

Phil 114: History of Political Philosophy

Tu–Th, 2–3:30pm, 106 Moffitt

Website: <http://sophos.berkeley.edu/kolodny/S07Phil114.htm>

Instructor:

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Office hours: Wednesday, 2–4pm, 144 Moses Hall, or by appointment

Graduate Student Instructor:

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Catalog Description:

A survey of the major political philosophers, including some or all of: Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Bentham, Mill, and Marx.

Longer Description:

Political *science* seeks to describe, explain, and predict political phenomena. (Why did Italy and Germany unify when they did? What impact will demographic shifts have on the next presidential election?) These questions must be settled empirically: by consulting history, observing differences between countries, taking polls, and so on. Political *philosophy* asks different questions, which it is less clear that we can settle empirically. Some of these questions are *conceptual*. What makes a particular form of human interaction political? Other questions are *normative*. What sort of government should we have? How should we, as individuals, relate to it?

This course surveys the major works of political philosophy of the 17th–19th centuries, by Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau (in the social contract tradition) and by Hume, Bentham, and Mill (in the utilitarian tradition). To provide context and contrast, briefer readings will be drawn from Aristotle; Filmer (a critic of Hobbes in turn criticized by Locke); and Whewell and De Tocqueville (contemporaries of Mill).

The course will be more interpretive than many philosophy classes. Although we may hope to learn something about the questions that interest us, we will be discussing, in the first instance, the questions that interested the authors. Furthermore, our interpretations will have a different focus from courses on the same texts in other departments. There will be greater emphasis on normative foundations than on institutional design, and greater emphasis on the internal logical structure of the arguments than on their author's rhetoric or immediate political aims. For this reason, some experience with philosophical reasoning is essential.

Prerequisites:

One course offered by a philosophy department. Phil 2 or Phil 104, in particular, will be helpful. This course will complement Phil 115.

Readings:

1. Reader, available at Copy Central, 2560 Brancroft Way. Included readings are marked with a “*”.
2. *The Classical Utilitarians: Bentham and Mill*, Ed. Troyer, Hackett, 0-87220-649-1
3. Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ed. Curley, Hackett, 0-87220-177-5
4. Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, Ed. Laslett, Cambridge, 0-521-35730-6
5. Rousseau, *The Discourses and other Early Political Writings*, Ed. Gourevitch, Cambridge, 0-521-42445-3
6. Rousseau, *The Social Contract and other Later Political Writings*, Ed. Gourevitch, Cambridge, 0-521-42446-1

Note: You do **not** need Kant, *Practical Philosophy*, Ed. Gregor, Cambridge, 0-521-65408-4.

Requirements:

1. For each lecture, [download the handout](#) and bring it to class.
2. Section participation: 10% of course grade.
3. Outlines: 10% of course grade. For each lecture, we ask you to bring an outline: five sentences, summarizing the reading for the lecture. Once in a while, we will collect these in class. You must be present in class to hand in your outline. A serious attempt automatically gets an A. Anything else, or an absence on a day when outlines are collected, gets no credit. Since you may not be able to come to every lecture (because of minor illnesses, extracurricular activities, etc.) you may fail to hand in two outlines without penalty.
4. First paper: 15% of course grade. Three pages.
5. Second and third papers: 20% of course grade each. Five pages each.
6. Final exam: 25% of course grade. The exam questions will be selected from a longer list that you will get beforehand.

Note: GSIs will not give extensive comments on the last paper and final exam. However, GSIs will be available to meet to discuss them in person.

Syllabus:

1. Tuesday, January 16
Introduction

Part I: The Social Contract

2. Thursday, January 18
The Aristotelian background: the concept of nature, the good for man, the state as natural and prior, natural slavery
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk I, Ch. 2, 4–7, 13*
Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I, Ch. 1–6*

3. Tuesday, January 23

Hobbes: Man as mechanism, state as artifact

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Introduction (i.e., Hobbes's introduction, not the editor's), Ch. 6, 8, 10–11

4. Thursday, January 25

Hobbes: The state of nature as a state of war

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 13, 17

5. Tuesday, January 30

Hobbes: The state of nature as a state of war

6. Thursday, February 1

Hobbes: The law of nature and the role of consent

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 14–15, 20–21, 31 and 43

First paper assigned

7. Tuesday, February 6

Hobbes: The law of nature and the role of consent

8. Thursday, February 8

Hobbes: The sovereign

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Ch. 16, 17 (review), 18–19, 20–21 (review)

First paper due

9. Tuesday, February 13

Hobbes: The sovereign

10. Thursday, February 15

Locke: Did God make us slaves?

