

Introduction to Political Science

Mark David Hall
Pennington House, 202B
Class time: MWF 10:00-10:50

PSCI 150
Spring 2015
Location: Stevens 109

(O) (503) 554-2674, (H) (503) 554-0324. We don't check our home answering machine, so don't leave a message at this number.

Email: mhall@georgefox.edu. I prefer face-to-face meetings, but I check my email regularly.

Office Hours: Office Hours: MW 11:00-11:50; TTH 8:00-11:50; 2:00-3:00 [I am often but now always in my office until 5:00].

This course provides an introduction to the study of politics. We will consider the nature and purpose of politics, and will look at the different sub-fields within the discipline of political science. A major theme of the course is the proper relationship between Christianity and politics. Students completing the course will be familiar with the basic fields of political science and will have been challenged to approach the subject from a Christian perspective.

Please note: unless I clearly and unambiguously change something on this syllabus, you are responsible for everything on it. You should read it, keep it, and follow it religiously.

Required books:

Plato, *The Republic*. Trans. Desmond Lee, 2nd rev. ed. New York: Penguin Books, 2003. Make sure to get the edition published in 2003 with the ISBN number of 0-140-44914-0. The publisher printed other versions of its 2nd edition with different paginations.

The Bible, any version.

Stephen Monsma and Christopher Soper, *The Challenge of Pluralism: Church and State in Five Industrialized Democracies*, 2nd ed.

A variety of documents available on FoxTALE.

Other Required Materials:

Students are required to read *The New York Times* each day. Read *at least* all of the front-page stories dealing with national and international politics. We will discuss these stories regularly, and quiz questions will be based on them.

Course Requirements and Grading:

I expect students to attend class regularly, complete reading assignments on time, and participate in class discussions. Throughout the semester I will give 17 short quizzes at the beginning of class over recent readings and the preceding week's major news. I will drop 5 of

the quizzes under the assumption that students will miss or do poorly on 5 quizzes because of illness, sporting events, travel, job interviews, family emergencies, tardiness, etc. **I will not give make-up quizzes for any reason.** If you think you will miss more than 5 quizzes this semester, let me know immediately. Combined quiz scores are worth 16% of your final grade. As well, we will have three exams, each of which is worth 18% of your final grade.

Op-Ed Essays

Finally, students are required to write three opinion pieces about current political controversies (each is worth 10% of your final grade). Editorials should be typed, double spaced, and 600-700 words long (about two full pages—use the “word count” function under the “tools” bar in Microsoft Word to ensure that you fall within these guidelines). Please indicate the number of words in the body of the text (i.e. don’t include cover page, footnotes, bibliography, etc.) along with your name, date, and box number.

One piece should be written for a Christian audience, one for a general audience, and one for either. You may write them in any order, just indicate your audience along with your name. I will add three points to your score if you publish your piece in *The Crescent*, and eight points if you publish it in *The Oregonian*, *The Graphic*, or a similar paper. **You must come by my office in Pennington House to chat with about your first topic.**

Each opinion piece should rigorously argue a thesis. Although newspaper editorials do not include footnotes, you should use them for the purposes of this assignment to document quotes, facts, etc. If you are unfamiliar with op-eds, you should read columnists such as Ruth Marcus or George Will to get a feel for the format. For op-ed pieces, paragraphs should generally not be more than three sentences long. I strongly recommend that you buy, read, and follow religiously Strunk and White, *The Elements of Style*.

Editorials are due at the beginning of class on **February 2, February 27, and March 18.** All written assignments must be turned in by hand and on paper (no e-mail submissions). Late assignments will be penalized 3 points every 24-hour period they are late (excluding weekends). *Absolutely no extensions will be given for computer/printer problems. Plan ahead and back up your files.*

You may discuss your topic with other students, and they may proofread your essay, but all of your research and writing must be done by you alone. Plagiarism will result in an automatic “F” on the paper or, if flagrant enough, the course. A good definition of plagiarism, with links to sites that show you how to avoid it, may be found at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>. I encourage you to take your essay to George Fox’s Writing Center for assistance.

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

All readings proceeded with a “#” refer to documents on FoxTALE.

Readings

January

12. Introduction.

14. The quest for justice is a key concern of politics. The following selection can be confusing to first time readers. Don't worry about following every twist of the argument. Instead, focus on the main ideas. The debate between Socrates and Thrasymachus has reoccurred throughout history and is in full bloom today. Can you identify counterparts to Plato and/or Thrasymachus? Plato, Skim part I, sections 1-2 (pp. 1-15); Read part I, section 3 (pp. 15-29).

