

Introduction to Political Theory

Mark Hall
Center Street House, Room 12
Class time: 2:40-3:30, MWF
Lemmons 8
(O) (503) 554-2674, (H) (503) 554-0324

PSC 280
Fall 2005

Office Hours: MWF 9:40-10:30, 3:40-5:00; TTH 1:00-3:00; or by appointment.

This course provides an introduction to political theory. It examines the major issues that all political theorists must grapple with, such as the nature of persons, the formation of political societies, and ethics. The different approaches taken to these subjects by some of the most important theorists in the western world are systematically studied and critiqued.

I expect students to attend class regularly, complete reading assignments on time, and participate in class discussions. These activities are worth 10% of your final grade. If it becomes evident that students are not reading the assignments, I reserve the right to give daily quizzes that will count toward this grade. As well, there will be three tests, each of which is worth 20% of the final grade.

Finally, students are required to write an 8-10 page paper rigorously arguing a thesis about one of the thinkers we cover in this class. The paper should give evidence of serious consideration of secondary literature on the topic. Please see my style guide for additional information. Possible paper topics will be suggested in class. The paper due dates and assessment are as follows:

September 9: turn in topic

September 23: turn in thesis statement (1% of grade—if you change your thesis you lose half of this grade). I must approve your thesis statement, and you must turn this assignment in with your final paper.

October 14: turn in copies of three academic journal articles or book chapters on your topic, along with one page critical summaries of each article (5% of grade)

October 31: turn in a substantial, two page outline of your paper. Include a bibliography that cites every work you plan to utilize for the paper (4% of grade)

November 30: turn in final paper (20% of grade)

A final letter grade based upon the percentage of points you earn in this course will be given based on the following scale:

93-100, A; 90-92.99, A-; 87-89.99, B+; 83-86.99, B; 80-82.99, B-; 77-79.99, C+; 73-76.99, C; 70-72.99, C-; 67-69.99, D+; 60-66.99, D; 0-59.99, F

Required Text: Alan Ebenstein, *Introduction to Political Thinkers*, 2nd. ISBN 0-15-506666-8.

Dates and Reading Assignments:

August

29. Introduction. What is political theory? Why is it important?

31. **No class. Read Plato.**

September

2. Plato, 1-33

5. Plato, 33-57

7. **No class, Serve Day**

9. Review Plato

12. Review Plato.

14. Read Aristotle, 58-77

16. Read Aristotle, 77-98

19. Review Aristotle

21. Review Aristotle

23. Is there such a thing as Christian political thought? TBA Class debate.

26. TBA

28. Read Augustine, 99-116

30. Review Augustine

October

3. Review

5. **Test #1**

7. **No class, mid-semester holiday.**

10. Read Aquinas, 117-142

12. Review Aquinas
14. Read Machiavelli, 143-161
17. Review Machiavelli
19. Read Hobbes, 162-175
21. Read Hobbes, 175-186
24. Review Hobbes
26. Read Locke, 187-204
28. Read Locke, 204-214
31. Review Locke, read Declaration of Independence

November

2. Are Christianity and liberalism compatible? TBA

4. Read Rousseau, 215-229

7. Read Rousseau, 229-245

9. Review Rousseau

11. Catch-up and review

14. **Test #2.**

16. Read Mill, 246-265

18. Read Mill, 265-285

21. Read Mill, 286-291

23. Read Marx, 292-309

25. **No Class, Thanksgiving**

28. Read Marx, 309-319

30. Review Marx

December

2. Read Hayek, 320-340

5. Read Rawls, 341-357

7. Review Rawls

9. Catch up and review [add next time:
<http://www.econlib.org/library/Essays/rdPncl1.html>]

14. Final Exam, 1:00 p.m.

PLEASE NOTE: I DO NOT GIVE EARLY FINALS. PLEASE PLAN ACCORDINGLY.

The Academic Resource Center (ARC) provides all students with free writing consultation, general tutoring, and learning enhancement strategies (e.g., techniques to improve reading, note-taking, study, time management). Students can make an appointment with the ARC Writing Center for guidance and feedback on written projects. ARC consultants can also provide basic tutoring for many general education and other courses. The ARC hours of operation are from 3:00-10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 12:30-4:30 p.m. on Friday. Go to www.georgefox.edu/arc/ for information about consultants' areas of study, how to schedule an appointment, and helpful learning tools. Call Rick Muthiah, Director of the Academic Resource Center, at x2314 if you have questions.

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please contact the Disability Services office early in the term so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide current documentation of your disability to Disability Services. For more information, contact Rick Muthiah, Director of Disability Services (ext. 2314 or rmuthiah@georgefox.edu), or go to ds.georgefox.edu.