presence of the course in the department of political science. The answers to political questions within political science are often sought through the deducing of knowledge from the material world. That is, for much of political science, knowledge exists in the form of empirical inquiry. This might occur in a variety of both quantitative and qualitative manners. The sorts of political questions that an empirical political scientist might answer are questions such as "Why do some democracies fail while others succeed?" "How do political parties impact knowledge acquisition on the part of voters?" and "What type of voter contact is most likely to sway undecided voters?"

The nature of political philosophy, however, is quite different than the aforementioned approach to politics. Specifically, the philosophical perspective involves knowledge acquisition that

cannot be reduced to the material realm of institutions and behaviors. The “truth” in political philosophy lies beyond the scope of survey responses, observational data, and statistical models. Rather than ask, as a social scientist would, “What policies best enhance democratic participation?” a political philosopher might ask “What is democracy?” or “Is democracy a desirable system of government?”

In this course, we will deal with such topics as justice, freedom/liberty, (in)equality and human nature. By doing so, we will be able to have a better grasp on the foundations of politics that exist prior to the formation of the material politics with which we interact today. To do so, we will explore some of the canon of modern and contemporary political philosophy. While it is fair to critique the selections as being too male and too Eurocentric, you will additionally have the opportunity to expand beyond the horizons of the canon. For the sake of brevity (given the structure of the summer session), this selection has been cultivated not to suggest that this will provide a full or complete understanding of political philosophy, but rather to serve, as the course title suggests, as an introduction to a field that has existed for nearly 2,400 years.

Student Learning Objectives:

Following the course, students should be able to comprehend the political philosophy behind the system under which they currently live – liberalism. Students should be able to identify the core tenets of liberalism, and the philosophical justifications for the system. Additionally, students should be able to identify several critiques of liberalism from class-based, racialized, and gendered perspectives. Students should be able to recognize these critiques and see their applicability within American society.

Although students are encouraged to have different political perspectives, students are also expected to be better able to understand the perspectives and experiences of their peers, and exhibit empathy towards multiple political positions. While I do not expect that all, or even any students will change their political beliefs, students should be able to reconsider their own political ideologies and alter and/or defend them in the face of these political philosophies – whether students maintain or change their political allegiances is their own decision, but students should be able to better defend their positions either way.

Methods of Instruction:

This course will primarily be taught through open dialogue. I will use slideshows which can help explain the context of the reading materials. I will discuss the readings but I will frequently pause to open the class up to discussion and debate. I truly believe that the best way to understand the assigned materials is through as lively and active of a discussion as possible. As long as the discussion remains topical and respectful, this combination of lecturing and open discourse will be continued throughout the semester.

Grading Procedures:

Please note the following!

Grades on Canvas may be inaccurate or otherwise not reflective of your actual progress in the course. Although I am trying to get the grading to match the syllabus, it may be imperfect. For example - your grade on Canvas will not include your attendance and participation grades until the end of the semester

and thus there are times where it won't be 100% clear as to your final grade. Please feel free to ask, at any time, how you are doing in the course, but please do *not* rely on Canvas in calculating your grade.

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

Course Grading	
Short Paper #1	10%
Short Paper #2	15%
Short Paper #3	15%
Final Paper	30%
Pre-Class Assignments	10%
Attendance	10%
Participation	10%
Total	100%

Assignment Submission Information

All assignments will be submitted via Canvas. All written work is to be submitted in .doc or .docx format. Please also note that Google Docs, while fantastic, doesn't always translate perfectly to Microsoft Word. Frequently students lose half of a page due to differences in formatting when they download Google Docs and open them in Word. Be aware of this issue!

Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions

In short - we need you! Students are expected to have completed the reading assignments and any other assigned work prior to each class date and should be prepared to discuss the materials. This seminar is a learning community and political science is best learned through everyone's active engagement with the text and with each other in the classroom. Discussions will help create a vibrant space in which we can all learn and grow intellectually. I encourage discussion and debate among all students as long as everyone does so in a respectful manner.

By participation, I mean a reasonable quantity of high-quality interjections. I am not asking for each person to attempt to speak the greatest number of times possible. Rather, participation should be based on relevance to the topic and discussion which includes asking clarifying questions (remember - if you don't understand something, it's likely that you're not the only one!).

I reserve the right to alter participation points for the entirety of class in the following manner: should participation be extraordinarily low, I will give the class a warning. Should this persist, I am reserving the right to give in class quizzes on the readings to motivate careful reading of the materials before class. I

do *not* want to give quizzes as an incentive as it is more work for everyone, myself included. However, if participation is poor, I will not hesitate and may do so. This is not an empty threat - I have done this in the recent past.

