CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THEORY

This course is specifically designed to introduce students to the work and works of contemporary political theorists. The emphasis is on political theory as it is practiced in the Anglo-American tradition. Contemporary political theory emerges as a series of restatements, illuminations, and critical perspectives on the classical liberalism that has characterized political philosophy for the last five centuries. Classical liberalism, articulated in thinkers like Hobbes, Locke, Kant, and Mill emphasizes the rational, rights-bearing individual as the norm to be aspired to and realized and the political structures devised by human reason for the protection and realization of that rational, rights-bearing individual. Classical liberalism assumes a relationship between property and freedom, gives voice to a preference for rule by the governed (now, democracy,), and suggests a liberation of human possibilities that it has had difficulty accommodating. In this course, we will see how the best contemporary political theorists have articulated these issues and how they have addressed the questions raised by these assumptions. As is always the case with any form of theory or philosophy, the questions here are more enduring and interesting than the answers that derive from asking them.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students will learn how to read philosophical works critically. Through reading assignments, discussion and written assignments the student will become familiar with various approaches to problems in ancient political theory and how those attitudes shape our own. The format of the class is lecture and discussion. All discussion and written work in the class is intended to develop students' critical thinking, reading and writing skills. As you do the classwork, as you read, write essays, study, and prepare for examinations, you should keep in mind that the assigned work in this class is intended to help you develop your skills in the following ways:

1) Recognizing IDEAS/FACTS, that is, develop the ability to recognize key ideas and facts.
   --key terms and their meanings (including how those meanings differ across periods and thinkers)
   --who wrote what
   --what it says

2) Making CONNECTIONS, that is, develop the ability to see connections between and among ideas and the ability to see how an author says what s/he says:
   --recognition of the structure of the author’s discussion (what steps are involved in the way s/he tries to explain his or her position or persuade the reader?)
   --recognition of the assumptions that inform the development of ideas
   --recognition of the relative weight of ideas (e.g., what is the main idea? what are the supporting ideas?)

3) Using EXTENSIONS, that is, develop the ability to extend the ideas beyond their context, that is, to make use of them in your own thought without distorting them or violating their meaning.
   --what are the implications of the author’s position and the way s/he makes the argument?
   --what did the author leave out?
   --what value may we derive from the author’s discussion?

The development of a critical voice means attending to each of these—IN ORDER. You cannot critique an argument unless and until you can make and defend it on its own terms. A concerted effort at understanding is the minimum requirement of a student of political theory and the mere baseline of what you will be asked to do in this course.

TEXTBOOK: The edition of this text was carefully chosen and is required for the course. Students choosing to use a different or earlier edition are solely responsible for any reconciliation of differences.

--Bailey, et.al., editors, The Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought, Volume Two: The Twentieth Century and Beyond (Broadview Press, 2008)

BLACKBOARD: Please note that this syllabus, supplementary handouts, study questions, writing assignments, and advance essay questions for the exams WILL be posted on Blackboard after the class period in which they are distributed. Exams, quizzes, class notes and grades WILL NOT be posted.
POLS 4353--Contemporary Political Theory

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Grading is done on a 10-point scale: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79, etc. The formal requirements of the course and their relative impact on your final grade are as follows:

1) Class Summary Journal/Participation 10%
   After every class, students will be expected to write a summary—no more or less than half a page—of the substance of the previous class discussion in a journal kept in a Blue Book to be provided. Think in these terms: what did we talk about? How did we talk about it? How did it relate to what we have already talked about? Your journals will be picked up from time to time in order to gauge student engagement with the material, check attendance, etc. You will also be evaluated on how well and often you participate in class.

2) Reading and Lecture Comprehension Quizzes 5 x 3% = 15%
   At scheduled times during the semester, students will be given in-class timed quizzes to check comprehension of reading materials and in-class discussions. These will consist of multiple choice and/or matching questions and will be administered at the beginning of class periods. As these quizzes are designed also to check attendance they cannot be made up.

3) Writing Assignment 15%
   In the first half of the semester, students will be given a take-home essay assignment covering some substantive aspect of the reading material. The assignment requires a 2-page, single-spaced, handwritten essay response to be turned in at the beginning of the class period in which it is due. Students may be asked to present his or her response to the class in order to stimulate or further discussions. Writing assignments are designed to help the student organize the material during the semester and prepare the student for the written portion of the examinations. This assignment cannot be made up and late papers will NOT be accepted.

