Politcal Science 7
Introduction to Political Philosophy
El Camino College, Summer 2015

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Office Hours (SOCS 205): Monday 1:30 – 2:30 pm, or by appointment.

Course Time & Location:
Section 2683: Mondays through Thursdays, 10:30 am – 12:35 pm (SOCS 205)

Course Description:

In this course, students will examine political theory as presented in the primary works of major Western thinkers. Fundamental issues to be explored include human nature, justice, power, the role of the state, and the legitimate scope of government.

Course Methodology:

This course will consist of four in-class lectures per week, running for approximately two hours. Each lecture will focus on a different topic in political theory (for example, Liberty, Democracy, Equality and Social Justice) and each lecture will focus on a selected reading. Student are expected to complete the readings for each lecture before the beginning of class. Of the lectures, five will also focus on a particular political philosopher and his or her contribution to a specific branch of study. For example, related to the topic of Equality and Social Justice, we will examine Iris M. Young’s seminal essay, “Five Faces of Oppression”. These lectures will also be devoted to student participation and debate around a set of questions provided by the instructor which will attempt to establish why the contribution is controversial and important. In addition to the readings, students will be expected to attend all lectures and participate.

Course assignments will include both a midterm and final exam as well as a 5-6 page research paper on a topic provided by the instructor. Also, there will be a short weekly quizzes on the Key Concepts from the course textbook.

Expected Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) and Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should (1) have an understanding of how philosophers, from ancient Greece through the modern era, have considered and conceptualized a variety of ideas critical to the discourse of political theory; (2) apply analytical and interpretive frameworks to particular theories and concepts; (3) write clear critical analyses of the context, content, and implications of particular political theories; (4) describe and assess the value of a state based on privilege versus one based on equality, or the apparent conflict between liberty and equality in a democratic state; (5) describe two distinct theories of the just state, and compare and contrast their ideas on political power and social justice.
Specifically, **students will be able to:**

1. Analyze and interpret the writings of Western **classical and modern political theorists**.
2. Distinguish between the **descriptive and normative** elements of political thinking.
3. Identify and evaluate the **changing roles of Western political theory**, and the relation between **theory and practice**.
4. Assess and analyze the theoretical foundations of **enduring political questions** including the **role of the state**, the **obligation** of citizens/subjects to the state and vice versa, **basic values** that should be pursued, and to **what end**, and by **what means** those values should be pursued.
5. Distinguish between various philosophical conceptions of the **social contract**.
6. Explain and analyze the concept of **natural law**.
7. Identify and explain the foundations of **political legitimacy** and how it may be maintained.
8. Explain and distinguish the relation between **theories of human nature** and **conceptions of the just state**.

**Course Requirements and Assignments:**

**GRADING BREAKDOWN:**

- Class participation and attendance – 5%
- Quizzes – **20%**
- Midterm Exam – **25%**
- Research Paper (5-6 pages) – **25%**
- Final Exam – **25%**

**PARTICIPATION and ATTENDANCE**

*Attendance and participation* in lectures is **mandatory** and attendance will be taken at the start of each class.

**QUIZZES**

There will be **14 in-class quizzes** during the course. Quizzes will be given at the end of class and students will have 10 minutes to finish. The quizzes will not be difficult, but are designed to encourage students to attend lectures and keep up with the readings.

**MIDTERM & FINAL EXAMS**

The course exams will consist of **three sections:** (1) a set of **multiple choice** questions pertaining to the key themes and concepts of the course; (2) a set of **short-answer questions** requiring students to briefly elaborate on the major issues, answers should be roughly a paragraph long; (3) two **essay questions** of which the students will **select one to respond to**, answers should be roughly 3 to 5 paragraphs long (students will receive the possible essay questions before the exam). Exams require a **bluebook** and will be closed book and no notes.
RESEARCH PAPER
Students will write one 5-6 page (double spaced) paper addressing a question concerning the themes and issues introduced during the course. Students will be assigned the paper topic on **Wednesday, July 29**. Papers will be due at the start of class on **Monday, August 10**. Papers will be evaluated on the degree to which they respond to the assigned question, the accuracy and force of their arguments, and the clarity of their writing. Late papers will lose **three points per day late**.

EXTRA CREDIT
Various extra credit assignments and projects may be given throughout the course at the instructor’s discretion.

Course Texts: Both texts are available at the college bookstore and online.


- **OPTIONAL**: Steven M. Cahn, ed. (2015) *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*, third edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press). **Listed as PP** in the Course Schedule (PDFs of readings from this text will also be emailed to students).

**Course Schedule:**

Please complete the assigned reading **BEFORE** each lecture.

**Week 1**

- **LECTURE 1**: Tuesday, July 7  
  **Course Introduction**  
  **Reading**: *PT*, Introduction.

