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## **INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY** **Political Science 120, Fall 2007**

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Political theory investigates how we should and how we do live together. It is an inquiry into some of the fundamental problems and priorities of collective life: liberty, authority, equality, justice, and governance. There is fairly broad agreement that these are important pursuits, but much less agreement about what they are. What are liberty, authority, equality, etc. and how do they relate to one another? And which of them is or are the most important? This course is designed to introduce students to the practice of thinking systematically about these and related phenomena. We will do so by reading, speaking, and writing about freedom and order, and especially about political freedom and political order. We'll see that freedom and order can be seen as complementary and antagonistic, and that each can be praised or condemned. The syllabus is structured in sections. If you get disoriented, think about how a particular reading relates to its section heading and to the main questions of the course.

### COURSE READINGS

Except for the first week's assignment, readings will be available through the Daley Library's Electronic Reserve system. The URL for this course is <http://uic.docutek.com/eres/coursepage.aspx?cid=1162> and the password is **politics120**. Please print the selections before reading them, and read with pen or pencil in hand. The assignment for August 29 will be handed out in class.

### COURSE FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

This course is a reading, lecture, writing, and discussion course. These four elements will set us on our way toward thinking--and by that I mean thinking critically--about freedom and order. Participation in class discussions is an essential element of this course. Assigned materials must be read by the day they are assigned and consistent attendance is mandatory. Poor attendance and attending class unprepared will seriously affect your participation grade and overall performance.

The written work for this course will consist of two 5-7 page papers in which you will be asked to analyze and/or synthesize themes from the readings, and two exams. Paper topics will be assigned and late papers will be penalized.

**Your work must be your own. If you feel the need to consult outside sources, then you don't understand the essay assignments, and you should talk to me immediately. Your papers must be adequately cited; to do otherwise is to plagiarize (see <http://www.uic.edu/depts/pols/Plagiarism1.pdf>). **PLAGIARISM—THE PASSING OFF OF OTHERS' WORDS AND IDEAS AS YOUR OWN—WILL BE SEVERELY PENALIZED.** You do not need to do any research in order to complete the essay assignments for this class. Instead you need to read the reading provided, reread it, think,**

**and write. Do your own work!**

**SUMMARY OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING PERCENTAGES:**

---Participation 10%

---Two 5-7 page papers, 25% each, for a total of 50%

(See "Schedule of Assignments" below for due dates)

---Midterm exam 15% (in class Wednesday, October 17)

---Final exam 25% (Friday, December 14)

**COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

M-8/27: Course introduction

**I. Security and terror**

W-8/29: Handouts: Bush Executive Order November 13, 2001; Gonzales Memorandum January 25, 2002 and Powell comment; Agamben, "Security and Terror"; Danner, "We Are All Torturers Now"

F-8/31: Discussion sections

M-9/3: Labor Day (no class)

**II. What is political freedom and what are its sources?**

W-9/5: Friedman, "Prohibition and Drugs"; Jefferson, letter to William Stephens Smith; Dostoevsky, "The Grand Inquisitor"

F-9/7: Discussion sections

M-9/10: Rousseau, On the Social Contract, Bk. I and Bk. II, chs. I-VI

W-9/12: Rousseau, On the Social Contract, Bk. I and Bk. II, chs. I-VI

F-9/14: Discussion sections

M-9/17: Mill, On Liberty, chs. I and IV

W-9/19: Thucydides, "Pericles' Funeral Oration"; Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (excerpt)

F-9/21: Discussion sections

M-9/24: Paine, Common Sense (excerpt)

**\*\*Paper topic one assigned: due in class Friday, October 12**

W-9/26: Declaration of Independence; the familiar letters of Abigail and John Adams; Seneca Falls Declaration; Douglass, North Star editorial and Fourth of July oration; Sojourner Truth, "Ain't I a Woman?"

F-9/28: Discussion sections

M-10/1: Malcolm X, "The Ballot or the Bullet"

### **III. What is political order and what are its sources?**

W-10/3: Hobbes, Leviathan, chs. 13-14

F-10/5: Discussion sections

M-10/8: Hobbes, Leviathan, chs. 17-18, 21

W-10/10: Montesquieu, The Spirit of the Laws (excerpt)

F-10/12: Discussion sections

**\*\*papers due at beginning of class!!**

M-10/15: Publius, Federalist 10 and Federalist 51; Constitution of the United States

W-10/17: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

F-10/19: Discussion sections

### **IV. Relationships between freedom and equality**

M-10/22: Hayek, "Equality, Value, and Merit"

W-10/24: Walzer, "In Defense of Equality"

F-10/26: Discussion sections

M-10/29: Plato, Apology

W-10/31: Plato, Crito; King, "Letter from Birmingham Jail"

F-11/2: Discussion sections

M-11/5: Marx, "On the Jewish Question," part I

W-11/7: Moruzzi, "A Problem With Headscarves"

**\*\*Paper topic two assigned: due in class Friday, November 30**

F-11/9: Discussion sections

M-11/12: Marx, "Wage Labour and Capital"

W-11/14: Fraser, "After the Family Wage: A Post-Industrial Thought Experiment"

F-11/16: Discussion sections

## **V. Ways of seeing**

M-11/19: Castaneda, "The Political Economy of Nineteenth Century Stereotypes of Californians"

W-11/21: Bennett and Reed, "The New Face of Urban Renewal: The Near North Redevelopment Initiative and the Cabrini-Green Neighborhood"

F-11/23: No class: Thanksgiving Break

M-11/26: Berger, Ways of Seeing, ch. 3

W-11/28: Berger, Ways of Seeing, ch. 7

F-11/30: Discussion sections

**\*\*papers due at beginning of class!!**

M-12/3: Wolin, Politics and Vision, ch. 16

W-12/5: Wolin, Politics and Vision, ch. 17

F-12/7: Discussion sections

## **F-12/14, 8:00-10:00 a.m.: FINAL EXAMINATION**

**\*\*Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Please contact ODS at 312/413-2183 (voice) or 312/413-0123 (TTY).**