

SUMMER 2015 – SESSION II

POLS 335 : HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

YOU
SAID
WHAT
ABOUT
ME?



- YOU ARE POSSESSED BY LOGOS!
- WHAT MAKES YOU ANXIOUS IS THE FEELING OF EQUALITY
- YOU NEED FRIENDS AND YOU KNOW WHY?
- THIS IS THE PURPOSE OF YOUR LIFE: HAPPINESS
- YOU HAVE A SOUL AND IT'S COMPOSED OF...
- YOU ARE BORN FREE AND EVERYWHERE YOU ARE IN CHAINS! YOU KNOW HOW?
- YOUR LIFE WOULD BE SOLITARY, NASTY, BRUTISH, POOR, AND SHORT IF A COMMON POWER DID NOT KEEP YOU IN AWE
- YOU ARE MADE A DEMOCRAT THEREFORE YOU ARE FOR DEMOCRACY
- YOU CANNOT BE FREE IF YOU ARE NOT FREE OF YOUR BASIC NECESSITIES
- YOU ARE FREE BECAUSE YOU DON'T HAVE TO BOTHER VOTING
- ON THE CONTRARY! YOU CAN ONLY BE REALLY FREE IF YOU PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS

WOULD YOU LIKE TO LEARN MORE OF WHO SAID WHAT ABOUT YOU?

COME JOIN US THIS SUMMER IN POLS 335. FOR MORE INFO ON THE COURSE CONTACT OZGE TEKIN, LECTURER, AT otekin@hawaii.edu

POLS 335 HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT
Communitarianism and Its Critics
SUMMER- SESSION II (July 6–August 14, 2015)

Instructor: Ozge Tekin
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Days/Time: M-F/10:30 AM – 11:45 AM
Classroom: TBA
Office: TBA
Office Hours: W-F/11:45 AM – 12:45 PM

→ **COURSE TEXT AND REQUIRED MATERIAL:**

The following texts are **REQUIRED** for the course:

- Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Univ. of Chicago)
- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Harper Collins)

→ **COURSE OVERVIEW & GOAL**

Since its emergence in the 18th century, liberal democracy has attracted all sorts of criticism. One set of such critics has argued that liberal democracy and its cousin, bourgeois capitalism, have failed to deliver on their promises of freedom and equality. Injustice is their mantra, and they typically point to racism and economic inequality that plague societies. Another set of critics has argued that liberalism has resulted in the degeneration of the human soul. Liberal humans, these critics contend, are mediocre, materialistic creatures who care for nothing but petty self-advancement and material comfort. Thus, they are incapable of historical greatness. A third important criticism of liberalism appeared in the middle of the 20th century. According to these critics, known as communitarians, liberal societies are incapable of sustaining community. Liberal institutions, they argue, promote a view of humans as insular, separate and atomized; as individuals who do not identify with their neighbors or see them as part of the collective enterprise of social living. We thus hear a familiar refrain from communitarians: liberals are hostile to the value of community. Of course, as with almost any movement that defines itself against something, there is tremendous diversity among communitarians. In this course, we will survey a number of different approaches to communitarianism. Mixing classic authors with contemporary thinkers, we will examine some of the pioneers in this intellectual movement. In addition, in this course we will develop our abilities on how to write a philosophical essay by critically discussing and evaluating some of the arguments that these authors deemed important in their works. The in-class oral discussions that we are going to have will help you brainstorm and understand the ideas better. The writing assignments that you are going to fulfill in this course are designed to develop your argumentative abilities.

Note: Reading materials on this syllabus may be subject to change.

→ **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING**

1. Participation and Attendance (10% of the grade): Students are expected to arrive on time and participate in all scheduled class sessions.

2. Midterm (30% of the grade): The midterm is going to be an in-class exam. Blue books will be provided.

3. Written Assignments (30%) + Final (30% of the grade): There will be a **10-page final essay** due on the last session of the class. Students will be asked to evaluate and critically discuss an argument in one of the assigned texts. Final essay questions will be provided after the midterm. Additionally, students are required to submit **three 2-page essay exercises (each comprises 10% of the final grade)**, which will also count towards the final grade. Additional feedback and comments on written assignments will be provided after class during the office hours. If you want to make sure to be the first in line, please make an appointment via e-mail in advance. A hard copy is required for all assignments. Digital copies will be marked down one letter grade. Font instructions: Double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 font, default margins.

GRADING: Grading will be *strictly* determined by a *weighted average* of the scores you receive on the requirements above. The scale is as follows:

A+: 95 percent and above	B+: 84~86 percent	C+: 73~75 percent	D+: 63~65 percent	F: 54 and below
A : 90~94 percent	B : 80~83 percent	C: 70~72 percent	D: 60~62 percent	
A-: 87~89 percent	B-: 76~79 percent	C-: 66~69 percent	D-: 55~59 percent	

→ SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Part 1: Classical Republicanism (July 6-July 9) (Reading available at Laulima)

July 6: Opening Lecture

July 7: The Nicomachean Ethics (Book I, 1-13)

July 8: The Nicomachean Ethics (Book II, 1-9)

July 9: The Nicomachean Ethics (Book VIII)

PAUSE – How to write a philosophical essay: some tips + discussion + example arguments. First written assignment topic will be given in following this discussion.

July 10: The Politics, Book I

July 13: The Politics, Book II

July 14: The Politics, Book III (Chapters 1-4 ,6, 13)

July 15: The Politics, Book IV, (Chapters 1-10)

July 16: The Politics, Book V (Chapters 1-3, 8-12)

First 2-page essay due in class on July 16

Part 2: Modern Republicanism I (July 17-July 20) (Reading available at Laulima)

July 17: Legacies of Jean-Jacque Rousseau, “Discourse on Inequality”

July 20: Legacies of Jean-Jacque Rousseau, The Social Contract (Book 1, ch 1-6, Book IV)

Part 3: Modern Republicanism II (July 21-23)

July 21: Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition (Part I, II, V)

July 22: Hannah Arendt, Full Interview

July 23: Benjamin Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared to that of the Moderns" (Laulima)

July 24: MIDTERM –Essay topics for the final will be provided in this session
Second 2-page essay due in class on July 2

Part 4: Conservative Communitarianism (July 27-29)

July 27: Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, pg. 3-50. (Laulima)

July 28: Michael Oakeshott, Rationalism in Politics (Laulima)

July 29: Michael Oakeshott continued.

Part 5: Communitarianism and Democracy I (July 30-31)

July 30: Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, pgs. 9-20 (Author's Intro), 31-60, 174-202, 235-86, 712-714 (appendix e) [an excerpt from the movie Monty Python and the Holy Grail]

July 31: Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America pgs. 503-549, 294-308, 316-63

Part 6: Communitarianism and Democracy II (August 3-4)

August 3: Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, 504-554 & documentary

August 4: Alexis de Tocqueville, Documentary

Part 7: Civil Society (August 5-7)

August 5: Adam Ferguson, An Essay on the History of Civil Society, selections (Laulima)

August 6: Karl Marx, "On the Jewish Question" (Laulima)

August 7: Civil society continued. Review for the final essay.

Third 2-page essay due in class on August 7

Part 8: Liberalism & Communitarianism (August 10-11)

August 10: John Rawls, Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical (Laulima)

August 11: Michael Walzer, Spheres of Justice (ch 1-4) (Laulima)

Part 9: Philosophy: Guide to Happiness (August 12-13)

August 12: Philosophy: Guide to Happiness Part I

August 13: Philosophy: Guide to Happiness Part II

August 14th – Final (10-page) Essays due in class at 10:30 am.