Participation grading will be done as follows: because I understand that some people are inherently shy and/or introverted, I will not penalize anyone by taking away the entirety of their participation grade even if they are entirely silent. Everyone will begin with 3/10 points in participation. You can earn up to 10 points by contributing to class discussions. It is also possible to lose the 3 points through disruptive behavior (e.g. talking during class), other rude activities (e.g. making/taking calls in class, putting on headphones or vaping during class), or through non-attendance of class (since participation implies that you will be in attendance). You can also receive negative points if any or all of these issues persist.

Attendance will be taken every day. I am limiting absences in the following manner: you are limited to 3 absences overall. For absences beyond 3, you will receive a percentage of the 10 points (e.g. if you attended 75% of classes, you receive 7.5/10 points). This will hold for up to 75% of the class sessions. Any classes missed beyond that range will result in an automatic grade deduction of one-half of a grade for each additional absence (e.g. B to B-). This deduction is in addition to dropping your attendance grade entirely. Any absence beyond the 75% threshold means that you will automatically receive a 0/10 on attendance and grade deductions of one-half of a grade. Again, under these circumstances, grade deductions are not from a 10/10, but you will both receive a 0 for attendance **and** begin to lose overall grade points once you exceed the 3 absences.

I am only willing to waive this policy if any absence beyond 3 is accompanied by some form of documentation. If you have any issues regarding attendance, please let me know via email as soon as possible.

Please note the following: politeness, kindness, courteousness, respect and all similar notions are expected of you. If you are disrespectful to your fellow classmates or to me, I will not allow for your participation in class. Continued disrespect will result in further punishment at the departmental, college, or university level.

Paper Assignments

This course is listed as a writing intensive (W) course. Much of your grade will be dependent upon your completion of writing assignments. It is part of my responsibility to assist you in writing a political theory paper and as such, some of our time will be spent going over the process of completing a sufficient philosophical work.

To fulfil this requirement, you will have to complete 4 papers. Each of the first 3 papers will be short and will serve to help you understand some of the theories and theorists that we are reading. You will be able to use the work you put forth in these papers as you craft your final paper, the topic of which is entirely up to you. However, the final paper should build upon some of your thoughts and analysis in earlier papers to fulfil the requirement that the papers scaffold towards completing a final assignment.

We will work towards crafting the beginnings of your final paper in class after the Thanksgiving break but I hope you will have some independent thoughts and ideas before that point in time.

Paper	Value	Learning Objective	Due Date
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Short Paper #1	10%	Following the assignment, you should be able to define liberalism, explain its key components and detail some key similarities and differences between the works of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke.	October 5th by midnight
Short Paper #2	15%	Following the assignment, you should be able to identify critiques of liberalism from either democratic or Marxist positions by analyzing the thoughts of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and/or Karl Marx.	November 2nd by midnight
Short Paper #3	15%	Following the assignment, you should be able to identify critiques of liberalism from perspectives rooted in the politics of identity. You should have an understanding of some race-based, gender-based and intersectional critiques of liberalism.	November 30th by midnight
Final Paper	30%	Following the final paper, you should be able to understand how an issue that is of importance to you relates, philosophically, to liberal political philosophy. You should be able to determine whether your position is in line with, or in opposition to liberal political philosophy, and how the issue you have chosen relates to the core components of liberalism.	December 17th by midnight

Pre-Class Assignments

Prior to class every week, you will be asked to complete 1 of 2 assignments. This is true for all weeks wherein we have class on both Tuesday and Thursday. You will be able to choose which of the two assignments you complete – Tuesday’s or Thursday’s. The assignments will be due **before class** on the day of your chosen assignment. If there is only one day of class in a given week, you *must* complete that assignment to receive completion credit.

The assignments themselves will vary and I will not post assignments for Thursday until after Tuesday’s class has concluded. The assignments can include, but not be limited to the following: answering reading questions, forming your own discussion questions based on the reading, a mini quiz, a short response/reflection, resonance/cultural artifact posting (e.g. video clip, song, news story etc. that you relate to the readings).

A Note on Extra Credit

I rarely, if ever, offer extra credit. If I do offer extra credit, it will be via Canvas announcement. Please do not ask for any extra credit during or at the end of the semester to make up for poor grades – the answer will be **no**. I am not responsible for your GPA maintenance for purposes of scholarships,

fellowships, sports, graduation, matriculation, ability to study abroad etc. The grade you receive is the grade you earned.

