

Honors Political Philosophy
PHL 207H – Winter 2006

Instructor: Lani Roberts, Ph.D. LRoberts@oregonstate.edu
102C Hovland Hall 737-5654
Hours: 1 pm MW and by appointment

Texts: Social and Political Philosophy, 3rd Edition, ed. James P. Sterba (S)
Required Packet of Readings (P)
Writing Philosophy Papers, on line at <http://oregonstate.edu/dept/philosophy>, under resources

Introduction

Social and political philosophy derives from the fact that we humans have organized ourselves into communities, for all our known history. Inevitably, problems, questions and conflicts have arisen which have remained surprisingly the same through time. In this course we will examine some of these concerns, including the social contract theory of government, ideas of private property, and attitudes toward authority as well as why we have government at all.

The text is subtitled *Classical Western Texts in Feminist and Multicultural Perspectives*. It was selected to enable us to critique the central theories of western politics, primarily democracy, from the perspectives of feminism and those speaking on behalf of colonized persons. We will also examine anarchism, and John Rawls' contemporary theory of justice. Since law is a central organizing principle of our society, we will also examine obedience to the law, that is, whether it is obligatory in a democracy.

Learning Outcomes

The successful completion of Honors Political Philosophy will enable a student to describe and critique the various foundations of western democracy, understand the basics of Marxist political theory, understand and critique anarchism, have a working knowledge of a contemporary Rawlsian view of justice as fairness and, finally, understand the arguments for and against civil disobedience as political action.

Class Schedule

1-9 Introduction to the course, expectations, et al
1-11 Hobbes (S) 139-157
1-13 Hobbes (S) 157-167
1-16 No Class – Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Celebration
1-18 Pateman (S) 167
1-20 Locke (S) 184-196
1-23 Locke (S) 196-207
1-25 Clark (S) 207
1-27 de Las Casas (S) 180; Tecumseh (S) 222; Churchill (S) 270
1-30 Rousseau (S) 225-235
2-1 Rousseau (S) 236-250
2-3 Wollstonecraft (S) 263
2-6 Mill (S) 340
2-8 Taylor (S) 351; Shanley (S) 354
2-10 Review - Study Questions #1 Due
2-13 **Midterm**
2-15 Marx (P) 33
2-17 Marx (S) 372-379
2-20 Engels (S) 382
2-22 Kropotkin (P) 1; Goldman (P) 8
2-24 Rawls (S) 409-419 (Optional term paper topic due in writing.)
2-27 Rawls (S) 419-427
3-1 Workshop
3-3 Okin (S) 438
3-6 Hospers (S) 427
3-8 Friedman (S) 520
3-10 Plato's *Crito* (P) 15

- 3-13 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (P) 23; Gandhi (S) 312
- 3-15 Just War Theory - Handout
- 3-17 Review - Study Questions #2 Due
- 3-21 **Final Exam** 6 pm in our classroom

Important Notes

Most, but not all, required material will be found in the reading. Some required material may be presented in class only. You are responsible for any and all material presented in lecture. This may include changes to the syllabus. I may also offer extra credit either in class on the reading assigned or take home. These may not be made up.

All work must be your own. Although you are encouraged to study with others, **all work you turn in must be in your own words**. I consider anything else to be academic dishonesty. "Academic dishonesty is defined as an intentional act of deception in one of the following areas: cheating - use or attempted use of unauthorized materials, information or study aids; fabrication or invention of any information; assisting or helping another commit an act of academic dishonesty; tampering or altering or interfering with evaluation instruments and documents; plagiarism - representing the words or ideas of another person as one's own" (from the Student Conduct Office). See <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/achon.htm>

Be sure to save all graded work returned to you until you are satisfied that your grade for the term is a fair one. You will need this material to substantiate any claim to the contrary. Finally, if you require any special arrangements, please let me know. I am here to assist you in every way that I can.

Finally, if I can assist you in any way, please let me know. "Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Students with accommodations approved through SSD are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Student who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through SSD should contact SSD immediately at 737-4098."

Grading Criteria

Short Papers (2 x 15 for 30 points total) You will write two short papers of approximately 3-5 pages on topics assigned by me, each of which will ask a philosophical question about the materials we are studying. The papers will be graded on content as well as grammar, spelling, punctuation, correct citation format, *et al*. You will have at least one week to write each of the two papers.

Study Questions (2 x 10 for 20 points total)

There will be two sets of study questions, one prior to the midterm and one prior to the final. We will go over them in class as a review for the examinations. Credit will be given on a pass/no pass basis. If your answers are on time, complete and substantially correct, you will receive credit. If one or more of these criteria are not met, there will be no credit.

Exams

The midterm exam is worth 60 points and will be in class and essay. The final exam, worth 90 points, will also be in class and essay. In consultation with the instructor, a term paper may be written in lieu of the final exam. If you wish to write a term paper instead of taking the final exam, you must see me to discuss options and submit a topic in writing no later than February 24.

Grading Scale [Please note that I do not give plus/minus grades.]

Study Questions (2 x 10)	20	A = 185 - 200
Response Papers (2 x 15)	30	B = 165 - 184
Midterm	60	C = 145 - 164
Final (or term paper)	<u>90</u>	D = 125 - 144
		F = 0 - 124
TOTAL	200	