4) Midterm Exam (25%) and Final Examination (35%) 60%
   The examinations in this class are cumulative and comprehensive. The midterm exam will consist of matching (10%), multiple choice (20%) and essay (70%) questions. The final exam will consist of matching (15%), multiple choice (25%) and essay (60%) questions. The matching and multiple choice questions will test the student’s comprehension of the readings and class discussions. The student’s ability to match authors with concepts and concepts with their definition and applications will be emphasized. The essays will test the student’s ability to link concepts across authors and situations. About a week before each examination, a number of possible essay topics will be distributed to the student. One will appear on the exam. Make-up exams will be allowed ONLY in the event of a verifiable emergency and must be arranged for within a week of the examination date.

ASSESSMENT: You will encounter the following types of assignments in this class. Your work will be evaluated according to the requirements of each. The assignments and evaluative criteria fit the learning objectives in the following way:

1) Matching Questions--quizzes and exams--are the most basic of FACT/IDEA questions. As you complete the reading assignments in this class, make sure to pay attention to:
   A) The AUTHOR and TITLE of the work. The title can be especially helpful in discerning what the author thinks is important about an essay or piece of literature.
   B) DEFINITIONS of key terms may appear here also. We will encounter important terms in class AND in our reading. Note them as you go and be prepared to identify them.
   C) You may be asked to match KEY IDEAS to their authors or works.

2) Multiple Choice Questions--quizzes and exams--test your understanding of FACTS, IDEAS, and the CONNECTIONS among them. In addition to questions regarding AUTHORS, TITLES, and DEFINITIONS or KEY TERMS you will encounter questions that ask you to recognize:
   A) Which AUTHOR broached a particular IDEA/PROBLEM? Authors will raise particular questions owing to their particular concerns. One of your tasks is to keep up with the particular ideas and concerns in each author.
   B) Keep in mind that Authors frequently RANK their concerns (most important, less important, least important, etc.). How they rank their concerns is often critical to an author’s conclusion. Be prepared to identify what an author thinks is most important, etc.
   C) What are the ASSUMPTIONS underlying a particular author’s work? We will discuss some of these in class, but you must learn to recognize them as you read and think about the work.

3) Essay Prompts--on writing assignments and exams--will test your ability to bring a coherent understanding of the material to bear on a theme or problem posed by the question itself. These are not exercises in regurgitating your notes. The essays are designed to test your ability to make CONNECTIONS and EXTENSIONS in clear, precise language and reasoning. YOU WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR PROPER GRAMMAR, SPELLING, PARAGRAPH USAGE, SENTENCE STRUCTURE, etc. In addition, you must be able to:
A) Demonstrate an UNDERSTANDING of the issues raised by the QUESTION in a THESIS paragraph. This is neither a mere restating of the question nor, worse, a “Once upon a time” opening sentence like “Throughout history human beings have been concerned with justice.” Instead, a thesis involves you demonstrating to the reader that you understand the issues raised by the question and saying how you will approach them using the material required by the question.

B) Demonstrate a mastery of the facts/ideas articulated by the authors the question asks you to use. You will NOT be asked to summarize an author, but you WILL be asked to USE his or her work to answer the question. YOU decide which aspects of the author’s work are most appropriate in solving the problem raised by the question.

C) Demonstrate an ability to make CONNECTIONS across authors and issues. How does one author’s approach complement, supplement, or call into question another’s approach? Think of the works you read this semester as part of an ongoing conversation about the full range of issues that make up the course material. As with conversations, the work of this class will illuminate issues but very rarely resolve them once and for all.

D) Conclude your discussion in an illuminating way, that is, to demonstrate an extended understanding of the ideas in question. Why was it important for your reader to have read your essay? What does the reader now know or is s/he called upon to think about the s/he wasn’t before? DO NOT use phrases like “In conclusion.” The content of your concluding paragraph should be sufficient to let the reader know that your essay has come to a happy ending.

SAMPLE QUESTIONS:

Matching:
A. John Rawls  B. Michael Sandel  C. Martha Minow
___1. complex equality
___2. The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self.

Multiple Choice:
___1. Which of the following best characterizes Sandel’s argument:
A. Liberalism defends a conception of the self that is unencumbered and, therefore, offers no real vision of a human community.
B. Liberalism defends a conception of the unencumbered self that can only be overcome by the community generated in the procedural republic.
C. He defends the unencumbered self as the best response to the conditions created by the procedural republic.

