

Political Science 210 syllabi must include this language:

7. Social Science

Goals/Rationale:

Courses in social science help students understand human behavior and cognition, and the structures of human societies, cultures and institutions.

Learning Objectives:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of scientific inquiry as they are applied to the studies of individuals, groups, organizations, and societies.
2. Students comprehend human differences and similarities in various psychological, social, cultural, economic, geographic, and political contexts.
3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess individual and social values, and recognize their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

Pol. Sci. 210
J.R. Champlin
Autumn 2005

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY

An introduction to the field of political theory through classic and contemporary texts and selected case studies. Texts represent a wide range of theories. Students are expected to read attentively and with care. We will select contemporary cases from the day's news, to see whether and how theories, even older ones, might lead us to something interesting, whether by way of understanding and explanation, justification and criticism, or political action and practice.

TEXTS

The following texts are required reading, and are available for purchase at S.B.X.:

Plato, *The Trial & Death of Socrates*, tr. G.M.A. Grube (Hackett)

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Hackett)

John Locke, *Locke's Two Treatises of Government*, ed. P. Laslett (Cambridge University Press)

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (International)

Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition"* (Princeton)

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Like other courses, Pol. Sci. 210 asks students for a high level of intellectual curiosity and seriousness, but it does not ask for any particular background or preparation. You are expected to get the

reading done on time, and then read and think again, to learn to read and think critically. This does not mean that you are expected to read as an expert; it means you are expected to read as yourself, without pretence or bluff, and to discuss with others your reactions to the reading. Saying forthrightly that you are perplexed or bothered by an idea or argument, and why, is a real contribution, as is listening attentively to what others have to say.

Class will combine some lecture with as much discussion as feasible. Students should know, however, that class can not "cover" everything that is important or interesting in the assigned reading. If you find yourself interested in something you have read, in disagreement with something, in trouble grasping some portion of it, or just wanting to talk, it is your responsibility to raise questions: in class is best, but out of class conversation is encouraged too, since members of the class can learn from each other. For each text, the syllabus specifies the day on which you are expected to have read it. Whatever gets our attention in class, students are responsible for ALL assigned reading, and will be examined on it.

GRADES: As a first approximation, the grade for the course will be based on a final essay, and mid-term and final exams, each worth one third (33 1/3%) of the grade for the course. The grade for the course will also reflect the quality of your contributions to class discussion: the grade will be raised if your participation in class warrants; it will be lowered if you do not regularly attend class, having completed the assigned reading.

ESSAY: Each student will write an essay, about ten pages long. See the syllabus, below for topics. Essays are due on Monday, 5 December (with the Final Exam). Late essays will be graded by a more demanding standard, in fairness to those students who submit work on time.

EXAMS: The exams will be based on the assigned reading, as interpreted in class. The midterm will be on Wednesday, 26 October, and the final will be given at the regularly scheduled time: 11:30 a.m., Monday, 5 December. The exams will assess the work students have done to grasp the assigned reading: NOT performance during the exam time, but the quality of the reading and thinking ALREADY done. It is not necessary to memorize trivia, but rather to have read and thought carefully. Class will offer practice in the intellectual processes involved. If you do the reading on regular basis, exams should be easy; if you don't, expect to find them challenging.

ACADEMIC HONESTY. All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and, when appropriate, reported to the university

Committee on Academic Misconduct.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: The quality of a student's contributions in class will be assessed according to the following considerations: having done the reading on time, asking good hard questions, pursuing arguments in an intellectually responsible way, being generous in attending to the ideas of others and determined in sticking up for one's own.

DISABILITY: Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disabilities Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs.

CLASS AND READING SCHEDULE

Wed, 21 Sept: Introduction to the course

I. SOCRATES/PLATO. Read: Plato, The Trial and Death of Socrates

Mon, 26 Sept: Euthyphro

Wed, 28 Sept: Apology

Mon, 3 Oct: Crito

II. MACHIAVELLI. Read: Niccolo Machiavelli, The Prince

Wed, 5 Oct: Dedication, chs. I-XI

Mon, 10 Oct: chs. XII-XVII

Wed, 12 Oct: chs. XVIII-XXVI

III. LOCKE. Read: John Locke, SECOND Treatise, in Locke's Two Treatises of Government

Mon, 17 Oct: Starting in the state of nature, chs. 2, 5

Wed, 19 Oct: The origins of government in contract, chs. 8, 9

Mon, 24 Oct: The limits of government, chs. 11, 19

Wed, 26 Oct: Review and MIDTERM EXAMINATION

IV. MILL. Read: J.S. Mill, On Liberty

Mon, 31 Oct: ch. 1

Wed 2 Nov: ch. 2

Mon, 7 Nov: ch. 3

V. MARX. Read: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto

Wed, 9 Nov: Part I

Mon, 14 Nov: Part II

Wed, 16 Nov: Reread parts I and III!

VI. TAYLOR. Read: Charles Taylor, Multiculturalism and "The Struggle for Recognition"

Mon, 21 Nov: I, pp. 25-36

Wed, 23 Nov: II and III, pp. 37-51

Mon, 28 Nov: IV and V, pp. 51-73

Wed, 30 Nov: More time to finish Taylor!

ESSAY TOPIC: How, if at all, might one go about establishing that a political theory is true or valid or in some way deserves to be believed? Present your own views, but make your case in part with specific reference to the five assigned texts when relevantly possible: how do some of these theories try to make a case for their worth, and what do you make of their efforts?

ALTERNATE ESSAY TOPIC: To what extent should one look to political practice to reveal the merits or flaws of a theory? Present your own views, but make your case in part with specific reference to the five assigned texts when relevantly possible: how might some of these theories have been put into practice, with what consequences attributable to the theory?

ESSAY DUE, FINAL EXAMINATION: 11:30 a.m., Monday, 5 December (the regularly scheduled time)