

Department of Political Science
University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Fall 1999

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Political Science 409

TWENTIETH-CENTURY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Tuesdays and Thursdays 4-5:30 PM
G429 Mason Hall

This course will survey twentieth-century political thought, focusing on selected themes and authors. The course will aim to familiarize students with the recent history of political theory and philosophy, and it will encourage students to develop and explain their own critical perspectives on history, politics, and thought. Students enrolled in the course should expect to read, discuss, and write about a number of challenging, provocative texts.

Course meetings will consist of a mix of lecture and discussion. The course as a whole will be divided into three historically-sequential segments. The first unit will introduce the liberal individualist tradition of political thought and then examine some European reactions to and criticisms of liberalism from the first half of this century. The second segment of the course will sketch the emergence of European-influenced political theorizing in the postwar liberal-democratic United States. Finally, in the third unit, the course will examine a number of recent theories that promote or reject "identity politics."

At times, portions of course meetings may be given over to discussion, in-class writing, and small-group work. Participation in these exercises will be noted and will influence final grades. Regular attendance is therefore advised. Tardiness will also be noted. Course meetings are brief, so be on time. Expect to stay for the whole period, focusing on coursework throughout. As a courtesy to all, please turn off any pagers or telephones that you may carry while in class. Note that this entire syllabus is subject to revision at the instructor's discretion.

Written Requirements

Course requirements include the following, in addition to the above:

- three examinations: a take-home, due 5 Oct. (25%); an in-class midterm, on 2 Nov. (33%); and a take-home final examination/project, due 13 Dec. (35%);
- at least 3 minimally-graded, 1-page reaction statements (3%), to be used in completing the final project; and
- participation in discussions, both in the classroom and on-line (4%).

For more information on the assignments and grading, see the last page of this syllabus.

Required Readings

The following books contain most of the required readings. They are available for purchase at Michigan Book & Supply, the Michigan Union Bookstore, and Ulrich's Bookstore. Please use the assigned edition. All readings are also on reserve at the Shapiro Undergraduate Library.

Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, trans., George Schwab (U. Chicago Press, 1996)
Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, trans. Anthony Bower (Vintage International, 1991)
Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy* (Harper Torchbooks, 1976)
Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, intro. Margaret Canovan, 2nd ed. (U. Chicago Press, 1998)
John Arthur and William Shaw, eds., *Justice and Economic Distribution*, 2nd ed. (Prentice Hall, 1991)
Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, trans. Constance Farrington (Grove Press, 1986)
Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton U. Press, 1990)
Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton U. Press, 1994)

SCHEDULE OF MEETING, TOPICS, AND ASSIGNMENTS

Note: The reading and writing assignments listed are to be completed *before* coming to class. The on-line assignments are to be completed during the period indicated.

Thurs., 9 Sept. Introduction

- 9-13 Sept. On-Line:
- 1) Visit the course website and set your personal preferences. Go to: <https://my.ummumich.edu/>
 - 2) Sign up on-line to post a 2-paragraph comment on one author.
 - 3) Try out the discussion feature. Post your reflections on the website or the introductory lecture under the category, "Introduction."
 - 4) Get the Benjamin Constant reading for Tuesday's class. This reading is on reserve at Shapiro Undergraduate Library, in both "hard" and digital forms. Photocopy the "hard" article at the Library, or download the digital version from the Library website and then print it. Either way, get this article and read it BEFORE class on Tuesday. To download the article, see the "Resources" section of the course website, or go to: <http://www.lib.umich.edu/libhome/Reserves/F99>

I. ON ORDER AND MORALITY

Tues., 14 Sept. The Liberal Tradition and Modern Political Thought

Reading: Benjamin Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with That of the Moderns," in *Political Writings*, trans. Biancamaria Fontana (Cambridge University Press, 1988), pp. 309-28. [*On reserve—see above for information.*]

14-15 Sept. On-Line: Anyone may post comments on Constant and liberalism on the course website, under the category, "Benjamin Constant and Liberalism."

Thurs., 16 Sept. Discussion of Constant/Carl Schmitt and the Problem of a Modern Order(s)

Reading: Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, chs.1-4, pp. 19-45.

16-20 Sept. On-Line: The first group of commentators should post its comments on the Schmitt reading (on either all of it, or just the first half) by 20 Sept., and then be ready for class discussion on the 21st. All students should get in the habit of checking on announcements and discussion postings before class.

Tues., 21 Sept. Discussion/Schmitt's Criticisms of Liberal Ideals and Procedures

Reading: Schmitt, *Concept of the Political*, chs. 5-8, pp. 45-79.

Writing: ***Reaction statements on Constant due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website. (See the last page of the syllabus for an explanation of this requirement.)***

Thurs., 23 Sept. Albert Camus and the Critique of Modern Nihilism

Writing: ***Reaction statements on Schmitt due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.***

Reading: Albert Camus, *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, pp. 3-25, 65-80, and 100-104.