Essay Question:
Liberalism is the dominant philosophical perspective in contemporary political theory and much ink has been spilled trying to save it from both its proponents and its adherents. Use the work of (a) Rawls; (b) Nozick or Walzer; (c) Okin; and (d) Kukathas to write an analytical account of this discussion. You should deal with what liberalism is, how it works, and what its strengths and shortcomings are and why (i.e., are there new political conditions it can or cannot handle?).

Notes on Classroom Etiquette or THE RULES
--Class starts promptly. Be here on time. After the first week or so of the semester, you WILL be denied entry if you arrive more than 5 minutes late. Late arrival is disruptive to the classroom experience of your classmates and, perhaps even your professor. In any case, it works against the mission of the classroom. To this end, I suggest you not drive from class to class—gas is too expensive and we could all use the exercise.

--The format of the class is lecture and conversation. The classroom is a safe place to ask questions. But they should be questions that derive from work with and in the material and NOT because you did not do the assignment.

--You will not read newspapers, textbooks, or study for other classes while in this class. If you do so, you will be asked to leave—and in no uncertain terms.

--Turn all cellphones and other electronic devices off (or set to vibrate) for the duration of class. You are not to accept calls or engage in text messaging during class. If you do so, I will confiscate your device. If you are awaiting a call or message of extreme importance, I suggest you skip class and accept the consequences.

--You may use a laptop, but only for the purpose of taking notes. If I catch you surfing the web, playing games, or engaged in some other activity not related to the work of the class, you will lose your laptop privileges.

--You are responsible for material missed due to absence. I suggest you exchange notes with other responsible students in any case, but particularly if you have to miss. I am happy to answer questions about this material, but will not rehearse my lectures or our class discussions.

--Some semesters, life gets in the way. Should you have one of these semesters, I am more than happy to talk to you about what to do. But if the trauma is too great, I strongly suggest you drop one or all of your courses. Your education is vitally important, but there are things that outrank even education sometimes—and you have to make that call when it is necessary. I cannot grade you on how well or poorly you deal with your life at given moments. Your grades reflect your performance in class—not how well you are dealing with other things. I wish all of us a semester in which these things aren’t issues.
NOTE: Students are expected to come to class having read the reading assigned for that day’s class. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MATERIAL IN THE READINGS—WHETHER THERE IS EXPRESS DISCUSSION OF IT IN CLASS OR NOT—AND THE LECTURES/DISCUSSIONS. Questions about all material are always welcome and should form the lion’s share of our experience in this course.

14 Jan T General Introduction and Distribution of Syllabus

16 Jan Th Introduction to Contemporary Political Philosophy

21 Jan T John Rawls
Read: Rawls, selections from A Theory of Justice (pp. 265-273; 278-81; 287-96)

23 Jan Th John Rawls
Read: Rawls, selections from A Theory of Justice (pp. 265-273; 278-81; 287-96)

28 Jan T John Rawls
Read: Rawls, selections from A Theory of Justice (pp. 265-273; 278-81; 287-96)
Read: Rawls, “The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus” (pp. 296-311)

30 Jan Th John Rawls
Read: Rawls, “The Idea of an Overlapping Consensus” (pp. 296-311)
QUIZ #1

4 Feb T Michael Sandel
Read: Sandel, “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self” (pp. 384-391)

6 Feb Th Michael Sandel
Read: Sandel, “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self” (pp. 384-391)

11 Feb T Michael Walzer
Read: Walzer, from Spheres of Justice, Ch. 1. Complex Equality. (392-408)
WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE at the BEGINNING OF CLASS

13 Feb Th Michael Walzer
Read: Walzer, from Spheres of Justice, Ch. 1. Complex Equality. (392-408)

18 Feb T Michael Walzer
Read: Walzer, from Spheres of Justice, Ch. 1. Complex Equality. (392-408)
QUIZ #2

20 Feb Th Iris Marion Young
Read: Young, “Impartiality and the Civic Public” (pp. 202-216)

25 Feb T Iris Marion Young
Read: Young, “Impartiality and the Civic Public” (pp. 202-216)

27 Feb Th Martha Nussbaum
Read: Nussbaum, “Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings” (pp. 453-74)
QUIZ #3

4 Mar T Martha Nussbaum
Read: Nussbaum, “Human Capabilities, Female Human Beings” (pp. 453-74)

6 Mar Th MIDTERM EXAMINATION

11-13 Mar SPRING BREAK—no class meetings
18 Mar T  
**Emma Goldman**
Read: Goldman, from “Anarchism: What it Really Stands For” (pp. 16-21)