Sir Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha*, Ch. 1, 3 §§1, 4–7*

Sir Robert Filmer, *Observations Concerning the Originall of Government*, p. 187*

John Locke, *First Treatise of Government*, Ch. 1, Ch. 4 §§21–24, 29, 41–43, Ch. 6, Ch. 9

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. 1

11. Tuesday, February 20

Locke: Natural religion and the law of nature

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. 2–4, 6

12. Thursday, February 22

Locke: Natural religion and the law of nature

13. Tuesday, February 27

Locke: "Appeal to heaven" – consent and the right to revolution

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. 7–9, 10–12, 14–19

*The Declaration of Independence**

14. Thursday, March 1

Locke: Property... and the class state?

Sir Robert Filmer, *Observations Concerning the Originall of Government*, p. 234*

John Locke, *First Treatise of Government*, Ch. 4 §§41–43 (review), Ch. 9 §§84–103 (review)

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Ch. 5, 13

15. Tuesday, March 6

Rousseau: Is society good for us?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Second Discourse*

Second paper assigned

No class Thursday, March 8

16. Tuesday, March 13

Rousseau: Is society good for us?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Second Discourse*

17. Thursday, March 15

Rousseau: How might it be?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Social Contract*

18. Tuesday, March 20

Rousseau: How might it be?

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Social Contract*

Second paper due

19. Thursday, March 22

Hume: The myth of the social contract

David Hume, “Of the Original Contract”*

20. Tuesday, April 3

Hume: Justice as an artificial virtue

David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Bk. III, Pt ii, §§1–2*

No class Thursday, April 5

Part II: Utilitarianism

21. Tuesday, April 10

Bentham: The principle of utility as ultimate standard

Jeremy Bentham, *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, Ch. I–IV, XIII*

22. Thursday, April 12

*Bentham: "Right the child of law" –the myth of natural rights
The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen**

Jeremy Bentham, "Nonsense on Stilts, or Pandora's Box Opened, or the French Declaration of Rights Prefixed to the Constitution of 1791 Laid Open and Exposed" (up through article 12)*

23. Tuesday, April 17

Mill: Between Bentham and the conservatives

William Whewell, *Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy in England*, pp. ix–xvii*

John Stuart Mill, "Whewell on Moral Philosophy," pp. 187–191*

John Stuart Mill, "Remarks on Bentham's Philosophy"*

24. Thursday, April 19

Mill: Between Bentham and the conservatives

John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism* [Restrict]

Third paper assigned

25. Tuesday, April 24

Mill: Individual liberty against the tyranny of the majority

Alexis De Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, Ch. 7*

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*, Ch. 1–4

No class Thursday, April 26

No class Tuesday, May 1

26. Thursday, May 3

Mill: Individual liberty against the tyranny of the majority

Third paper due

27. Tuesday, May 8

Mill: Individual liberty against the tyranny of the majority

Course Policies:

Extensions:

Plan ahead. You may request extensions from your GSI *up until 72 hours* before papers are due. After then, extensions will be granted *only for medical and family emergencies*.

Submitting Work:

Papers must be submitted, on paper, by you, to your GSI, in class, by 2:10am, before the lecture starts. Papers submitted later will lose *one step* (e.g., B+ to B) *immediately* and then an *additional step every 24 hours*. If you cannot come to lecture on the due date, you may request to make other arrangements with your GSI, so long as you do so well before the deadline. Whatever the circumstances, you are responsible for ensuring that your GSI gets your paper. Forgotten or unopenable attachments, bounced or lost emails, and so on, are your responsibility.

“Re-grading”:

You are strongly encouraged to discuss grades and comments on papers with your GSI or me. However, *grades on particular papers and exams will not be changed under any circumstances.* While there is no perfect system, selective “re-grading” at students’ request only makes things worse. “Second” grades are likely to be less accurate and less fair than “first” grades. This is because, among other things, the GSI does not have access to other papers for purposes of comparison, the student will inevitably supply additional input (clarifications, explanations, etc.) that the original paper did not, and there are certain biases of self-selection.

The only exception, to which none of these concerns apply, is a suspected arithmetical or recording error in your final course grade. Please do not hesitate to bring this to your GSI’s or my attention.

Academic Dishonesty:

Plagiarism and cheating will result in an “F” in the course as a whole and a report to Student Judicial Affairs.

“Any test, paper or report submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor.

“In all of your assignments, including your homework or drafts of papers, you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution. ‘Proper attribution’ means that you have fully identified the original source and extent of your use of the words or ideas of others that you reproduce in your work for this course, usually in the form of a footnote or parenthesis.”

—Report of the Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism Subcommittee, June 18, 2004.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you have an official accommodation letter that is relevant to this course, please notify both me and your GSI at a reasonable time. We will do whatever we can to help.