On Tuesday, September 3rd there will be a syllabus quiz. It will not count towards your final grade but *will* be the only extra credit opportunity you are guaranteed. For extra credit: do not answer any questions on the quiz – only write your name and the word “pineapple.” If you follow these instructions, you’ll automatically receive 1 point towards your final grade.

Extra credit, if offered, usually involves your attending some event outside of class and conducting a write up on the event. This may be within Temple or outside of the university. All extra credit is at my discretion and will be (1) a rare occurrence if at all, and (2) directly related to the course.

Late Policy

Late assignments will only be accepted under the following conditions: (1) that you speak with me before the due date via e-mail (we can speak in person too, but I want confirmation via e-mail that we have reached an agreement), (2) that lateness is excused because of a reason that I deem acceptable, and (3) this is not a frequent occurrence.

Other instances of lateness will result in an automatic deduction of one-half of a grade (e.g. from A to A-, or from B+ to B). I will not accept any late assignments beyond 3 days unless extreme circumstances arise.

I will make no late exceptions for the final paper. I am giving you as long as possible to turn in the paper but I need to grade the assignment and submit final grades in as timely a fashion as possible. Unless you have a medical excuse from Temple’s Disability Resource Services center, I simply cannot extend the date of the final paper and I will not accept late finals.

Materials

I have made sure that all of the materials needed for the course can be provided for free. **You are under no obligation to purchase any materials for this course.** I will post all reading materials and assignments on Canvas.

You are expected to have the materials accessible for every class. This can be via hard copy printout, or via pdf on your laptop or tablet. Please do not use your phone for this purpose.

I will post all the materials on Canvas, but you may want to purchase hard copies of books if you feel that it will better aid you in your reading. The following books will be used in greater detail:

Thomas Hobbes – *Leviathan*

John Locke – *Second Treatise of Government*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau – *Discourse on Inequality*

Jean-Jacques Rousseau – *The Social Contract*

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels – *The Marx-Engels Reader*

Electronics Policy

It's 2019 and there's essentially no reasonable way that I could ban electronic devices from class. Many people –myself included – have found laptops helpful for having articles accessible and for taking notes. There may be times during the semester that I specifically ask you to use your electronic devices for classroom purposes (e.g. groupwork).

However, I must also remind you that **I can see you from my vantage point**. I can see when you are staring at the screen and laughing at something unrelated to class. I can see when you are texting under your desk. I can see you staring at your screens when I am showing a video with the lights off.

These actions do not go unnoticed and are considered when I calculate your participation grade.

Again - obvious inattentiveness because of your usage of electronic devices is something that I do consider when calculating a portion of your grade. Phones, tablets and laptops may be useful, but they also may be unnecessarily tempting distractions. Bring them and use them at your own discretion.

Note on Academic Conduct

You are expected to abide by the University's rules of academic honesty. When you turn in someone else's work under your own name, and/or paraphrase, quote, or borrow ideas that are not your own without proper citation, you commit plagiarism, a serious academic offense (not to mention a total waste of your time in school) with consequences ranging from failing the course, to disciplinary action by the Dean, to academic dismissal. Given the seriousness of these infractions, there will be no second chances and no leniency concerning plagiarism.

Disability Policy

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Academic Freedom Policy

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The University has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02

A Final Note on the Syllabus

By maintaining enrollment in the course, it is assumed that you have read and agreed to all of the terms of this syllabus – it is effectively a contract. You are under no obligation to continue your enrollment in this section of the course. Please read the syllabus closely, and feel free to ask – in advance – for any clarification necessary. Henceforth, the grade you receive will be the grade you have earned based on living up to your end of the syllabus. Any claims of ignorance to the syllabus' grading, readings, policies, other responsibilities, etc. will be met with reference to this section.