20 Mar Th  
**Max Weber**
Read: “Politics as a Vocation” (pp. 52-61)

25 Mar T  
**Carl Schmitt**
Read: from *The Concept of the Political* (pp. 62-69)

**QUIZ # 4**

27 Mar Th  
**Hannah Arendt**
Read: Arendt, from *The Human Condition*, Ch. 28, Power and the Space of Appearance. (pp. 86-90)

1 Apr T  
**Hannah Arendt**

3 Apr Th  
**Hannah Arendt**

8 Apr T  
**Hannah Arendt**

**QUIZ # 5**

10 Apr Th  
**Michel Foucault**
Read: Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (pp. 108-125)

15 Apr T  
**Michel Foucault**
Read: Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (pp. 108-125)

17 Apr Th  
**Michel Foucault**
Read: Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (pp. 108-125)
Read: Foucault, *Two Lectures*. (pp. 125-142)

22 Apr T  
**Michel Foucault**
Read: Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (pp. 108-125)
Read: Foucault, *Two Lectures*. (pp. 125-142)

**QUIZ # 6**

24 Apr Th  
**Michel Foucault**
Read: Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (pp. 108-125)
Read: Foucault, *Two Lectures*. (pp. 125-142)

29 Apr T  
**Michel Foucault**
Read: Foucault, from *Discipline and Punish* (pp. 108-125)
Read: Foucault, *Two Lectures*. (pp. 125-142)

1 May Th  
**Conclusion and Review**

8 May T or 10 May Th  
**FINAL EXAMINATION** Time and Date TBA

**IMPORTANT:** This syllabus reflects the minimum requirements of our professional relationship over the course of this semester. By staying in this class, you signify that you understand the contents of this syllabus and you agree to the terms and conditions stated herein.
Policy Regarding Academic Dishonesty
Academic dishonesty is against university as well as community standards. Academic dishonesty is defined as: cheating, plagiarism, or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses.

Plagiarism is defined as submitting the language, ideas, or thoughts or work of another as one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
--use of direct quotations without quotation marks and without credit to the source;
--paraphrasing or using direct quotations within quotation marks without credit to the source;
--failure to provide adequate citations for material obtained through electronic research;
--downloading and submitting work from electronic databases without citation;
--submitting material created/written by someone else as one’s own, including purchased term/research papers;
--allowing someone to copy or submit one’s work as his/her own;
--participation in a group project which presents plagiarized materials;
--submitting the same paper in more than one course without the knowledge and approval of the instructors involved;
--assisting in the act of plagiarism by allowing one’s work to be used in this fashion;
--aiding and abetting another student’s dishonesty.

Cheating is defined generally as copying from someone else’s exam, homework, or laboratory work. Types of cheating include but are not limited to:
--using notes or other materials during a test or exam without authorization;
--obtaining or providing unauthorized information during an examination through verbal, visual, or unauthorized use of books, notes, texts, or other materials;
--obtaining or providing information concerning all or part of an examination prior to that examination;
--taking an examination for another student or arranging for another person to take an exam in one’s place;
--altering or changing test answers after submitting it for grading, or after grades have been awarded;
--releasing information about an examination to anyone who has yet to take the examination

Disciplinary procedures for incidents of academic dishonesty may result in any of the following:
(1) permanent dismissal from the university; (2) suspension from the university for not less than one semester; (3) outright failure of the course (an automatic final grade of ‘F’); (4) canceling the student’s enrollment in the class without a grade (‘W’); (5) awarding a failing grade on the exam, test, or assignment in question; (6) requiring the student to take another examination or test on the same material or to resubmit the paper or assignment based on a specific topic.

In all cases of substantiated academic dishonesty, a permanent record of academic discipline will be established in the Office of the Dean of Students. These records are searched regularly by government agencies, licensing authorities, certification authorities, and others. The existence of such a record can bar entry to many occupations.

Students Rights and Responsibilities
To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies
Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar. Each semester’s Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.
The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions that students need to be aware of. These include:
- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a “W” grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy
Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).
Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability Services
In accordance with federal law, a student requesting accommodation must provide documentation of his/her disability to the Disability Services counselor. If you have a disability, including a learning disability, for which you request an accommodation, please contact the Disability Services office in UC 3150, or call (903) 566-7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance
Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities
If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement:
It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation:
Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor’s directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

HERE ENDETH THE ENDLESSNESS.

HAVE A GREAT SEMESTER!
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