

**POLS XXXX**  
**Introduction to Political Theory**  
**FALL 2022**

**Instructor Information**

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**Course Information**

Lecture: DAY and TIME  
 Location

**Learning Outcomes**

This course is an introduction to political theory, taking the approach of focusing on the problems and tensions of political action and order. Politics is at once the creation of a legitimate public order *and* a system of power. The problems arise in that the requirements of order and the imperatives of power are often in tension with one another. It is this tension we will consider in the various themes/units of the course. The below table maps out the themes of the course:

Theme	Questions	Major Thinkers
Political Obligation, Conscience, and the Claims of Authority	As a citizen, I have an obligation to obey laws, but as a moral being, I have an obligation to obey my conscience, what should I do if law and conscience are in conflict? How can I be obligated to obey laws that I have not made? When may I justifiably disobey?	Sophocles Crito
Political Action	The Problem of Ends and Means: what can we properly do to bring about a just society? Do the imperatives of power dictate that one be prepared to dirty one's hands in the name of advancing the good in political life? What kind of person must one be to engage in this type of political activity?	Machiavelli
The Moral Foundations of Political Life	When is a government legitimate and when is it illegitimate? That is, when can a regime make a moral claim against me to obey its laws and when can it not make a moral claim against me? One in which authority is vested in those with knowledge of political and moral truth (Plato); in an absolute sovereign (Hobbes); in the hands of the people over whom authority is exercised (Rousseau); or somewhere else?	Plato Hobbes Locke Rousseau Mill Marx Engels
Beyond Moral Foundations	How might we critique these contradictory approaches to legitimate regimes?	Nietzsche Foucault

Politics and Violence	How do we make sense of great evil and how should we respond to it? What is the nature of politics, evil, and justice in the modern world?	Arendt
Politics and Cultural Difference	How can differences in culture and identity be resolved or managed within and across regimes/countries/regions? Can we accommodate differences in a way that is just for all parties? What is the role of national identity in a globalized world?	Okin Nussbaum

After successfully completing this course, you will be able to:

- Understand and examine the questions in the course outline above.
- Develop critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. In particular, developing the ability to integrate both theoretical arguments and evidence.
- Demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of contemporary challenges in American and global politics and how they relate to past conflicts and past theories of how human beings might live well together.

### Course Readings

Arendt, Hannah. 2006. *Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil*. New York: Penguin Classics.

Cahn, Steven M. 2015. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Nussbaum, Martha and Joshua Cohen. 2002. *For Love of Country*. Beacon Press.

Okin, Susan. 1999. *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Sophocles. 1984. *The Three Theban Plays: Antigone, Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus*. New York: Penguin Classics.

Miscellaneous readings and multimedia posted on the course's Sakai page and listed in the course outline below.

### Course Requirements and Grade Distribution

(1) Seminar Participation (20% total): This course is largely in the style of a seminar class, meaning that instead of the instructor lecturing, we will spend class time discussing the readings with occasional lectures. In particular, we will discuss their strengths and weaknesses, how they relate to each other, and what they mean for contemporary politics and our understanding of liberal-democracy. You must all be active participants in these discussions, and that entails

Careful and thoughtful reading of each week's assignment. As you prepare for each class, you should think about three things:

(a) Criticisms of particular readings: are there weaknesses in the types of arguments certain authors use, in the theoretical assumptions or development of the piece, or in the conclusions that the authors reach based on the evidence?

(b) How the readings relate to each other and what they tell us about politics: How do the readings for a given week fit together (or not) and how are they related to earlier readings or current events? Taken together, what do the readings tell us about contemporary challenges in American and global society, politics, and democracy?

(c) Lines of future research: What questions do these readings leave unanswered? Do they point to new directions for future research? What theories, data, or methods are needed to address these new directions/questions?

You should come to class prepared to discuss all three of these things about the readings for the week.

(2) Papers (4 x 20%): Over the course of the semester, you will write four 5-7 page (double-spaced, typed, standard font) papers. I will circulate the topics for each paper at least two weeks in advance of the paper's due date (usually earlier). The due dates are at the end of Week 3, Week 8, Week 12, and Week 15.

Grading is based on the following distribution:

Participation	20%
Paper One	20%
Paper Two	20%
Paper Three	20%
Paper Four	20%

The following scale will determine your final grade:

93% +	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
60-69%	D

## Course Policies

(1) No extensions or make-ups: There will be no extensions on papers or make-up exams except in the cases of serious illness (with a doctor's letter), deaths in the family, or university-sponsored activities (with a note from the particular university organization). Without such an excuse, anyone not taking an exam during the specified class time or not turning in a paper by the specified due date will receive a grade of zero on the exam or paper. If you need an extension, please contact me 24 hours before the due date so we can talk about an alternative timeline.

If you are having trouble managing your time and worry you will not complete assignments on time, please come talk to me or seek resources from your academic advisor and the McDonald Center, which has resources to develop better time management skills.

(2) Academic honesty: As members of the academic community, we each have a responsibility to uphold rigorous standards of integrity. Every student is thus expected to abide by Notre Dame's Undergraduate Academic Code of Honor. Among other things, that means that all of the work you do (whether on exams or in the essays) is your own and solely your own, and that when you obtain any ideas or information from other sources, you provide full citation to those sources. Students should be thoroughly familiar with the Code of Honor, located at <http://honorcode.nd.edu>. If you have any questions about the Code of Honor or academic honesty, please contact me.

