

**PLPT 3020: Modern Political Thought<sup>1</sup>**  
University of Virginia, Department of Politics  
Summer 2016  
10:30a-12:45p, Clark 102

Instructor: Harrison P. Frye  
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This course provides a survey of Western political thought from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. We will focus on texts by five influential writers during this period: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx. In addition to approaching these historical texts on their own terms, we will use them to explore three topics of pressing relevance to contemporary politics:

Authority: What is the “state” and what (if anything) justifies the authority it claims over our lives? If the state has legitimate authority, when are we permitted to resist the state?

Freedom and Toleration: How should we understand freedom? What sort of freedom is worth promoting? What (if anything) justifies tolerating beliefs and actions that are noxious?

Inequality: What should our attitudes be towards increasing economic inequality? What is the relationship between material and social inequality?

By the end of the course, the hope is that you will not only have a greater appreciation where many of our political ideas come from, but also be better equipped to approach these ideas with some critical distance.

The syllabus describes (1) the course materials, (2) grades and assignments, (3) rules and requirements (including important dates!), and (4) a course schedule.

## **1. Course Materials**

Available for purchase at the UVA bookstore (NB: It is important you have these editions as I refer to specific page numbers and paragraph numbers that might not match up with other editions):

Hobbes, T. *Leviathan*, ed. E. Curley, Hackett  
Locke, J. *Second Treatise of Government*, ed. C. B. MacPherson, Hackett  
Mill, J. S. *On Liberty, Utilitarianism, and Other Essays*, ed. M. Philp, F. Rosen,  
Oxford University Press

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<sup>1</sup> This syllabus is subject to change.

Rousseau, J. J. *The Basic Political Writings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, ed. D. A. Cress, Hackett  
Ed. Tucker, R. *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, W. W. Norton

Excerpts from the following works are available online at the course website on Collab:

Bentham, J., *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*  
Hume, D., "Of the Original Contract"  
Locke, J. *The First Treatise*  
Locke, J. "Toleration", ed. J. Bennett

## 2. Assignments and Grading

The following components will make up your grade in this course:

Participation: 20%  
Response Papers: 20%  
Midterm Examination: 25%  
Final Examination: 35%

### *Participation:*

Class time will involve a mixture of guided seminar-style discussion, in-class activities, and lecture when necessary. It is essential that you come to class having done the reading, with the readings, and be willing to participate. The response papers will help with this. I have tried to keep the reading to a manageable ~35 pages a night with this in mind.

### *Response Papers:*

You are required to complete *four* (4) response papers during the course – one per week. I say papers, but really I just want you to write a short paragraph. These papers provide an opportunity to engage the reading on your own terms. Was there something you vigorously disagreed with? Agreed with? Perhaps you found something confusing? Feel free to relate the reading to contemporary issues. During the introductory meeting, you will pick one day each week we meet for your response papers. The papers will be due by 9am on the days you select. You will turn them in using the Dropbox feature on Collab. These are graded on a pass/fail basis. No late papers will be accepted.

### *Midterm and Final Examination:*

There will be a take-home midterm examination (July 22) and a take-home final examination (August 5) in this course. Examinations will involve questions that require you to (i) explain concepts and arguments presented in the texts, (ii) compare and contrast claims advanced by the authors, and (iii) evaluate considerations for and against the various positions we encounter.

### 3. Rules and Requirements

#### *Participation:*

Participation is a requirement of this course. If you are going to be absent and have a good reason, let me know and provide documentation. Given the subject matter, I expect disagreement. Register your disagreement, but be respectful about it. Abide by a principle of charity.

#### *Electronic Devices:*

I ask you not to use laptops, cellphones, and the like in course. They tend to be a distraction for everyone. There is also good reason to believe that electronic devices inhibit learning outcomes (look it up!).

#### *Academic Integrity:*

The University's Honor Code applies to all assignments in this course. This includes the response papers.

#### *Important Dates:*

July 22 - Take-Home Midterm Examination

July 29 - Drop Date

August 5 - Take-Home Final Examination

#### *Feedback:*

Feedback is welcome during the course. If you are uncomfortable having your name attached to your feedback, there is an anonymous feedback feature on Collab.

### 4. Schedule

\* = Available on Collab as PDF

#### July 11 - Introduction

No reading

#### July 12 - Hobbes I: The State of Nature and Its Problems

##### *Leviathan*

The Introduction (NB: Not the editor's introduction!)

Chapter I ¶¶1-4

Chapter II ¶¶1-2

Chapter III

Chapter IV ¶¶1, 3-4, 11-12 24

Chapter V ¶¶2-3, 17, 20

Chapter VI ¶¶1-2, 7, 49, 53

Chapter VIII ¶¶14-16

Chapter XI ¶¶1-2, 4

Chapters XIII-XV

July 13 – Hobbes II: The State as Solution

*Leviathan*

Chapters XVI-XX

July 14 – Hobbes III: Freedom under the State

*Leviathan*

Chapter XXI ¶¶1-6, 8, 10, 15-18, 21

Chapter XXII ¶¶1-6

Chapter XXIV, ¶¶5, 10

Chapter XXVI ¶¶1-8, 11-13, 26 (first paragraph)