The organization of society and the need for government. The relationship between theory and good government. Plato, part II, sections 1-3 (pp. 53-66); part VII, sections 7, 1 (pp. 240-248; 189-192).

16. **No class, I'm out of town.**

19. **No class, MLK Day**

21. The just state and civil society: the totalitarian solution. Plato on Guardians, education, and family. Plato, part IV, sections 1-3 (pp. 112-129); part VI, sections 1-2 and introduction to section 3 (pp. 157-176).

23. Justice in the state and the individual: Plato, part V, sections 1-4 (pp. 130-156); skim part IX, sections 6-8 (pp. 290-308).

Plato approached the problem of politics in a deductive manner and arrived at a totalitarian solution. Although Aristotle was Plato's student, he took an inductive approach to politics and arrived at conclusions that are far more palatable for most of us. Selections from Aristotle's *Politics* are available in the photocopy packet.

26. Aristotle on politics: **Reading #1 (FoxTALE)**

Plato and Aristotle illustrate two major approaches to the study of politics and two major conceptions of ideal regimes. They also help show the important implications theoretical ideas can have for real world politics. Christians who affirm the Lordship of Christ in every human endeavor, including politics, should carefully consider the relevance of biblical revelation for politics. Please read the following passages with an eye to questions such as: (1) what basic principles can we derive from the Bible that are relevant to the study of politics (e.g., what can

we learn about human nature, justice, etc.)? (2) what is the kingdom of God? (3) how can one take passages like those in the Sermon on the Mount seriously in real life? (4) why and to what extent should Christians obey political authority?

28. Genesis 1-3; Matthew 1-10.

[29. Bonus points for attending guest lecture, Hoover 105, 7:00]

30. Matthew 11-21.

February

2. Acts 4; Romans 1-2, 13. **First Editorial due at beginning of class.**

4. Read Mayflower compact and early state constitutions, # 2, 4.

6. Lockean liberalism, #3

9. Catch-up

11. Review

13. **Test #1**

We turn now to the creation and preservation of political institutions. We will use the American system of government as a case study.

16. The Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and Federalist 10: # 5, #6, #7.

October

18. Amendments 11-27, notes on federalism and Congress, #8. Go to the following page and read the entries on the Legislative Branch and the Constitution:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/our-government>.

20. The Presidency #9. Go to the following page and read the entries on the Executive Branch: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/our-government>. The following website has a marvelous collection of past advertisements from presidential campaigns: <http://livingroomcandidate.movingimage.us>. View four ads including: 1952 “High Prices” (3rd from top on left); 1964 “Daisy” (2nd from top on left); 1972 “McGovern Defense” (3rd from top on left).

23. Public opinion and voting behavior: **Reading #18.**

25. Religion and the 2008 election, #10.

27. Polling, Interest Groups, and Campaign Finance, read #11. **Op-ed #2 due.**

1. Go to <http://www.pollingreport.com>, pick a topic, and carefully consider three polls on it. Are the polls consistent? Are the questions fairly worded?

2. Read the following page on interest groups:
<http://thisnation.com/textbook/participants-groups.html>.

March

2. Judiciary and Constitutional Rights and Liberties: Read #12, 13. Go to the following page and read the entry on the Judiciary: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/our-government>

4. Equal Protection, Read # 14 a and b (notes and *Plessy*).

6. Catch up.

9. Catch up and Review.

11. **Test #2.**

By measure, the American political experiment has been an enormous success. However, it is foolish to assume there is not plenty of room for improvement. One important tool for helping us understand the strengths and weaknesses of America's constitutional order is comparison. By comparing different governments, we can better understand the strengths and weaknesses of our own. As well, by comparing public policy in different countries, we can gain insights about what sort of policies America should follow or reject.

13. Introduction and America: Monsma and Soper: 1-50.

16. Religion Clauses Continued: Go to <http://www.findlaw.com/casecode/supreme.html> and retrieve and skim full opinions for cases *McCreary County v. ACLU* or *Van Orden v. Perry* (2005) [the Ten Commandments cases].

18. America concluded.

20. Holland: Monsma and Soper, 1-14, 51-92. **Op-ed #3 due.**

23-27. Spring Break

30. Australia, 93-130.

April

1. England, 131-168

3. **No Class, Good Friday**

6. Germany and conclusion, 169-238.

8. International Relations: Introduction: **#19**. Nations necessarily interact with each other. The sub-discipline of international relations studies their interaction and, of particular concern to us, attempts to develop ways to resolve conflicts peacefully.

