

**PHILOSOPHY 166 CLASSICS OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY**

**INTRODUCTORY HANDOUT revised February 9**

Winter, 2020

Professor Richard Arneson

**Class meets Mondays & Wednesdays from 5:00 to 6:20 p.m. in HSS 1128A.**

**The final exam for this class will take place from 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. on March 16.** You should be sure that you can attend this final exam (i.e., that you do not have too many other finals on this same day) before you enroll in this class.

For further information about the course, which will change throughout the quarter, consult the course Canvas course page.

This course is an introduction to the issue of political legitimacy: What is required in order that a government's coercion of its citizens to obey the law should count as morally legitimate? Under what conditions does a government act rightly in issuing commands to its subjects backed by force? Under what conditions are those who receive such commands morally obligated to obey? What are the legitimate functions of the state?

In tandem with the issue of political legitimacy runs another issue: What sort of political society and social community should we aspire to build? As the 20<sup>th</sup>-century philosopher John Rawls once noted, "the social system shapes the wants and aspirations that its citizens come to have. . . . Thus an economic system is not only an institutional device for satisfying existing wants and needs but a way of creating and fashioning wants in the future. How men [and women] work together now to satisfy their present wants affects the desires they will have later and the kind of persons they will be." Also, for better or worse, what we do and don't do today to build a better life for those who comes after us affects the conditions of life for future persons—our children and their children and their children's children and so on.

We explore these questions by studying some classic texts of political theory. The authors of these texts radically disagree in their answers. Our working assumption is that these differences are instructive, partly because in modern societies today these questions remain unsettled.

**The goals of the course** are to improve our understanding of these core texts in political theory, to assess their arguments, and to reflect on our own political values. We will get practice in reading hard texts and developing arguments to support our moral and political convictions.

**Course Texts:** John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*; Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (both of these Rousseau texts are in Susan Dunn (ed.), *The Social Contract & The First and Second Discourses*); Karl Marx, excerpts from David McClellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: selected Writings*; John Stuart Mill, excerpts from *Principles of Political Economy* and *Considerations on Representative Government*, *On Liberty*, & *The Subjection of Women*. Paired with texts of each of the four authors we study are a select few required or recommended essays by more recent authors approaching the issues from diverse perspectives. Course readings are available on-line by link or at the Canvas course page.

**Course Requirements:** There is a class participation course requirement (described in the next paragraph). The other course requirements are a takehome midterm exam, an analytical writing assignment (about five to seven pages in length), and a regular final exam. The writing assignment will not require extra reading, but will ask you to interpret and assess some course texts. On the writing assignment you will have a choice among topics assigned in class. The writing assignment has two components: (1) write a draft or outline of your paper and discuss it with me and (2) complete and turn in a final draft of your paper. The final exam will comprehend all course materials (required readings, lectures, and handouts). The final exam will consist of one and a half hours of essay questions (these will be drawn from a set passed out in advance and will somewhat emphasize material covered after the

midterm) and one and a half hours of short “paragraph essay” questions testing comprehension of all course readings, handouts, lectures and so on. Note: **Only** required readings (so, **no** recommended readings) will be covered on the final exam.

To encourage keeping up with the reading class by class and week by week, there will be a class participation component of your grade. On all class days, there will be class discussion for about half of the class, usually on questions posed in advance of class (and relating to the readings assigned for that class). During the lecture portion of any class, you are encouraged to interject questions and comment. I will take notes after every class on the class discussion, and the quality and frequency of your contributions to discussion will be the basis of your class participation grade, along with two other components. (1) You may also participate in class discussion by sending me email questions or comments before class regarding some significant aspect of the assigned reading for that day. I will keep a file of these email messages for each student. (2) Also, there will be a few short quizzes or writing exercises given throughout the quarter on the assigned readings for that class (or maybe also on recent readings prior to that class). (Each day of class counts the same toward your class participation grade, except for the first class, which is just for practice. So, there are in total 17 equal components of your class participation grade.

**Grading:** Class participation counts for 20 per cent of your final grade, the midterm exam for 15 per cent of your final grade, the writing assignment for 30 per cent, and the final exam counts for 35 per cent.

**Course grading for those enrolled on a Pass/Not Pass basis:** If you are taking the course on a Pass/Not Pass basis, and you have an A- average or better on all class work up to the final, you will be excused from the final exam.

**Academic Honesty.** Students are expected to understand and follow the University policy on academic honesty (Integrity of Scholarship). You can read this at <http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>

**Integrity of scholarship--the basic idea is simple: be honest. Don't cheat.**

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## SCHEDULE OF REQUIRED READINGS AND LECTURE/DISCUSSION TOPICS

Week 1. January 6-12.

MON: Locke on natural rights; the state of nature, the right to property. Reading: Locke, *Second Treatise*, chapters 1-5.

WED: Locke on property continued, plus Locke on the family, and on tacit consent. Reading: Locke, *Second Treatise*, chapters 5-8. plus John Simmons, “Tacit Consent and Political Obligation.” Recommended reading: Robert Nozick, “Locke’s Theory of Acquisition” and “The Proviso” excerpts (pages 70-76, sections 6 & 7) from his essay “Distributive Justice.” (available at Canvas course page).

Week 2. January 13-19.

MON: Limited government. Reading: Locke, *Second Treatise*, chapters 9-14.

WED: Tyranny and the right of revolution. Reading: Locke, *Second Treatise*, chapters 15-19.

