

## **POT 2002: Introduction to Political Theory**

Professor Dan O'Neill  
Office: 334 Anderson  
OH: T, 12:30-2:30 (Zoom, by appointment)

Fall 2020  
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### **COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS:**

This class is designed to introduce students to a number of intellectual traditions that have been fundamentally important to the development of our modern political life: liberalism, democracy, conservatism, feminism, and African American political thought. Our narrow goal in the course is to come to a better understanding of these traditions by engaging with thinkers whose writings are regarded as crucial for their articulation. More broadly, the course aims to help students to think critically about the ways in which knowledge derived from the history of political thought might inform their approach to political thinking and political action in the present.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS\*:**

\*Please purchase *these specific editions* of the books (all paperback).

John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Hackett, ed. C.B. Macpherson),  
ISBN: 0915144867

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and the Discourses* (Everyman, ed. G.D.H. Cole), ISBN: 0460873571

*The Portable Edmund Burke* (Penguin, ed. Isaac Kramnick), ISBN: 0140267603

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of Rights of Woman* and *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (with excerpts from *An Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution* (Oxford, ed. Janet Todd), ISBN: 9780199555468

*The Marx-Engels Reader* (Norton, ed. Robert C. Tucker), ISBN: 9780393090406

W.E.B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Dover Thrift Edition, 1994), ISBN: 9780486280417

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

***Assignments and Grading:*** Grades for the course will be determined by 6 components: two 5-6 page papers (25% each); a take-home course final (25%); section attendance and participation (10% overall, evenly divided); and discussion questions based on each week's readings (15%). These components will be aggregated into an overall letter grade at the end of the course, in keeping with current UF policies for assigning grade points, which you can access by following this [link to the university grades and grading policies](#). In order to receive credit for an assignment, it must be uploaded to Canvas as a doc, pdf, or docx.

The highest grade a late paper can receive in the absence of a legitimate excuse is a "C+." An example of a legitimate excuse would be an illness for which you have a signed doctor's note. Please be aware: A "C+" is not the lowest grade a late paper can receive; it is the highest (i.e., it is the ceiling, not the floor). You have plenty of time to write these papers and the take home final; do not wait until the last minute. Due dates for the papers are listed below.

The take-home final will be entirely essay based; questions will be uploaded on the last day of class and the final exam will be due not later than Wednesday, December 16 at 12 Noon.

The course is out of 100 total points, and the Grading Scale is as follows:

94-100 (A); 90-93 (A-); 87-89 (B+); 83-86 (B); 80-82 (B-); 77-79 (C+); 73-76 (C); 70-72 (C-); 67-69 (D+); 63-66 (D); 60-62 (D-); 0-59 (E; failing)

***Teaching Assistants and Sections:*** We have four excellent Teaching Assistants for this course. They are:

Glen Billesbach, [gbillesbach@ufl.edu](mailto:gbillesbach@ufl.edu), Sections: F 4 (10:40 AM - 11:30 AM), F 5 (11:45 AM-12:35 PM); Office Hours: Tuesday, 1 PM -3 PM (Zoom, by appointment)

Walker Chavatel, [wchavatel@ufl.edu](mailto:wchavatel@ufl.edu), Sections: TH 6 (12:50 PM -1:40 PM), TH 7 (1:55 PM-2:45 PM ); Office Hours: Tuesday 3 PM -5 PM (Zoom, by appointment)

Murad Gafarov, [mgafarov@ufl.edu](mailto:mgafarov@ufl.edu), Sections: F 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40 PM), F 7 (1:55 PM - 2:45 PM); Office Hours: Tuesday, 10 AM-12 PM (Zoom, by appointment)

Yuanxin Wang, [yuanxin.wang@ufl.edu](mailto:yuanxin.wang@ufl.edu), Sections: TH 4 (10: 40 AM-11:30 AM), TH 5 (11:45 AM-12:35 PM); Office Hours: Thursday 1 PM -3 PM (Zoom, by appointment)

***Your attendance and participation in section is mandatory and will be graded*** (see above), and it is highly recommended for you to visit your TA in Office Hours. All Office Hours this semester will be via Zoom, by appointment. The TAs will also do the other grading in this course, working in close consultation with me. This means: If you have a problem with your grade, you must first take it up with your TA, who evaluated your work. If you are still unconvinced, or feel that you have been grievously harmed in some fashion (“But I’ve never gotten grade X before...” does not count), then by all means bring your concerns to me as the final arbiter of the issue. However, be aware: I reserve the right to change grades in either direction, down as well as up; so please give it some thought. Political theory is not easy. Your TAs are a valuable resource for your success in the course. They can help you to gain a firm grasp of the material in sections, and aid you in the development of your papers. Sections are especially important this semester due to the online format of the course.

