

Grande Prairie Regional College

Political Studies 2100
History of Political Thought
September 2005 to April 2006
(Full year course)

Instructor: Tom Enders, PhD Room: B303
Office: C303 Time: M 11:30-12:50;
Telephone: 539-2996 F 10:00-11:20
e-mail: tenders@gprc.ab.ca
Office hours: Wed. 4-5 p.m.; Thurs. 1:30-3 p.m. and by appointment

Course Description:

The first part of this course presents a critical survey of Western political philosophy from ancient Greece to the Middle Ages. Topics to be examined include views of human nature and their political relevance, democracy and the best form of government, the political importance of education and popular culture, moral obligation to obey the law, the nature of law, the relationship of church and state, justice, and the difference between relative or contextual and universal understandings of political truths.

Political thinkers to be studied include Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Augustine, Aquinas and Machiavelli.

The second part of this course presents and examines the political ideas of the great thinkers of the West from the times of Thomas Hobbes in the sixteenth century through the nineteenth century. Topics to be given prominent consideration include the consent of the governed, the limits of authority, rights, liberty, equality, social contract theory, property, entitlements of labour, and the justifications of capitalism.

Political thinkers to be studied include Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Burke, Wollstonecraft, J.S. Mill, Hegel and Marx and Engels.

While attention will be given to the historical and cultural context of the views of thinkers, the course will focus on the significance of their ideas for us today.

Course Requirements for the two terms:

Attendance and Participation	10%
Three papers	35%
Four exams	55%

Marks will be given in percentage figures before conversion to a letter grade.

Required Texts:

1. John Hallowell and Jene M. Porter, Political Philosophy: The Search for Humanity and Order. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice Hall Canada, 1997.
2. Plato, Great Dialogues of Plato. Translation by W.H.D. Rouse. Penguin.
3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Rousseau's Political Writings. Alan Ritter & Julia Bondanella, editors. New York, New York: W.W. Norton, 1988.
4. John Stuart Mill, On Liberty and other Essays. John Gray, editor. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
5. Karl Marx & F. Engels, The Marx-Engels Reader, 2nd edition. Edited by Robert C. Tucker. New York, New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978.
6. Selected readings from the internet

Topics and Readings

[Note: this list is subject to revision]

PART ONE: Ancient and Medieval Political Thought

I. Introduction to the study of political philosophy.

Read Hallowell and Porter [hereafter H&P] "Preface" and "Introduction"

II. Plato - "The Apology" and "Crito." Life and death of Socrates. The nature and extent of political obligation (obligation to obey the law).

- Read H&P ch. 1: Plato, pp. 1-10 and both "The Apology" and "Crito"

III. Plato - "Gorgias," The Republic and The Laws The divided and harmonious human soul. In search of the good life, justice and the just society, the good ruler (the philosopher king), right education. Nature vs. convention. Leo Strauss, Plato, George Bush and the American neo-conservatives.

Read: H&P ch. 1: Plato, pp. 10-51 and...

- Plato, The Republic

- Wikipedia, "Leo Strauss"

- Thomas G. West, "Leo Strauss and American Foreign Policy."

Posted 25 April, 2005 Approx. 7 pages at www.claremont.org/writings/crb/summer2004/west.html

IV. Aristotle - The Nicomachean Ethics and The Politics. Happiness. Moral and intellectual virtue. Justice. Friendship. The political association. The best regime. The best education.

Read H&P ch. 2: Aristotle and...

- Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics, translated by W.D. Ross. Book I chapters 1-3, 7; Book V chapters 1-3, 6,7; Book VIII chapters 1,3,

9-11. Retrieve from:

<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/nicomachean/>
- Aristotle, The Politics, translated by Jowett. Book I, chapters 1,3, 4, 6-9; Book II, chapters 1-5; Book III, chapters 1,34, 6-9; Book IV, chapters 1,2,4,5,8,11,12; Book V, chapters 1,8,11; Book VII, chapters 1-3, 13,14. Retrieve from <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/a/aristotle/a8po/>

V. The Hellenistic Age and the Roman Lawyers: early Cynics, Epicureanism, Stoicism, Polybius, Cicero and Roman law.
Read H&P ch. 3

VI. Augustine and the Early Middle Ages. Augustine's Christian perspective on human nature, the state, slavery, property...
Read H&P ch. 4

VII. Aquinas. Reason and revelation. Natural law, just law, just war, just regime, private property...
Read H&P ch. 5: St. Thomas Aquinas and the High Middle Ages

VIII. Machiavelli. The Prince and Discourses on the First Ten Books of Titus Livius. Human nature and successful political rule. Political power and realism.

Read H&P ch. 6 and

- The Prince, Preface and chapters V-IX, XI-XVIII, XXI, XXV. Retrieve from <http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/m/m149p/>

- The Discourses, pages TBA. Retrieve from

<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/m/machiavelli/niccolo/m149d/>

PART TWO: **Modern Political Thought**

I. Rise of Modern Science, 17th century philosophical revolution and Thomas Hobbes and his Leviathan. Individualism, capitalism, the self-interested social contract. The rights of sovereigns and the liberty of citizens.

Read H&P ch. 7 and

- Hobbes, Leviathan, author's introduction, Part I chapters 1-21, 26-31.

II. John Locke - "Letter Concerning Toleration," "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," and Second Treatise of Government. A different "state of nature"? Locke's social contract. The right to rebel. Natural rights and property rights.

Read H&P ch. 8 and

- "Letter Concerning Understanding." Retrieve from

www.constitution.org/jl/tolerati.htm (26 pages)

- Second Treatise chapters 1-13, 16 to end. Retrieve from

<http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/l/locke/john/l81s/>

III. Rousseau - "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" and The Social Contract. Human nature. Private property. Political inequality. Freedom and the general will. Democracy and

totalitarianism. Women. Education.

Read H&P ch. 9 and

- "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality"
- The Social Contract
- selected readings from the Norton Critical Edition TBA

V. Edmund Burke. Reflections on the Revolution in France. Human reason. Inequality. Tradition. The folly of revolution in the name of abstract natural rights.

Read:

- Reflections on the Revolution in France, selected sections TBA.
- Retrieve from: www.bartleby.com/24/3

VI. Mary Wollstonecraft - A Vindication of the Rights of Woman Equality and equal educational opportunities for women.

Read:

- A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, selected sections TBA.
- Retrieve from: www.bartleby.com/144/

VII. Utilitarianism, Bentham and Mill.

Read H&P ch. 10 pp. 487-520

VIII. John Stuart Mill on women, on liberty and representative government.

Read H&P ch. 10 pp. 520-46 and

- "The Subjection of Women," pages TBA and "On Liberty"

IX. Karl Marx and F. Engels - Capitalism and private property critiqued. Religion and politics. "Scientific socialism"

Read H&P ch. 11 and

- "Preface" (to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy)
- "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844"
- "Theses on Feuerbach"
- "Manifesto of the Communist Party"
- "Critique of the Gotha Programme"
- "Socialism: Utopian and Scientific"