Week 3. January 20-26.

MON: NO CLASS. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HOLIDAY.

WED: **Takehome midterm due at class today OR tomorrow at my mailslot OR by email attachment sent to [rarneson@ucsd.edu](mailto:rarneson@ucsd.edu) by midnight, Jan 23.**

Natural man. Reading: Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, First Part, pp. 82-113, in Susan Dunn ed. *Rousseau: The Social Contract and First and Second Discourses*; also Second Part, pp. 113-138, plus Rousseau’s notes, in Susan Dunn (ed.).

Recommended reading: Philip Pettit: *Just Freedom: A Moral Compass for a Complex World*, "Prologue" and chapters 1 & 2.

Week 4. January 27-February 2.

MON: The founding of civil society. Reading: Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Second Part, pp. 113-138 in Susan Dunn ed., plus Rousseau's notes to Second Part. Also: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I, pp. 155-170 in Susan Dunn ed.

WED: The Social Contract. Reading: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Books I and II, pp. 155-192 in Susan Dunn ed.; also Joshua Cohen, *Rousseau: A Free Community of Equals*, chapters 1 & 2. (available at Canvas course page).

Week 5. February 3-9.

MON: The general will; government and direct democracy. Reading: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book III, pp. 193-226 in Susan Dunn ed. Also Rousseau: liberal, radical democrat, or totalitarian? Reading: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book IV, pp. 227-254 in Susan Dunn ed.

Merely recommended reading: Frederick Neuhouser, "Freedom, Dependence, and the General Will."

WED: Karl Marx on alienated labor.; Marx versus money and exchange. Reading: Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," sections on "Alienated Labour" (pp. 85-95) "Private Property and Communism" (pp.95-104), and "On Money" (pp. 118-120), all in McLellan; also Marx, "On James Mill," (pp. 124-133). also in McLellan. Also: Jan Kandiyali, "The Importance of Others: Marx, Unalienated Production, and Meaningful Work."

Recommended reading: Michael Walzer, excerpt from chapter 4, "Money and Commodities" (pp. 95-105)" & chapter 6, "Hard Work," both from his *Spheres of Justice*..

Week 6. February 10-16.

MON: Historical materialism. Reading: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Communist Manifesto," in McLellan; also Marx, "Preface" to the *Critique of Political Economy*, handout passed out in class and available at Canvas course page. Merely recommended reading: R. Arneson, "Marxism and Secular Faith," available at Canvas course page.

WED: Marx's amoralism. Reading: same as for Monday, "The Communist Manifesto"; also handout excerpt from "Preface" to the *Critique of Political Economy*; plus Allen Wood, "The Marxian Critique of Justice," available at Canvas course page.

Week 7. February 17-23.

MON: NO CLASS. PRESIDENTS' DAY HOLIDAY.

WED: Exploitation; communist revolution; the stages of communism. Reading: Marx, "Critique of the Gotha Program" (pp. 610-617), in McLellan,; also G. A. Cohen, "Why Not Socialism?", available at Canvas course page.

Week 8. February 24-March 1.

MON: Communism and democracy; communism and liberalism. Reading: Introduction and Part III of "The Civil War in France" (pp. 584-596), in McLellan. Also: Mill on democracy. Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chapter 8.

Available at <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/mill-the-collected-works-of-john-stuart-mill-volume-xix-essays-on-politics-and-society-part-2>

Merely recommended reading: Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, chapter 4.

WED: Mill on utilitarianism, democracy, coops, and socialism.

Reading: Mill, *Utilitarianism*, first 12 paragraphs of chapter 2; also Mill, "The Probable Futurity of the Working Class," in his *Principles of Political Economy*, Book IV, ch. 7, sections 1-6 (but skip all of the details Mill reports about contemporary coops in sections 5 and 6). Available at

Further recommended reading: Mill, Chapters on Socialism, chapter 4, "The Difficulties of Socialism," pp. 1-9—stop at the subheading, "The Idea of Private Property not Fixed but Variable." This is available at CANVAS course page.

Week 9. March 2-8.

MON: Mill, utilitarianism, the liberty principle, freedom of expression. Reading: *On Liberty*, chapter 1-2.

Also: Mill's Utilitarianism, short excerpt from chapter 2.

Available at <https://www.utilitarianism.com/ol/one.html>

Recommended reading: David Lewis, "Mill and Milquetoast."

WED: Mill versus paternalism; Mill on individuality, limits of liberty. Reading: Mill, *On Liberty*, chapters 3-

4. Available at <https://www.utilitarianism.com/ol/one.html>

Recommended reading: Mill, *On Liberty*, chapter 5.

**FRI: Writing assignment due by email submission at [rarneson@ucsd.edu](mailto:rarneson@ucsd.edu).**

Week 10. March 9-15.

MON: Mill on women's rights & women's liberation.

Reading: Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, chapters 1-2.

WED: Mill on women's rights & women's liberation.

Reading: Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, chapters 2-4. Recommended reading: Sally Haslanger, "The Sex/Gender Distinction and the Social Construction of Reality," available at Canvas course page..

*The Subjection of Women* is available at

<https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/mill-on-liberty-and-the-subjection-of-women-1879-ed>

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Arneson's office hours: Tuesdays 2-3 and Thursdays 3-4 in HSS 8057.

Arneson's email: [rarneson@ucsd.edu](mailto:rarneson@ucsd.edu)