

**The University of Texas at Austin**  
**GOV 351D; CTI 335**  
**Unique # 38730; 33830**  
**The Theoretical Foundations of Modern Politics**  
**Fall 2011**

Professor: Devin Stauffer  
Office: Mezes 3.144  
Email: [devinstauffer@mail.utexas.edu](mailto:devinstauffer@mail.utexas.edu)  
Office Hours: Friday 8:30–11:30

Teaching Assistant: Lewis Fallis  
Office: Batts 1.118  
Email: lewisfallis@yahoo.com  
Office Hours: M/F 9:30–11:00

### **Course Description**

This course examines the philosophic origins of modern politics and culture by looking at the works of several authors whose writings played decisive roles in the rise and development of modernity. In our study of Machiavelli's *Prince*, Hobbes's *Leviathan*, Locke's *Second Treatise of Government*, and selected political writings of Rousseau and Nietzsche, we will consider the ways in which modern political thought broke with the past and offered a new set of political visions. We will consider the differing views of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Nietzsche on issues such as the aims and limits of politics, the role of morality in the harsh world of political necessity, the proper place of religion and reason in political life, and the nature and basis of justice, freedom, and equality. Throughout the course, we will reflect of the impact that the revolutionary doctrines of modern political philosophy have had on the political world in which we live.

### **Prerequisite**

Completion of at least thirty hours of coursework.

### **Texts**

Machiavelli, *The Prince* (University of Chicago)  
Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Hackett)  
Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Yale or Hackett)  
Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses* (St. Martin's Press)  
Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (Penguin)

- Please try to purchase the particular editions of the books ordered for this class, and always bring the book we are reading to class.

### **Requirements**

Careful reading is the most important requirement. The reading assignments in this course are not long, but they are quite difficult; make sure you read them slowly and take notes while you read. You should try to come to every class with questions, comments,

and interpretations. Since the love of knowledge is not always powerful enough to inspire students to do all of the reading, I will give unannounced quizzes. These quizzes will not be particularly difficult for those who have done the reading carefully, and they can be a nice way of lifting your grade. Any quizzes missed due to an unexcused absence from class cannot be made up. I also encourage you to keep a notebook for the notes that you take as you read (separate from the notebook you use for class notes). If you turn in such a notebook at the end of the semester, you can add 1 or 2 points to your final grade, based on the thoroughness of your notes.

You have the option of writing a paper this semester. If you choose this option, you will write an analytical essay on a theme in one or two of the readings. I will hand out options periodically during the semester with staggered due dates. You would be wise not to wait until the last set of topics, since the end of the semester is a busy time and you might find one of the earlier topics more interesting. To encourage you to write the optional paper and to reward those who put forth the extra effort, your paper grade will be factored into your final grade only if it will be to your advantage. No late papers will be accepted.

There will be two exams, one in the middle of the term (on Machiavelli and Hobbes) and the other during the exam period at the end of the term (on all of the authors, but with greater weight given to Locke, Rousseau, and Nietzsche). The first exam will be given in class, probably during the week of October 11–13; the second will be given on the scheduled day during the exam period. The exams will be essay exams, with a quotation identification component in the case of the final exam.

On all of your work, you are expected to know and to adhere to UT's policies on academic honesty.

### **Attendance Policy and Other Odds and Ends (please read carefully)**

- Roll will be taken at the beginning of each class, and attendance will be considered in determining your final grade. *After two unexcused absences, your grade for "Attendance and Participation" will drop 25 points for each unexcused absence. That means that a significant number of absences will have a serious downward effect on your final grade.* If you are late to class, you will be counted as absent for that day. If you have perfect attendance for the entire semester, 5 extra points will be added to the "Attendance and Participation" part of your grade.
- No work submitted by email will be accepted.
- Please turn your cell phones off, and do not take them out at any time before or during class.
- Please do not bring a computer to class unless you have a special need for one (in which case you should explain that need to me).

**IMPORTANT NOTE ON COMPUTERS, PHONES, I-PADS, AND THE LIKE:** If you spend any of our class time on a computer (without first explaining your need for one to

me) or looking at a cell phone screen, you will receive a double-F (0 points) for the attendance and participation portion of your grade for the entire semester.

**RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS:** By UT policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

## **Grades**

Your grade will be calculated by one of the following two methods. *Plus/minus grades will be used in the final grades.*

### With the optional paper

Paper: 25%  
First exam: 20%  
Final exam: 30%  
Attendance and Participation: 15%  
Quizzes: 10%

### Without the optional paper

First Exam: 30%  
Final Exam: 45%  
Attendance and Participation: 15%  
Quizzes: 10%

## **Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

## **Course Plan**

I will give the specific assignments for each class as we go along, but this is a rough schedule:

August 25	Introduction
Aug. 30 – Sept. 1	Machiavelli, Letter to Vettori, <i>The Prince</i> , Dedicatory Letter, Chapters 1-6
Sept. 6 – 8	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , Chapters 6-14
Sept. 13 – 15	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , Chapters 15-26
Sept. 20 – 22	Finish Machiavelli; Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Dedicatory Letter, Author's Introduction, Part I, Chapters 1-6, Part 4, Chapter 46
Sept. 27 – 29	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I, Chapters 7-16

Oct. 4 – 6	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part II, Chapters 17-21, and other selections
Oct. 11 – 13	<u>FIRST EXAM</u> ; Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 1-4
Oct. 18 – 20	Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 5-9
Oct. 25 – 27	Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 10-19
Nov. 1 – 3	Finish Locke; Rousseau, <i>The First Discourse</i>
Nov. 8 – 10	Rousseau, <i>The Second Discourse</i> , Part I
Nov. 15 – 17	Rousseau, <i>The Second Discourse</i> , Part II
Nov. 22	Nietzsche, Preface from <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i>
Nov. 29 – Dec 1	Nietzsche, Selections from <i>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</i> .
Dec. 9 (9:00-12:00)	<u>FINAL EXAM</u>