

PHILOSOPHY 105.07 POLITICS AND SOCIETY
Spring Semester 2003
Tu. &Th. 3:50 – 5:10 SB Union 226
Class # 51356

Instructor: Chris Johns E-Mail: cjohns@ic.sunysb.edu (best contact) Philosophy Dept. office: 632-7570 Office: 142 Harriman Hall Office hours: Tu. 3:00-3:45 PM & 5:30-7 PM Th. 5:30-6, and by appoint.	Teaching Assistant: Jonathan Gurfein E-mail: jgurfein@ic.sunysb.edu Office hours Wed. 3:30-6:00 (142 Harriman)
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Course Description: This course is a historical introduction to major political theories that have had much historical impact and which inform our current political debates and situation. Class time will be devoted to lecture and discussion of the assigned readings. The readings are relatively short, but intensive and difficult, so you are expected to read them carefully. I will provide study questions (either handed out or posted on the web Blackboard) prior to due dates. Weekly writing assignments are required, and active class participation will be expected. There will also be a mid-term, a final exam, and a 3-5 page paper. This is also a course in philosophical thinking, which means we will thoroughly examine and evaluate the terms and arguments we encounter. It means we will likely end up with more questions about political philosophy than answers. To do well in this course you must keep up with the readings, the writings, pay attention, think hard, and ask questions.

Required Texts: The required book may be purchased at Stony Books, across from the train station.

- *Princeton Readings in Political Thought*, eds., Cohen and Fermon
- Extra material copyable from the philosophy office, 213 Harriman (to be assigned or available on the web Blackboard <<http://blackboard.stonybrook.edu>>).

Course Requirements:

Weekly Response papers 25%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Paper: (3-5 pages) 20%

Final Exam: 25%

Attendance and Participation 10%

Weekly Response Papers: By Thursday of each week you must hand in during class a one-page (typed, double spaced) response paper to the assigned readings. These will not be accepted by e-mail. The paper should consist of at least two substantial paragraphs. The first paragraph should be an attempt to explain a certain passage or point made by a specific author. The second paragraph should consist of your reaction to what the author said—agreement, disagreement, confusion, and *why*. Papers will be graded on a five-point scale, and graded mostly on thoughtfulness and effort. At least 50 points (provided you have done 11 papers) gets you an A for 25% of your course grade. Late papers are not accepted.

Final Paper: I will provide you with paper topics two weeks before the due date. Papers handed in after the due date will be rejected or penalized. Papers must be typed in a normal font, double spaced, and have one-inch margins. They will not be accepted by e-mail, except by prior arrangement. You must give me your proposed paper topic on the date indicated on the course schedule. I will review it and give you feedback. Good papers must strongly support a clearly defined thesis. I will provide you with details on what I expect, and on how to organize a good paper.

Exams: Exams will be comprehensive. Exam make-ups will be given *only* for serious reasons accompanied by written documentation.

Attendance: Since latecomers are distracting, please be on time. You must sign the attendance sheet that will be passed around at the beginning of class time. If you do not sign it at that time, you will be marked absent—no exceptions. Attendance will be figured into your participation grade. However, if you accumulate more than eight unexcused absences during the semester, you will automatically fail the course. An absence may be excused only if you provide written documentation for a legitimate excuse. Keep in mind that coming to class and participating will more likely improve your exam and paper grades, as well.

Participation: Ask questions! The only bad question is an unasked question. No question is too silly or off-base. All of us need to ask questions. Don't be afraid! Find out how many things I don't know!

I am also trying to set up a Web Blackboard for this course, on which you may participate in on-line discussions with your classmates. Details to be provided later.

Plagiarism: Unfortunately, too many students attempt to plagiarize their papers, and unfortunately for them, they get caught. To put it bluntly, plagiarism is lying and stealing and will not be tolerated. Do not underestimate my ability to spot it. I have sent many a dismayed student to the Office of Academic Judiciary. The penalty is severe. These days it is easy to get papers off the Internet, but it is also easy for teachers to find them on the Internet. Yet the Internet is not the only source of plagiarism.

However, plagiarism is a complex issue. If you are unsure about how to cite sources properly, please talk to me. If you are having trouble with an assignment, it is always best to talk to me *before* handing in your paper. I would rather see you struggle with a topic and learn something, rather than fail you for dishonesty.

University Services:

- Writing Center: If you have writing issues that need extra attention, please take advantage of the Writing Center's tutorial services. These instructors help all students, from first-year to doctoral. Keep in mind that they will *not* proofread or copy-edit your work. Call 632-7405 for an appointment, or stop by Humanities 198. Check out <<http://ws.cc.sunysb.edu/writrhet/description/writctr.html>> for more information.
- Disability: If you have a mental or physical disability and require special assistance, please contact Disabled Student Services (DSS), Humanities 133, 2-6748. All information is strictly confidential.
- Ombud: If you are having a conflict with the teacher or other students, and you need to speak confidentially to a neutral party, please consult the Ombudsperson in Humanities 114, 2-9200.

Course Schedule. This schedule is subject to change, but not without due notice. Each class will have lecture/discussion covering the course material from the *Princeton Readings* assigned for that week, plus any supplementary material I may assign. It is best to be familiar with the readings *prior* to the date shown. It is also helpful to read the introduction to each “part” (part 1, 2, 3, 4) of the book, as well as the introduction to each of the authors. I also recommend reading Leo Strauss’ “What is Political Philosophy” (pp. 642-655).

Week/Chapters to Read	Tuesday	Thursday
0. Introduction: Thinking Politically		01/23 Intro to course: pp. 1-5
1. Plato (d. 347 BCE)	01/28 <i>The Republic</i> pp. 39-65	01/30
2.	02/04 <i>Republic</i> pp. 65-94	02/06
3.	02/11 <i>Republic</i> pp. 94-106	02/13
4. St. Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274) and natural law. Christine de Pizan (d. 1430)	02/18 Aquinas, from <i>Summa Theologica</i> pp. 144-152	02/20 Pizan, from <i>Book of the City of Ladies</i> , pp.153-158
5. Hobbes (d. 1679) and social contract theory	02/25 <i>Leviathan</i> pp. 205-228	02/27
6. Locke (d. 1704)	03/04 <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> pp. 251-262	03/06
7. Locke	03/11 pp. 262-272	03/13 Mid-Term Exam (in class)
8. SPRING BREAK	03/18 SPRING BREAK	03/20 SPRING BREAK
9. Rousseau (d. 1778)	03/25 <i>Discourse on Inequality</i> pp. 293-313	03/27
10. Rousseau	04/01	04/03
11. Mill (d. 1873)	04/08 <i>On the Subjection of Women</i> pp. 388-397	04/10
12. Marx/Engles and Communism (1848)	04/15 <i>Communist Manifesto</i> pp. 448-464	04/17 Passover NO CLASS
13. Rawls	04/22 <i>A Theory of Justice</i> pp. 667-687;	04/24 Paper topics due
14.	04/29 pp. 692-697	05/01 <i>MLK, Letter from Birmingham Jail</i> pp. 623-635
15.	05/06 Review for Finals	05/08 Review/Last Day of class. Final paper due

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday May 20, 5:00PM –7:00PM in classroom.