Tues., 28 Sept. Discussion/Nihilist States and the Crises of Twentieth-Century Europe

Reading: Camus, *The Rebel*, pp. 105-111, 177-89, 193-201, and 220-52.

28-29 Sept. On-Line: The second group of commentators should post its comments on the Camus reading (either on all of it, or on just the first two sections) by 29 Sept., and then be ready for class discussion on the 30th.

Thurs., 30 Sept. Discussion/A Human and Natural World?

Reading: Camus, *The Rebel*, pp. 279-306.

Writing: ***TAKE-HOME EXAMINATION DISTRIBUTED.***

II. CONSUMER SOCIETY AND DEMOCRACY

- Tues., 5 Oct. "Realism" and the Critique of Democratic Theory
 Writing: **TAKE-HOME EXAMINATION DUE IN CLASS. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
 Reading: Joseph A. Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, chs. 20-1, pp. 235-68.
- 5-6 Oct. On-Line: The third group of commentators should post its comments on the Schumpeter reading (on either all of it, or just the first half) by 6 Oct., and then be ready for class discussion on the 7th.
- Thurs., 7 Oct. Discussion/Democracy and Electoral Politics
 Writing: **Reaction statements on Camus due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
 Reading: Schumpeter, *Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy*, chs. 22-3, pp. 269-302.
- Tues., 12 Oct. The Ancients and the Moderns/The Public and the Private
 Reading: Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*, chs. 1-2, pp. 7-78.
 Writing: **Reaction papers on Schumpeter due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
- Thurs., 14 Oct. Modernity and the Political
 Reading: Arendt, *The Human Condition*, selections from chs. 3-4, pp. 118-74.
- 14-18 Oct. On-Line: The fourth group of commentators should post its comments on the Arendt reading (at least the first four chapters) by 18 Oct., and then be ready for class discussion on the 19th.
- Tues., 19 Oct. Discussion/The End of Philosophy and the Beginning of Political Action
 Reading: Arendt, *The Human Condition*, ch. 5, pp. 175-247.
- 19-20 Oct. On-Line: The fifth group of commentators should post its comments on the Arendt reading (at least the first 5 chapters) by 20 Oct., and then be ready for class discussion on the 21st
- Thurs., 21 Oct. Discussion/Trouble in Paradise: A Consuming Society without Common Sense?
 Reading: Arendt, *The Human Condition*, ch. 6, pp. 248-325.
- Tues., 26 Oct. Justice and Consumer Preferences: A Liberal Searches for a Common Good
 Writing: **Reaction papers on Arendt due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
 Reading: John Rawls, "A Theory of Justice," in *Justice and Economic Distribution*, eds. John Arthur and William H. Shaw, 2nd ed. (Prentice Hall, 1991), pp. 13-60.
- 26-27 Oct. On-Line: The sixth group of commentators should post its comments on the Rawls reading (at least the first 5 chapters) by 27 Nov., and then be ready for class discussion on the 28th.
- Thurs., 28 Oct. Discussion/Imagined Selves and Democratic Legitimacy
 Reading: Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political, Not Metaphysical," pp. 320-39.
- Tues., 2 Nov. **IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAMINATION**

III. DIVERSITY AND POLITICS AT THE MILLENNIUM

- Thurs., 4 Nov. Selves and Common Goods: Violent Impositions?
 Reading: Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, ch. 1, pp. 35-106.
- 4-8 Nov. On-Line: The seventh group of commentators should post its comments on the Fanon reading (at least the first 2 chapters) by 8 Nov., and then be ready for class discussion on the 9th.