(3) Be a good class citizen: Good citizenship in the classroom calls for everyone to devote their full attention to the lectures and ensuing discussion. That means silencing your cell phones, no texting, and no surfing the web. I understand that many students use their laptops or tablets for taking notes, but many also use them to tweet, snapchat, surf the web, etc. This is both sort of rude and distracting to other students. If you are using a laptop or tablet, you must sit in the first two rows of the room and you are only to use it for note-taking and review of course materials

(4) Inclusiveness: "The University of Notre Dame is committed to social justice. I share that commitment and strive to maintain a positive learning environment based on open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. In this class we will not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, economic class, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration" (Statement borrowed from the Kaneb Center for Teaching and Learning).

(5) Respect: We do not know what anyone else's experience is or has been, listen and be kind.

(6) Be prepared: Read the material and be prepared to discuss beyond the surface-level meaning. Before class, begin analyzing the material in context.

(7) Privacy Statement: Course materials (videos, assignments, readings, etc.) are for use in this course only. You may not upload them to external sites, share with another person, or post them for public commentary without my written permission.

We may record class meetings to support remote students. These recordings will be available for review upon request. The University strictly prohibits anyone from duplicating, downloading, or sharing live class recordings with anyone outside of this course, for any reason.

If you need to join the class remotely via Zoom, please check surroundings first and use headphones to maintain the privacy of the course.

### Course Outline

Date	Topic	Readings (before Class)
<b>Theme I: Political Obligation, Conscience, and the Claims of Authority</b>		
<b>WEEK 1</b>		
	Course Introduction and Foundations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Course Syllabus</li> <li>2. Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i></li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 2</b>		
	Course Introduction and Foundations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Defence of Socrates, Crito. <i>Political Philosophy</i></li> </ol>
<b>Theme II: Political Action: The Problem of Dirty Hands</b>		
<b>WEEK 3</b>		
	Ends and Means: The Craft of Politics	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Machiavelli, Niccolò, <i>Political Philosophy</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Steven B. Smith)</li> <li>b. <i>The Prince</i></li> <li>c. <i>The Discourses</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <b>Paper One Due</b></li> </ol>
<b>Theme III: The Moral Foundations of Political Life</b>		
<b>WEEK 4</b>		
	Authority and Knowledge I	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plato, <i>Political Philosophy</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Richard Kraut)</li> <li>b. <i>The Republic</i>, Books 1-4</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 5</b>		
	Authority and Knowledge II	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Plato, <i>Political Philosophy</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. <i>The Republic</i>, Books 5-9</li> </ol> </li> </ol>

<b>WEEK 6</b>		
	Rationality and Sovereignty	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hobbes, Thomas. <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Jean Hampton)</li> <li>b. <i>The Leviathan</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 7</b>		
	Liberalism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Locke, John. <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by A. John Simmons)</li> <li>b. <i>The Second Treatise of Government</i></li> <li>c. <i>Letter Concerning Tolerance</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 8</b>		
	Republicanism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Rousseau, Jean Jacques. <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Joshua Cohen)</li> <li>b. <i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i></li> <li>c. <i>The Social Contract</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. <b>Paper Two Due</b></li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 9</b>		
	Utilitarianism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Mill, John Stewart. <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Jeremy Waldron)</li> <li>b. <i>Utilitarianism</i></li> <li>c. <i>On Liberty</i></li> <li>d. <i>The Subjection of Women</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 10</b>		
	Marxism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (Ricahrd Miller)</li> <li>b. <i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i></li> <li>c. <i>The German Ideology</i></li> <li>d. <i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i></li> <li>e. <i>A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy</i></li> <li>f. <i>Value, Price and Profit</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Theme IV: Beyond Moral Foundations</b>		
<b>WEEK 11</b>		
	Nietzsche and Foucault	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nietzsche, Friedrich. <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Richard Schacht)</li> <li>b. <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Foucault, Michel. <i>Political Philosophy</i>.               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduction (by Thomas McCarthy)</li> <li>b. <i>Power/Knowledge</i></li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>Theme V: Politics and Violence</b>		

<b>WEEK 12</b>		
	Arendt and Contemporary Challenges	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Arendt, Hannah. <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Chapters 1-3, 6-8, 14-Epilogue, and the Postscript.</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Videos of January 6<sup>th</sup> Insurrection</li> <li>3. <b>Paper Three Due</b></li> </ol>
<b>Theme VI: Politics and Cultural Difference</b>		
<b>WEEK 13</b>		
	Multiculturalism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Okin, Susan. <i>Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?</i> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Okin, “Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?”</li> <li>b. Kymlicka, “Liberal Complacencies”</li> <li>c. al-Hibri, “Is Western Patriarchal Feminism Good for Third World/Minority Women?”</li> <li>d. Sunstein, “Should Sex Equality Apply to Religious Institutions?”</li> <li>e. Parekh, “A Varied Moral World”</li> <li>f. Bhabha, “Liberalism’s Sacred Cow”</li> </ol> </li> <li>2. Crenshaw, Kimberle. 1990. “Mapping the Margins: intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence Against Women of Color.” <i>Stanford Law Review</i> 43: 1241-1300.</li> <li>3. Videos of Elizabeth Acevedo: <a href="#">Hair</a>, <a href="#">TEDx</a> (warning: these poems cover sensitive topics including systemic violence against women—listen only if you feel you can).</li> </ol>
<b>WEEK 14</b>		
	Patriotism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Nussbaum, Marth and Joshua Cohen. <i>For Love of Country</i>. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Nussbaum, “Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism”</li> <li>b. Appiah, “Cosmopolitan Patriots”</li> <li>c. Barber, “Constitutional Faith”</li> <li>d. Butler, “Universality in Culture”</li> <li>e. Glazer, “Limits of Loyalty”</li> <li>f. Wallerstein, “Neither Patriotism nor Cosmopolitanism”</li> </ol> </li> </ol>
<b>**PAPER FOUR DUE—EXAM WEEK**</b>		