***Preparation:*** You should do the reading for a given lecture prior to coming to class on that day. If you are playing catch up on the reading, you will be in trouble in this course. At a deeper level, failure to stay up with the reading and reflect upon it prior to lecture will stunt your intellectual growth, which would be a shame.

***Policy on Academic Integrity:*** All students are required to abide by the University of Florida’s Academic Honesty Guidelines. UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code.” On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conducthonor-code>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

Among other things, this policy means that cheating on exams is totally unacceptable, as is plagiarism. Plagiarism is the act of portraying as your own the words or ideas of other people. Examples include: submitting entire papers, or portions of papers, that you did not write (*e.g.*, old papers written by other students, new papers written by other students, papers which you paid a “research” service to write for you, papers or portions of papers downloaded from the Internet). Copying verbatim or paraphrasing any substantial portion of text by another author without acknowledging the source via quotation and/or footnotes is plagiarism. Plagiarism is far easier to spot than you might think. Do not ruin your experience in this or any other class by engaging in academic dishonesty. **This should be made somewhat easier in the current class because all outside sources are strictly forbidden. All assignments will be put through Turnitin on Canvas.**

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center](#). It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

**Class Demeanor:** Students are expected to arrive to class on time and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Opinions held by other students should be respected in discussion, and conversations that do not contribute to the discussion (including online conversations) should be held at a minimum, if at all. Phones should be turned off prior to class. Save Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Twitter until your free time. It is strongly suggested that you turn your Zoom video on, especially during discussion sections. The point of this format is to simulate a “brick and mortar” experience as much as possible, under the circumstances. To that end, being able to see and react to one another in section is very helpful.

**Course Evaluation Process:** Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. [Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner](#). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in the Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [ufl.bluera.com/ufl/Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/Summaries%20of%20course%20evaluation%20results%20are%20available%20to%20students%20here).

**Materials and Supplies Fees:** There are no additional fees for this course.

**Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center:**  
<http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc/Default.aspx>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

### **Lecture, Reading, and Discussion Schedule:**

**August 31 (M):** Introduction

**September 2 (W):** From Ancient to Modern Political Thought

**September 7 (M): NO CLASS: LABOR DAY**

**September 9 (W):** Locke, *Second Treatise*, pp. 3-30

**September 14 (M):** Locke, *Second Treatise*, pp. 30-65

**September 16 (W):** Locke, *Second Treatise*, pp. 65-107

**September 21 (M):** Locke, *Second Treatise*, pp. 107-124

**September 23 (W):** Rousseau, *A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, pp. 43-83

**September 28 (M):** Rousseau, *A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, pp. 84-126

**September 30 (W):** Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, pp. 181-182, 190-210, 213-217, 222-225, 228-237, 261-270

**October 5 (M):** Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, pp. 274-279, 296-309

**FIRST PAPER TOPICS HANDED OUT**

**October 7 (W):** *Portable Edmund Burke*, pp. 409-474

**October 12 (M):** *Portable Edmund Burke*, pp. 63-81, 155-157, 163-173, 489-499,  
**FIRST PAPER DUE**

**October 14 (W):** *Portable Edmund Burke*, pp. 499-530

**October 19 (M):** *Portable Edmund Burke*, pp. 194-212

**October 21 (W):** Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*, pp. 3-62

**October 26 (M):** Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, pp. 65-149

**October 28 (W):** Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, pp. 191-197, 221-265

**November 2 (M):** Wollstonecraft, *An Historical and Moral View of the French Revolution*, pp. 287-371

**SECOND PAPER TOPIC HANDED OUT**

**November 4 (W):** *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 26-52, 53-54, 3-6, 299-302, 595

**November 9 (M):** *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 70-81, 84, 88, 93, 150, 344-345  
**SECOND PAPER DUE**

**November 11 (W): NO CLASS: VETERANS DAY**

**November 16 (M):** *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 203-217, 305-306, 336-339

**November 18 (W):** *Marx-Engels Reader*, pp. 143-145, 469-491, 154-155, 160, 172-173

**November 23 (M):** Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, pp. v-vi, 1-54

**November 25 (W): NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING**

**November 30 (M):** Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, pp. 55-82

**December 2 (W):** Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, pp. 83-125

**December 7 (M):** Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, pp. 127-165

**December 9 (W):** Grand Synthesis

**TAKE HOME EXAM TOPICS HANDED OUT**

**December 16: TAKE HOME EXAM DUE (12 Noon)**