

Course Outline

Course purpose: To explore the teachings of six great political thinkers – Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Rousseau, Mill, and Voegelin – on the nature of politics, the purpose of the State, as well as such key political issues of freedom, equality and justice. We shall be emphasizing how these political thinkers’ view of human nature provides the foundation for their political teachings.

Course outline: All assignments for the week must be completed on the Monday of the week. It is crucial for you to complete a *careful reading* of assignments on a weekly basis so as not to get behind and for you to be prepared to answer my questions concerning the readings and contribute to class discussion.

Required texts: Copies of the required texts are available at Sundance Bookstore.

- (A) Deutsch, K. and Fornieri, J., An Invitation to Political Thought (referred to as D&F)
- (B) Mill, On Liberty (Penguin paper, Ryan (ed.) – referred to as Mill)
- (C) Voegelin, Science, Politics and Gnosticism (referred to as Voegelin)
- (D) Postman, Technopoly (referred to as Postman)

Weeks

Assignments

Week #1

“Thinking Politically”

Read D&F, pp. xxi-xxviii

Weeks #2 and #3

ARISTOTLE

(A) Human Nature and the State

(A) Read D&F, pp. 36-49

(B) Types of Regimes and Best Possible Regime

(B) Read D&F, pp. 49-68

Weeks #4 and #5

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

(A) God and Human Nature

(A) Read D&F, pp. 106-131

(B) The State and War

(B) Read D&F, pp. 131-141

Weeks #5 and #6
HOBBES

(A) Human Nature, the State of Nature
and the Social Contract

(A) Read D&F, pp. 226-247

(B) Sovereignty and Absolute Obedience

(B) Read D&F, pp. 247-269

Week #7

MIDTERM EXAM

Weeks #8 and #9
ROUSSEAU

(A) Human Nature, Inequality and the
Problem of Oppression

(A) Read D&F, pp. 312-331

(B) The General Will and Popular Sovereignty

(B) Read D&F, pp. 331-349

Weeks #10, #11 and #12
MILL

(A) Human Nature, Progress and the
Defense of Individuality

(A) Read D&F, pp. 442-466

(B) Reading On Liberty

(B) Read Mill – Introduction
And complete text

Week #13

(A) Read Voegelin complete text

Week #14

(A) The Rise of Technology and its
Impact on Politics

(A) Read Postman complete text

Week #15 – Conclusion

FINAL EXAM - Monday, May 10, 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Course requirements:

1. There will be a midterm worth 35% of your final grade.
2. There will be a final worth 35% of your final grade.
3. There will be a 7 page typed, double-spaced paper worth 15% of your final grade which will be due NO LATER than March 22nd – to be handed in at the time of class. No papers will be accepted after that date! If you expect difficulties with your computer or other matters, you should feel free to hand in your paper earlier. More about the paper will be forthcoming shortly.
4. Make-ups for exams will only be given for a serious medical problem or a serious personal crisis that is fully documented to my satisfaction. Should a make-up be granted, it will take the form of an oral exam.
5. Class participation is worth 15% of your final grade.
6. Students with more than four unexcused absences will not receive credit for this course!
7. All cell phones must be shut off during class. Should a student get an incoming call, I will invite that student to leave the class for that day. I also strongly advise you not to get involved in text messaging during class so as to make sure that you give the lecture-discussion the attention that is warranted! I prefer that you not use your laptop in class and focus on listening, taking good notes and participating in class!

Office Hours: My office is in Welles Building – Room 3C. My office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays at 10:15 – 10:45 a.m. and 2:15 – 3:45 pm. You must make an appointment, when we are both free, with the Department Secretary, Diane Lounsbury, who is located in the main office of the Political Science Department, Welles 2. Her number is 245-5371. If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, be certain to contact her.