

# **PSCI 2004: Introduction to Western Political Thought**

Fall semester 2017 • Tu & Th 11-11:50 am • HUMN 1B50

Instructor: Steve Vanderheiden

Office: Ketchum 240 • Office Hours: Tu & Th 9:45-10:45 am and by appointment

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## **Teaching assistants:**

Anna Daily (anna.daily@colorado.edu): sections 013, 015

Owen Fite (owen.fite@colorado.edu): sections 011, 017

Matthew Harvey (matthew.t.harvey@colorado.edu): sections 012, 016

Kimberly Killen (kimberly.killen@colorado.edu): sections 014, 018

## **Course Description:**

This course, which serves as an introduction to political theory, surveys the development of Western political thought from ancient Athens through major Western political thinkers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries. Taking as the core problem of politics the need for people to organize themselves within society in pursuit of common as well as individual objectives, the course examines the various norms and values offered as worthy of collective pursuit and the manner in which these norms are employed in the design of politics and society. The course is organized around major authors and primary texts from the Western canon, with lectures organized around understanding and interpreting historical texts and recitation sections around more contemporary ones, as well as gleaning from both key analytical principles or ideas that can assist in the understanding of contemporary social and political value conflicts.

The course is intended to offer critical perspectives on a range of historical and normative political ideals, and does not advocate any particular ideological position or value system.

## **Course requirements and grading:**

There are three main categories of graded components to the course:

1. **Exams** (65 percent): There will be three exams given over the course of the semester. The first two will be held in class on September 28 and November 2, and are worth 20 points each. The final exam will be held on December 17 and is worth 25 points. All three exams will be comprised of multiple-choice and short answer questions, and the final exam will also include an essay question. Further details on and a study guide for each exam will be provided in class.
2. **Short papers** (20 percent): Students will be assigned to write four short (2-3 page) papers on topics to be announced over the course of the semester (in between exam weeks). Students will have one week to complete each paper. Further details on the paper assignments, as well as tips for writing papers, will be provided in class.
3. **Recitation participation** (15 percent): Students will be assessed on their attendance and participation in weekly recitation sections, with approximately one point possible for each recitation meeting. Assessment will be based on preparation for discussion of assigned course texts as well as weekly recitation reading assignments, along with any further exercises deemed appropriate by the course's teaching assistants.

Late papers and make-up exams resulting from unexcused absences shall be accepted only at the discretion of the instructor, and with an appropriate penalty. All students must take the final exam during its scheduled slot, except as allowed under CU's final exam policy, in order to receive a passing grade for the course.

### **Texts:**

There are five required texts for the course, all of which are available for purchase in the CU bookstore. Used copies of all texts should be readily available, online if not through the bookstore, and can be located using ISBN codes below. All books for the course have been published in multiple editions; be sure to check with the instructor if planning to use alternate editions to verify that assigned readings will be available, and note that editor's introductions and pagination are likely to vary with editions other those listed.

Plato, *The Republic* (ISBN: 9780140455113)

Hobbes, *Leviathan* (ISBN: 9780140431957)

Locke, *Second Treatise* (ISBN: 9780915144860)

Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (ISBN: 9780199535736)

Marx & Engles, *The Communist Manifesto* (ISBN: 9780140447576)

Please notify the instructor if the CU bookstore runs out of any of the above-listed titles. Other required texts are available in .pdf format online through the course's D2L page.

### **University and course policies:**

**Disability accommodations:** If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671 and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>.

**Religious observances:** Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Students needing to miss class or exams for religious observances must inform the instructor during the first two weeks of the semester. [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html).

**Classroom behavior:** Students and faculty share responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Faculty have the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussion and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which opinions are expressed. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. For further information, see <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code) for details.

**Discrimination and harassment:** The CU-Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment, the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships apply to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has 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) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the above referenced policies can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>.

**Honor code:** All students of the CU-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 ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Further details can be found at [www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html) and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>.

**Excused absences:** At the instructor's discretion, students may be given opportunities to make up exams missed as the result of documented illnesses (with note from health care provider) or other (documented) emergencies, religious observances, or official university activities. Wherever possible, students should inform the instructor in advance of such absences in order to make necessary arrangements. The instructor reserves the right to distinguish excusable from non-excusable absences.

**Classroom etiquette:** Students are expected to arrive in the classroom by the scheduled start time and to remain until class is dismissed. Laptop computers and other electronic devices cannot be used in class without the prior consent of the instructor, and shall be subject to appropriate use restrictions. All students are welcome to participate in classroom discussion, and must allow others to do the same.

### **Reading and Lecture Schedule:**

Lectures will focus upon the readings assigned for a given day, as indicated below. Assigned texts should be read in advance of each day's scheduled topic. For each recitation section, students should be prepared to discuss assigned lecture texts assigned up through the day of their recitation. The instructor reserves the prerogative to modify this schedule if necessary.

August 29: Introduction (no reading assignment)

August 31: Plato, *Republic* (Introduction, Parts 1-2)

Recitation: introduction to recitation (no reading assignment)

September 5: Plato, *Republic* (Parts 3-4)

September 7: Plato, *Republic* (read Parts 8-9)

Recitation: from Huxley, *Brave New World* (D2L)

September 12: Plato, *Republic* (Parts 5-7)

September 14: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (editor's Introduction, chs. 1-8), first paper assigned

Recitation: Scott, "For Politics" (D2L)

September 19: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (chs. 9-16)

September 21: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (chs. 17-24), first paper due

Recitation: Scheurman, "Rethinking Crisis Government" (D2L)

September 26: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (chs. 25-31)

September 28: **first exam** (in class)

Recitation: exam preparation (no additional reading assignment)

October 3: Locke, *Second Treatise*, Introduction, chs. 1-7

October 5: Locke, *Second Treatise*, chs. 8-19

Recitation: Vonnegut, "Harrison Bergeron" (D2L)

October 10: Locke, "A Letter Concerning Toleration" (D2L)

October 12: Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Part 1 (D2L), second paper assigned

Recitation: Nozick, from *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (D2L)

October 17: Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Part 2 (D2L)

October 19: Smith, from *The Wealth of Nations*; and Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" (D2L),  
second paper due

Recitation: *American Democracy in an Age of Rising Inequality* (D2L)

October 24: Madison, *Federalist #10 & 51*; Letters of Cato, Brutus (D2L)

October 26: Wollstonecraft, "Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (D2L)

Recitation: Dahl, from *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* (D2L)

October 31: Thoreau, "On the Duty of Civil Disobedience" (D2L)

November 2: second exam (in class)

Recitation: exam preparation (no additional reading assignment)

November 7: Tocqueville, from *Democracy in America* (D2L)

November 9: Mill, *On Liberty*, chs. 1-2, third paper assigned

Recitation: Waldron, "Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom" (D2L)

November 14: Mill, *On Liberty*, chs. 3-5

November 16: Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chs. 1-4, third paper due

Recitation: Richie & Hill, "The Case for PR" (D2L)

November 28: Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chs. 5-7

November 30: Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, Parts 1-2

Recitation: Frye, from *The Politics of Reality* (D2L)

December 5: Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, Parts 3-4

December 7: Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Part I, § 8-12, fourth paper assigned

Recitation: Rogers, "Basic Income in a Just Society" (D2L)

December 12: Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Part II (entire)

December 14: Fanon, from *Black Skin, White Masks* (D2L), fourth paper due

Recitation: Harris, "The Next Civil Rights Movement" and Pinckney, "Black Lives and the Police" (D2L)

December 17 (Sunday), 4:30-6:10 pm: final exam