- **LECTURE 2**: Wednesday, July 8  
  **Political Authority and Obligation**  
  **Reading**: *PT*, chapter 1.

- **LECTURE 3**: Thursday, July 9  
  **Hobbes, “Leviathan”**  
  **Reading**: *PP*, pp. 309-343.

**Week 2**

- **LECTURE 4**: Monday, July 13  
  **Liberty**  
  **Reading**: *PT*, chapter 2.

- **LECTURE 5**: Tuesday, July 14  
  **Toleration**  
  **Reading**: *PT*, chapter 3.
LECTURE 6: Wednesday, July 15
Democracy
Reading: PT, chapter 4.

LECTURE 7: Thursday, July 16
Movie: “Europe in One Room”
Habermas, “Three Normative Models”
Reading: PP, pp. 992-998.

Week 3

LECTURE 8: Monday, July 20
Equality and Social Justice
Reading: PT, chapter 5.

LECTURE 9: Tuesday, July 21
Young, “Five Faces of Oppression”
Reading: PP, pp. 1054-72.

LECTURE 10: Wednesday, July 22
Crime and Punishment
Reading: PT, chapter 6.

LECTURE 11: Thursday, July 23
Multiculturalism
Reading: PT, chapter 7.

Week 4

Monday, July 27
MIDTERM EXAM

LECTURE 12: Tuesday, July 28
Human Rights
Reading: PT, chapter 8.

LECTURE 13: Wednesday, July 29
Paper Topics Assigned
“Universal Declaration of Human Rights”
Reading: PP, pp. 826-29.

LECTURE 14: Thursday, July 30
Global Justice
Reading: PT, chapter 9.

Week 5

LECTURE 15: Monday, August 3
War and Intervention
Reading: PT, chapter 10

LECTURE 16: Tuesday, August 4
Machiavelli, “The Prince”
Reading: PT, chapter 10.
LECTURE 21:  Wednesday, August 5  
Environment  
Reading: PT, chapter 11.

LECTURE 22:  Thursday, August 6  
Gender  
Reading: PT, chapter 12.

Week 6

LECTURE 23:  Monday, August 10  
Generations  
Reading: PT, chapter 13.

PAPERS DUE TODAY: Monday, August 10.

LECTURE 24:  Tuesday, August 11  
Coates, “The Case for Reparations”  
Reading: via email.

LECTURE 25:  Wednesday, August 12  
Power  
Reading: PT, chapter 14

Thursday, August 13  
FINAL EXAM

Course Policies and Suggestions:

1. You will do well on your exams if you read and re-read the texts carefully, attend class and participate, and ask for help if you feel yourself getting confused or behind.

2. Large classes are not ideal, but many studies have shown that students learn well in them if everybody works together carefully. To be specific: (a) please put away non-class material during lecture; (b) please silence or preferably turn off all cellphones during lecture; (c) while taking notes on laptop computers or tablet devices is acceptable, please refrain from visiting websites unrelated to the course or lecture (e.g. Facebook, etc.); (d) finally, please do not talk in class unless called upon. This as well as the other rules are important. Please be considerate of your fellow students (and the instructor).

3. Please bring the readings to class each day. Frequent references will be made to the text and reading along will be immensely useful to you later when you are preparing for exams.

4. Please take advantage of office hours. Lecturers enjoying talking with and getting to know their students. It is especially important that you contact your instructor if you feel confused or if you are falling behind. Instructors are here to help.

5. Students are encouraged to ask questions in class. While the last portion of class will be set aside for this specific purpose, questions during the lecture are also welcome, even if they are only for clarification or repetition. Every question is useful, and if you feel confused it is likely that other people do as well.
6. Please arrive to class on time. Important announcements (deadlines, discussion of paper topics and exams and so on) frequently come in the first five to ten minutes of class. If you arrive late you risk missing important information that could influence your grade.

7. The course paper is due at the beginning of class on the day stipulated in the course schedule. All late papers lose three marks per day late (e.g. an A+ paper becomes an A-paper) unless a verifiable doctor’s note is provided.

8. Please bring blue books for both the midterm and the final exam (two blue books will be needed).

9. Your paper should be typed, double spaced, with one-inch margins, page numbers, and written in 12-point font size.

10. Make sure that your correct and current email address is registered with the college so that you can receive course emails. The instructor will occasionally send out class emails regarding additions or updates to the course readings as well as other matters relating to the course material. Check your email often.

11. If you have any questions about this course, its assignments, quizzes, exams, readings or other requirements, please contact the instructor by email or after class or during office hours.

ADA Statement:

El Camino College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. A student with a disability, who would like to request an academic accommodation, is responsible for identifying herself/himself to the instructor and to the Special Resources Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resources Center at phone number 310-660-3295.