Chapter XXIX ¶¶3 (first paragraph), 6, 9-10, 12, 14

Chapter XXX ¶¶1-3, 18, 20-21, 30

Chapter XLIII ¶¶1-3, 22-23

Review and Conclusion ¶¶16-17

July 15 – Locke I: Consent and Contract

*Second Treatise*

Chapter I §3

Chapters II-III

Chapter VI §57

Chapter VIII §§95-99, §§119-122

\* Hume, “Of the Original Contract”

July 18 – Locke II: Property and Revolution

*Second Treatise*

Chapter V

\*Excerpt from Locke’s *First Treatise*

*Second Treatise*

Chapter IX

Chapter XI §§134-140

Chapter XII §§143-144

Chapter XVIII, §§199, 201-204 207-210

Chapter XIX §§211-212, 220-226, 240-243

July 19 – Locke III: Toleration

\* Locke, “Toleration” (NB: Only read the following sections 1-5, 9-10, and the section that begins with “In sum...” on the bottom of page 23 to the end of page 25)

July 20 –Rousseau I: Inequality and the Domination Contract

*The Basic Political Writings* (“Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men”)

pp. 45-49 (finish the paragraph on 49)

p. 51 (first full paragraph only)  
pp. 53-54 (through first full paragraph on 54)  
pp. 61-66 (don't read first full paragraph on 66)  
pp. 66-68 (paragraph on bottom of 66 through first full paragraph on 68)  
p. 117 (read note XV)  
p. 69 (first two paragraphs of Part Two)  
pp. 70-71 (through second full paragraph on 71)  
pp. 72-82 (through second full paragraph)  
pp. 84-86 (third full paragraph, finish paragraph on 86)  
pp. 89-92  
pp. 104-105 (through end of note)

July 21 – Rousseau II: The General Will and the Social Contract

*The Basic Political Writings* (“The Social Contract”),  
Book I, entire  
Book II, Chapters 1-4, Chapter 6  
*The Basic Political Writings* (“The Discourse on Political Economy”)  
pp. 125-135 (finish paragraph on 135)

July 22 – Take-Home Midterm Examination

No reading.

July 25 – Rousseau III: Maintaining the General Will

*The Basic Political Writings* (“The Social Contract”)  
Book II, Chapters 9-10  
Book III, Chapters 12, 15, 18  
Book IV, Chapters 1-2, 7-8  
*The Basic Political Writings* (“The Discourse on Political Economy”)  
pp. 136-137 (finish paragraph on 137)  
pp. 145-148 (start at 3rd paragraph full paragraph through third full paragraph on 148)

July 26 – Mill I: Utilitarianism

*On Liberty, Utilitarianism, and Other Writings* (“On Liberty”)  
pp. 2-17  
\*Bentham, J., *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*  
*On Liberty, Utilitarianism, and Other Writings* (“Utilitarianism”)  
pp. 120-126 (finish paragraph on 126)  
pp. 135-139 (start at the bottom of 135)

July 27 – Mill II: The Defense of Liberty

*On Liberty, Utilitarianism, and Other Essays* (“On Liberty”)  
pp. 18-27 (finish paragraph on 27)  
pp. 29-30 (finish paragraph on 30)

pp. 35-38 (bottom of 35, finish paragraph on 38)  
pp. 39-41 (finish paragraph on 41)  
pp. 45-48 (start at section break, finish paragraph on 48)  
pp. 55-58  
pp. 62-67  
pp. 69-72  
pp. 73-75 (finish paragraph on 75)  
pp. 77-80 (finish paragraph on 80)  
pp. 81-82 (finish paragraph on 82)  
pp. 89-90  
pp. 101-103 (finish paragraph on 103)

July 28 – Mill III: The Subjection of Women

*On Liberty, Utilitarianism, and Other Essays* (“The Subjection of Women”)

pp. 409-430  
pp. 436-439 (finish paragraph on 439)  
pp. 449-451 (finish paragraph on 451)  
pp. 484-489 (finish paragraph on 489)  
pp. 500-505

July 29 – In-Class Movie: Going Clear \*DROP DATE\*

No reading

August 1 – Marx I: The Criticism of Rights

*The Marx-Engels Reader*

“For a Ruthless Criticism of Everything Existing” pp. 12-15  
“On the Jewish Question” pp. 26-52

August 2 – Marx II: The Criticism of Capitalism

*The Marx-Engels Reader*

“Economic and Philosophy Manuscripts of 1844 ” pp. 66, 70-93  
“Wage Labor and Capital” pp. 203-217

August 3 – Marx III: History and Revolution

*The Marx-Engels Reader*

“On the History of His Opinions” pp. 3-6  
“The German Ideology” pp. 149-155 (start at third full paragraph on 149)  
“Manifesto of the Communist Party” pp. 473-491 (start with third preface), 499-500 (section IV)  
“Critique of the Gotha Program” pp. 528-532 (finish paragraph on 532), 537-538 (through second full paragraph)  
“Capital, Volume Three” p. 441 (from, “In fact...” to the end of section)  
“The German Ideology” p. 160 (just the paragraph in the middle of the page)

August 4 - Review and Conclusion

No reading.

August 5 -Take-Home Final Examination

No reading