Introduction to Political Philosophy - Reading Schedule

Tuesday	Reading	Thursday	Reading
8/27/19	Syllabus day - no reading!	8/29/19	<u>Topic:</u> None - Class Canceled for APSA <u>Reading:</u> Read the syllabus!!!
9/3/19	<u>Topic:</u> Thomas Hobbes and Proto-liberalism <u>Reading:</u> <i>Leviathan</i> Part I, chapters 4-6, 8, 10	9/5/19	<u>Topic:</u> Thomas Hobbes and Proto-liberalism <u>Reading:</u> <i>Leviathan</i> Part I, chapters 11, 13, 15 Part II, chapters 17, 18
9/10/19	<u>Topic:</u> Thomas Hobbes and Proto-liberalism <u>Reading:</u> <i>Leviathan</i> Part II, chapters 19-21, 30	9/12/19	<u>Topic:</u> John Locke - the "Father of Liberalism" <u>Reading:</u> <i>Second Treatise</i> chapters 2-5, 8-9
9/17/19	<u>Topic:</u> John Locke - the "Father of Liberalism" <u>Reading:</u> <i>Second Treatise</i> chapters 10-15	9/19/19	<u>Topic:</u> John Locke - the "Father of Liberalism" <u>Reading:</u> <i>Second Treatise</i> chapters 16-19
9/24/19	<u>Topic:</u> Jean-Jacques Rousseau Liberalism vs Democracy? <u>Reading:</u> <i>Origin of Inequality</i> Intro, Part 1 and Part 2	9/26/19	<u>Topic:</u> Jean-Jacques Rousseau Liberalism vs Democracy? <u>Reading:</u> <i>The Social Contract</i> Book 1, Intro., Ch 1-7, 9, Book 2 Ch 1-7
10/1/19	<u>Topic:</u> Jean-Jacques Rousseau Liberalism vs Democracy? <u>Reading:</u> <i>The Social Contract</i> Book 3, Ch. 1, 3, 9, 15, 18, Book 4, Ch 1-3	10/3/19	<u>Topic:</u> A Primer on Marx(ism) <u>Reading:</u> Preface to <i>A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy</i> <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> (selection on Estranged Labour)
10/8/19	<u>Topic:</u> A Primer on Marx(ism)	10/10/19	<u>Topic:</u> A Primer on Marx(ism)

	<p><u>Reading:</u> “On the Jewish Question”</p>		<p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> (skip section 3 on socialist and communist literature)</p>
10/15/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> A Primer on Marx(ism)</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> “Critique of the Gotha Program” (Part I, and Part IV ONLY)</p> <p>V.I. Lenin – <i>The State and Revolution</i> (chapter 5 – The Economic Basis of the Withering Away of the State)</p>	10/17/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Race and an Introduction to African-American Political Thought</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Frederick Douglass - “What to the Slave Is the Fourth of July?”</p> <p>W.E.B. Du Bois – “Of Our Spiritual Strivings”</p>
10/22/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Race and an Introduction to African-American Political Thought</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Martin Luther King Jr. - “A Letter from Birmingham Jail”</p> <p>Malcolm X - “The Ballot or the Bullet”</p> <p>Fred Hampton - “Power Anywhere Where There’s People”</p>	10/24/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Race and an Introduction to African-American Political Thought</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Charles Mills – <i>The Racial Contract</i> (Introduction and Chapter 1 “Overview”)</p>
10/29/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Gender, Feminism, and Intersectionality</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Simone de Beauvoir – <i>The Second Sex</i> (Introduction)</p>	10/31/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Gender, Feminism, and Intersectionality</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Francine Deutsch – “Undoing Gender”</p>
11/5/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Gender, Feminism, and Intersectionality</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Heath Fogg-Davis - <i>Beyond Trans: Does Gender Matter?</i> (Introduction)</p> <p>THIS CLASS CANCELED FOR ELECTION DAY</p>	11/7/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Gender, Feminism, and Intersectionality</p> <p><u>In Class Viewing:</u> Heath Fogg-Davis - <i>Beyond Trans: Does Gender Matter?</i> Book talk</p>
11/12/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Gender, Feminism, and Intersectionality</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Kimberle Crenshaw –</p>	11/14/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Social (In)justice - The Politics of Recognition vs Redistribution</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Charles Taylor – “The</p>

	“Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex”		Politics of Recognition” K. Anthony Appiah – “Identity, Authenticity, Survival”
11/19/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Social (In)justice - The Politics of Recognition vs Redistribution</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> Iris Marion Young – “Five Faces of Oppression” (from Justice and the Politics of Difference)</p> <p>Nancy Fraser – “Social Justice in the Age of Identity Politics”</p>	11/21/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> TBA</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> TBA</p>
11/26/19	NO CLASS FALL BREAK	11/28/19	NO CLASS FALL BREAK
12/3/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Your Final Paper</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Craft of Research</i></p>	12/5/19	<p><u>Topic:</u> Your Final Paper</p> <p><u>Reading:</u> <i>Craft of Research</i></p>