- Tues., 9 Nov. Discussion/A Political Culture of Combat?
 Writing: **Reaction papers on Rawls due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
 Reading: Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, ch. 4, pp. 206-48.
- Thurs., 11 Nov. Defending Property: A Neo-Conservative Reaction
 Reading: Robert Nozick, "Anarchy, State, and Utopia," in *Justice and Economic Distribution*, eds. Arthur and Shaw, pp. 64-102.
 Writing: **Reaction papers on Fanon due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
- 11-15 Nov. On-Line: The eighth group of commentators should post its comments on the Nozick reading (at least the first 2 chapters) by 15 Nov., and then be ready for class discussion on the 16th.
- Tues., 16 Nov. Discussion of Nozick/Young and the Problem of Identity
 Writing: **Reaction papers on Nozick due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
 Reading: Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, pp. TBA.
- Thurs., 18 Nov. An "Other" Public?
 Reading: Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, pp. TBA.
- 18-22 Nov. On-Line: The ninth group of commentators should post its comments on the Young reading (at least the first 2 chapters) by 22 Nov., and then be ready for class discussion on the 23rd.
- Tues., 23 Nov. Discussion/The Persistence of Oppression—and Power
 Reading: Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*, pp. TBA.
- Thurs., 25 Nov. **THANKSGIVING—HOLIDAY!**
- Tues., 30 Nov. The Telos of Modernity: A Traditionalist Perspective
 Reading: Alasdair MacIntyre, "Virtues, the Unity of Life, and the Liberal Tradition," in *Justice and Economic Distribution*, eds. Arthur and Shaw, pp. 250-71..
- Thurs., 2 Dec. Difference in Historical and Theoretical Perspective
 Writing: **1) Reaction papers on Young and MacIntyre due in class. Additional copies should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
2) FINAL EXAMINATION/PROJECT ASSIGNMENT DISTRIBUTED.
 Reading: Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutman, pp. 25-61.
 On-Line: The tenth group of commentators should post its comments on the MacIntyre reading (entire) and Taylor reading (at least the first assignment) by 6 Dec., and then be ready for class discussion on the 7th.
- Tues., 7 Dec. Respect for Humanity/Discussion
 Reading: Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed. Amy Gutman, pp. 61-73.
- Thurs., 9 Dec. Conclusions
 Writing: **Reaction papers on Taylor due in class. An additional copy should be posted to the instructor on the course website.**
- Mon., 13 Dec. **FINAL EXAMINATION/PROJECT DUE, 4 PM**

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Written Assignments

Course requirements will include three examinations:

First examination (3-5 pages, take-home)	distributed Thurs., 30 Sept. due Tues., 5 Oct.
Second examination (in-class)	Tues., 2 Nov.
Final Examination/Project (6-9 pages, take-home)	distributed Thurs., 2 Dec. due Mon., 13 Dec.

In addition, students will write at least three 1-page (250-300 words) reaction statements on assigned readings. Reaction statements must be completed for at least one author in each of the following three columns (for a total of three):

I. Constant Schmitt Camus	II. Schumpeter Arendt Rawls	III. Fanon Nozick Young MacIntyre Taylor
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Students may write additional reaction statements for course credit (see below). The syllabus shows when these reaction papers will be due. There will be no extensions given, except for dire health situations and the like. These reaction statements exercises will be minimally graded: plus, for very good; check, for satisfactory; and minus, for unsatisfactory. Expect no or few comments. Writing more than the required minimum number of statements, in addition, may potentially count for up to 3 points on a student's final grade in the course (out of a total of 100 points). The following formula explains how:

- 3 pluses, or any combination of 5 pluses and/or checks, will get 1 point
- 4 pluses, or any combination of 6 pluses and/or checks, will get 2 points
- 5 pluses, or any combination 7 pluses and/or checks, will get 3 points

Participation

Students will be expected to participate in discussions both in class and on line.

On Line: Each student will be expected to participate at least twice in on-line bulletin board discussions. Each student will be assigned to post a one- or two-paragraph reaction (125-150 words) to a reading on the course's website discussion bulletin board. Each student will also be required to respond, at least once during the term, to some other student's posted comments. These responses will not be assigned—students should choose to respond to whatever or whomever they find interesting over the course of the term.

Students may post additional reactions and comments (beyond the required one each), if they wish to do so. Students' own on-line postings may also be used as drafts for the 1-page reaction statement requirement discussed above. Students may not copy the postings of other students—that would be plagiarism. But students may—indeed they ought—incorporate the arguments and criticisms of other students in their own writing.

In-Class: Although this will likely be a large course, we will attempt to discuss the readings in class on a regular basis. In general, those students who are assigned to post comments on a reading will be asked to explain or elaborate on their posted reactions during the class period following the posting assignment. This way, all students in the course will take part in class discussion at least once. Students should feel free to enter any discussion we hold, however.

Grades: Grades for participation will be based on both the extent and the quality of participation. In judging the quality of participation, what I will look for is whether students have engaged the readings seriously; whether they are able to follow and contribute to class discussions; how intelligent and informed their questions and comments are; and how much preparation and effort they are putting into the class.

Grading Policy Summary

A full range of grades may be given. Grades for particular assignments will be weighted in the following manner:

First examination (take-home)	25%
Second examination (in-class)	33%
Final examination/project (take-home)	35%
Reaction statements	3%
Discussions:	4%

Office Hours/Communication

I will hold regular office hours on Thursdays from 11 am to noon and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 5:30-6 pm in my office, 1148 Angell Hall (just outside the Sweetland Writing Center and near the door to Tisch Hall). My telephone there is 763-1230. Voicemail messages can be left for me at that extension. Notes can be left for me in my mailbox at the Sweetland Writing Center, 1139 Angell Hall. E-mail messages can also be sent to me at:

ps409-dennismc@umich.edu