University of Texas Gov 314 (38755)
Professor J. Abramson Spring 2013

COMPETING VISIONS OF THE GOOD LIFE

This is a basic introductory course to political philosophy. Through a reading of works of political thought from Plato to the present, we confront enduring debates about the meaning of liberty, tolerance, equality, justice and the good life.

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Books for Purchase:

Plato:	Euthyphro, Apology, Crito (Library of Liberal Arts)
Plato:	Republic (Basic Books)
Sophocles:	Three Theban Plays (Penguin)
Aristotle:	Nichomachean Ethics (Hackett)
Aristotle:	Politics (Oxford)
Augustine:	Confessions (Penguin)
Machiavelli:	The Prince and the Discourses (Modern Library)
Hobbes:	Leviathan (Penguin)
Locke:	Letter Concerning Toleration (Hackett)
Locke:	Second Treatise on Government (Hackett)
Rousseau:	Basic Political Writings (Hackett)
Mill:	On Liberty (Hackett)
Abramson:	Minerva's Owl (Harvard)

Topics and Readings:

1. Introduction: Human Nature and Politics.

2. The Greek Polis: Citizenship and the Good Life:

PLATO	Apology	(entire).
	Crito	(entire).
	Republic	(entire).
SOPHOCLES	Antigone	(entire).
ARISTOTLE	Politics (Oxford, pb) Bk. I, Chs. 1-6; Bk II, Chs. 1-5; Bk. III, Chs. 6-13; Bk. IV, Chs. 1,2, 6-9, ll; Bk. V, Chs. 1,2; Bk. VI, Chs. 2,3; Bk. VII, Chs. 1-3, 9.	
	Ethics, Bks. III (secs. 6-12; IV-V; VIII-IX.	

3. The Fall of the Greek Polis and the Rise of the City of God:

AUGUSTINE Confessions, Bks I-V, VII, VIII.

4. The Origins of a New Secular State: The Power Vocabulary of the Political Professional:

MACHIAVELLI Prince (entire).

Discourses, Bk. I, introduction, Chs. 1-21, 24-27, 37, 40, 47, 49, 55, 58; Bk. II, Introduction, Chs. 1, 2, 6, 13, 19, 20, 23; Bk. III, Chs. 1, 3, 6, 19-22, 25, 30, 41.

5. Liberalism: Rights, Privacy, Individualism, and Tolerance:

HOBBES Leviathan, Introduction, Part One (entire); Part Two, Chs. 17-21,24, 26, 28, 30.

LOCKE Letter Concerning Toleration (entire).

Second Treatise of Govt., chs.1-14, 18-19.

6. Combining Democracy with Liberalism: Emerging Tensions between the Values of Equality and Freedom:

ROUSSEAU Discourse on the Origins of Inequality (all)

The Social Contract (all)

MILL On Liberty (all)

Course Requirements

Attendance and Participation: 10% of grade

Mid-term Examination (Feb. 21): 25% of grade

Paper (7-8 pages)(April 4): 25% of grade

Final Examination (TBA): 40% of grade

(Course grading policy is plus or minus grades)

Office Hours and Email Contacts

Prof. Abramson (jabramson@austin.utexas.edu) T/Th 5-6:330 MEZ 3.148) T/Th 2-3:30
TA: Kody Cooper

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/

Religious Holidays
Absences for religious observances will be accommodated. By university 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.

Honor Code and Academic Honesty
The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community.

Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity. In simplest terms, this occurs if you represent as your own work any material that was obtained from another source, regardless how or where you acquired it. For examples of plagiarism, please see http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis_plagiarism.php

Use of Computers or Cell Phones in Class
Cell phones must be off at all times in class. Laptop computers or other communication devices may NOT be used during class except by prior permission from the professor upon request.

Emergency Evacuation
In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same

as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Faculty members must then provide this information to the Fire Prevention Services office by fax (512-232-2759), with "Attn. Mr. Roosevelt Easley" written in the subject line.

Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at http://www.utexas.edu/emergency.

SYLLABUS

1. Introduction

2. Plato's Apology for Socrates: The Philosopher's Case Against Democracy

3. Socrates' Apology for the City: The Philosopher's Case for Obedience

4. Plato, Book I of the Republic: Justice - Doing One's Duty to the Gods?; the City?; Oneself

5. Plato, Books II & III of the Republic: The Founding of a City: From Pigs to Philosophers

6. Plato, Books III-VII of the Republic: The Education of the Rulers and the Theory of Communism -- the Corrupting Influence of Family Life and Private Property

7. Plato, Books IV, VIII & IX of the Republic: Plato's Psychology

8. Plato, Books IX & X of the Republic: To be Just is to be Happy: The Philosopher vs. the Tyrant

9. Concluding remarks on Plato

10. Sophocles, Antigone and the Dilemmas of Civil Disobedience

11. Aristotle, Book I of the Politics: Politics as the Master Science

12. Aristotle, Book I of the Politics: Slavery and Work

13. Aristotle, Book II of the Politics: The Antiutopian Criticism of Plato

14. Aristotle, Book III of the Politics: Justice and Equality

15. Aristotle and the importance of friendship for politics

16. Augustine: The Christian View of Politics

17. Machiavelli, The Prince and the Problem of "Dirty Hands"

18. Machiavelli, The Discourses: Machiavelli as a Republican. the Problem of "The End Justifies the Means"

19. Machiavelli: Concluding remarks and discussion

20. Hobbes, Leviathan: The Psychological Theory. Human Beings as Machines

21. Hobbes, Leviathan: The Problem of Moral Obligation or: How can Machines Make and Keep Promises?

22. Hobbes, Leviathan: The Political Theory. The State of Nature and the "Kingdom of Means"

23. Hobbes, Leviathan: The Political Theory. The Social Contract and Absolute Rule

24. Locke: The Theory of Toleration

25. Locke: The Liberalized Version of the Social Contract

26. Locke: The Theory of Property. Protection of Property and Liberal Values

27. Rousseau: The New View of the State of Nature

28. Rousseau: The Democratic Version of the Social Contract: Part One: The General Will

29. Rousseau: The Democratic Version of the Social Contract: Part Two: Participation

30. Rousseau: The Republic of Virtue; the Censorship of Art

31. Mill: The High-water Mark of Liberalism (On Liberty)

32. Mill: The Tyranny of the Majority and the Dominance of Bourgeois Values