POLITICAL SCIENCE 2004: SURVEY OF WESTERN POLITICAL THOUGHT
Spring 2012

Instructor: Jason Robles
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday, 10:30 – 1:30 and by appointment (Ketchum 105A)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a survey of the history of western political thought. We will cover some of the more significant works of political theory across several broad, historical time periods: Antiquity, the Middle Ages/Renaissance, Early Modernity, and Late Modernity. The course is not intended to offer a comprehensive survey of the entire history of western political thought, as this would neither be possible nor desirable in a single semester. You will, nonetheless, become acquainted with the major theories that figure into the tradition. This course is foundational and, as such, serves as a gateway to more advanced study in political theory.

We will examine some of the so-called perennial questions in political philosophy: What is justice? From where do our moral and political obligations derive? What is the proper role of government? What is authority? What is freedom? To what extent can society or government impinge on the freedom of individuals? What do free government and self-government entail? More importantly, what is necessary to the security of free government?

We will also explore possible answers to these (and other) questions via the texts of some major political thinkers since antiquity. We shall study these texts with an eye not only to historical context, but also to contemporary relevance. Thus, the aim of this course is twofold: on one level we seek to gain an understanding of the *history* of western political thought, that is, an understanding of the development of particular ways of thinking about the individual's relation to politics and society; on another level we will explore possible ways in which each of these texts illuminates or helps us to approach problems of *contemporary* political significance.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Plato, *The Last Days of Socrates* (Penguin)
Plato, *Republic*, (Hackett)
Aristotle, *Politics* (Hackett)
Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Hackett)
Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford)
Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Hackett)
Rousseau, *Basic Political Writings* (Hackett)
Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett)

A copy of each text has been placed on reserve in Norlin Library. For students interested in supplemental secondary literature, the following texts have also been placed on reserve in the library (please see me for relevant *suggested* reading in these volumes):

Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision*
Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey, eds., *History of Political Philosophy*

GRADING CRITERIA:

- Class Participation/Discussion (10%)
- First Midterm (20%)
- Second Midterm (20%)
- Paper (30%)
- Final Examination (20%)

COMMUNICATION: The University of Colorado considers email an official form of communication. You are responsible for checking your *colorado.edu* account regularly to ensure receipt of important course information (e.g., schedule changes, review materials, etc.).

RELIGIOUS AND DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS: If you have conflicts with exams or attendance due to religious obligations and/or if you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me ***NO LATER THAN JANUARY 30***. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. The University's policies on disability accommodations can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/disabilityservices.

CLASSROOM DECORUM: Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. The University's policies on classroom decorum can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html. ***THE USE OF PERSONAL COMPUTERS AND/OR CELL PHONES DURING CLASS IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.***

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council. See http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode for more information. ***ANY AND ALL VIOLATIONS OF THE UNIVERSITY HONOR CODE WILL AUTOMATICALLY RESULT IN A FAILING GRADE FOR THE COURSE.***

DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT: Anyone who believes they have been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) or the Office of Judicial Affairs. More information can be obtained at http://www.colorado.edu/odh. The University's policy on Discrimination and Harassment can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

* Indicates handout
† Indicates optional/suggested reading

PART I: Ancient Political Theory and the Renaissance

1/23	Introduction
1/30	Plato, *Apology* ———, *Crito* ———, *Republic*, Book I, 327-354c ———, Book II, 357-376d
2/6	Plato, *Republic,* Book III, 414b-436d ———, Book IV, 439c-445e ———, Book V, 449-476d ———, Book VII, 514-521c ———, Book VIII [†]
2/13	Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I, Ch. 1-2 ———, Book III, Ch. 7-11, 13 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Ch. 1-3, 5-6, 8-9, 15-18, 25-26
2/20	**FIRST MIDTERM**

PART II: Early Modern and Late Modern Political Thought

2/27	Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 13-15, 17-21, 29, 30
3/5	Locke, *Second Treatise*, §§ 4-37, 87, 92, 95-100, 117-142, 211-288, 240-243 Hume, *Of the Original Contract* [*]
3/12	Rousseau, *Second Discourse* ———, *Social Contract* (Selections TBA)
3/19	**SECOND MIDTERM**

PART III: The American Experiment

4/2	Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence* ("Original Rough Draught") [*] ———, *Declaration of Independence* (Adopted by Congress, July 2, 1776) [*] ———, "Letter to Henry Lee, May 8, 1825" [*] Publius, *Federalist*, #1, 9, 10, 14, 39, 48, 49, 51, 57, 78 [*]
4/9	Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience* [*] Lincoln, "Address before the Young Men's Lyceum" (January 27, 1838) [*] ———, "Speech in U.S. House on the War with Mexico" (January 12, 1848) [*] ———, "Speech on the Kansas-Nebraska Act" (October 16, 1854) [*] ———, "Message to Special Session of Congress" (July 4, 1861) [*] ———, "Letter to Erastus Corning et al." (June 12, 1863) [*] ———, "Gettysburg Address" (November 19, 1863) [*] ———, "Second Inaugural Address" (March 4, 1865) [*]

PART IV: Nineteenth Century Political Thought

4/16	Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 1-2
4/23	Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 3-5 Feinberg, "A Ride on the Bus" [*]
4/30	**FINAL EXAM**
5/4	**PAPER DUE**