10. International Development: Watch and take notes on:

http://www.ted.com/talks/hans_rosling_reveals_new_insights_on_poverty.html

13. Read Universal Declaration of Human Rights (sometimes referred to as United Nations Declaration of Human Rights). This is available on the internet, see, for instance, <http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>.

Go to U.S. Department of State and find the most recent annual report on International Religious Freedom. Read the executive summary for China and two other country reports. Read Paul Marshall's article "Patterns and Contexts of Religious Freedom and Persecution," **#15**.

15. Read Samuel Huntington's "Clash of Civilizations." **#20**. Look up and carefully consider correlations on the following two sites:

Civil Liberties:

<http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=363&year=2011>

Economic Freedom:

<http://www.heritage.org/index/ranking.aspx>

And watch: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jbkSRLYSojo>

17. Case studies: "Sino-U.S. Competition and U.S. Security: How Do We Assess the Military Balance?" <http://www.aei.org/papers/foreign-and-defense-policy/regional/asia/sino-us-competition-and-us-security-how-do-we-assess-the-military-balance/>

Also read entry for China from CIA Factbook on China and North Korea. (Just google CIA factbook and go from there).

20. Is war ever an option in international relations? On Pacifism, read: "A Guide for Friends on Conscientious Objection to War" (part 1 and 2) [on foxtale] and "On Just War Theory," **Read #17**.

22. Terrorism. What is it? Is it effective? How may it best be combated? Read 2008 State Department Report **#16** [slightly dated, but a better overview than contained in more recent versions.]

24. Catch up and Review

Final Exam: . PLEASE NOTE: I DO NOT GIVE EARLY FINALS. PLEASE PLAN

ACCORDINGLY.

The **Academic Resource Center (ARC)** on the Newberg campus provides all students with free writing consultation, academic coaching, and learning strategies (e.g., techniques to improve reading, note-taking, study, time management). The ARC, located in the basement of the Murdock Learning Resources Center (library), is open from 1:00-10:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday, and 12:00-4:00 p.m. on Friday. To schedule an appointment, go to the online schedule at arcschedule.georgefox.edu, call 503-554-2327, or email the_arc@georgefox.edu. Visit arc.georgefox.edu for information about ARC Consultants' areas of study, instructions for scheduling an appointment, learning tips, and a list of other tutoring options on campus.

Contact Melanie Mock (mmock@georgefox.edu, 503-554-2605) for questions about writing consultation services at the ARC. Contact Rick Muthiah (rmuthiah@georgefox.edu, 503-554-2314) if you have questions about general ARC services.

Disability Services Syllabus Information

If you have specific physical, psychiatric, or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please contact the Disability Services Office as early as possible so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide current documentation of your disability to the Disability Services Office. For more information, go to ds.georgefox.edu or contact Rick Muthiah, Associate Director of Learning Support Services (503-554-2314 or rmuthiah@georgefox.edu).

Study Guide

To do well in this class you must read every assignment, think about it, review it, and talk about it. You should come to every class, participate fully, and take the material seriously. If you do these things you should have little trouble with the quizzes. When it is time to take the first test, I suggest you review all of the material two days before the exam, meet with a study group the night before the exam, go to bed early and get a good night's sleep.

What sort of questions will be on the exam? I ask only three types of questions in this class: short answer, short essay, and long essay.

Short answer questions should be answered with a paragraph about 3-5 sentences long. They are usually worth 10 points each. Sample questions include:

1. Briefly describe and explain the significance of Plato's allegory of the cave.
2. Discuss Aristotle's six-fold classification of states. Which of the states are ideal but unrealistic? Which is the best possible state?

Short essay questions should be answered with an essay 2-3 paragraphs long. They are usually worth 25 points each. A sample question:

1. What major principles can be derived from the Bible that are relevant to politics. In your answer make sure to discuss human nature, individual ethics, and political obligation.

A longer essay question should be answered with a very well organized 5-6 paragraph essay. It would be worth 40-50 points. A sample question:

1. Compare and contrast the extent to which the governments of United States, Holland, and England encourage or support religion. Among other things, make sure to discuss how each country approaches public education and the funding of private education. Which approach is best? Why?

Please note: these questions are samples only. They may or may not be on the exam. The best way to prepare for the exam is to master all of the material we have covered.

