

## **POT 2002: Introduction to Political Theory (Spring 2018)**

Professor Steven Klein  
Lectures: Monday Wednesday 11:45 AM-12:35 PM  
Office: Anderson Hall 004

E: [stevenklein@ufl.edu](mailto:stevenklein@ufl.edu)  
Room: CSE A101  
Office Hours: Mondays 1-4 PM

### **Teaching Assistants:**

Nicholas Dzoba, E: [ndzoba@ufl.edu](mailto:ndzoba@ufl.edu), Office: Anderson 010, Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:50 - 2:45 PM  
Natalie Fontoura, E: [nataliarayol@ufl.edu](mailto:nataliarayol@ufl.edu), Office: Anderson 010, Office Hours: Thursdays, 9 to 11 AM  
Graham Gallagher, E: [earth2graham@ufl.edu](mailto:earth2graham@ufl.edu), Office: Anderson 010, Office Hours: Mondays 12:45-2 PM

### **Discussion Sections:**

0416, Thursday, 10:40 AM-11:30 AM: Graham Gallagher, Room: MAT 0011  
01GB, Thursday, 11:45 AM-12:35 PM: Graham Gallagher, Room: LEI 0242  
01HE, Thursday, 12:50 PM-1:40 PM: Nicholas Dzoba, Room: MAT 0007  
013C, Thursday, 1:55 PM-2:45 PM: Nicholas Dzoba, Room: MAT 0107  
0417, Friday, 11:45 AM-12:35 PM: Natalia Fontoura, Room: CHE 0237  
1E27, Friday, 10:40 AM-11:30 AM: Natalia Fontoura. Room: MCCB 2102

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Political theory is the study of the basic concepts, such as freedom, citizenship, rights, and democracy, through which we make sense of the political world. Political theorists examine how those ideas have evolved over time and how we should think about them today. Most fundamentally, political theorists are interested in how we should organize our social and political life. As a result, political theory combines the investigation of both different political institutions and practices with critical reflection on the values that inform or justify those practices. This course will introduce you to the discipline of political theory by way of three central political questions: Who should rule? When is inequality justified? And when do the ends justify the means? We will examine political thinkers from a variety of historical periods and intellectual traditions who provide distinctive visions of political life and so different answers to these fundamental questions. In addition to examining the internal cogency of their arguments, we will explore how their ideas have impacted the political world and how they continue to shape contemporary events. Students will learn to engage with writings from unfamiliar contexts, analyze difficult and complex arguments, and produce rigorous written work.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS:**

The follow texts are available for purchase at the UF Bookstore. Please purchase and use these specific editions. Other readings will be available online or through Canvas.

1. Plato, *The Republic* (trans. C. D. C. Reeve), Hackett
2. Niccolò Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings* (ed. and trans. Wootten), Hackett
3. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings* (ed. Cress, trans. Wootten), Hackett
4. Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (ed. Todd), Oxford
5. Karl Marx, *Selected Writings* (ed. Simon), Hackett
6. W. E. B. Dubois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (ed. Blight and Gooding-Williams), Bedford

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

*Assignments and Grading:* Grades for the course will be determined by five components: a short analytic paper (15%); a long paper (25%); a midterm (20%); a course final (30%); and attendance and participation (10%). The assignment due dates and exam dates are listed in the course calendar below. I will distribute the prompts for the short analytic and long papers beforehand. The short analytic paper will focus on dissecting and analyze a single set of arguments. The long paper will be based on more open-ended prompts involving multiple authors. The midterm will consist of long response questions. The final will have long response questions and an essay. I will distribute further information about my expectations for each assignment. The papers will be graded by your TA using a grading rubric, which will be available on Canvas. The midterm and final will be randomly assigned to a TA to grade. For additional help on college paper writing, I recommend Gerald Graff and Cathy Birkenstein, *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, W. W. Norton.

For the short analytic paper, you will be required to bring a draft of your introduction to your discussion section one week before the paper deadline (Feb 2<sup>nd</sup>). During the class, you will exchange your introduction with another student and provide each other feedback.

*Grading Scale:* The grading scale for the course is as follows:

94% – 100% = A, 90% – 93% = A-, 87% – 89% = B+, 84% – 86% = B, 80% – 83% = B-, 77% – 79% = C+, 74% – 76% = C, 70% – 73% = C-, 67% – 69% = D+, 64% – 66% = D, 60% – 63% = D-, < 60% = F

Further information on the University of Florida's standard grading point system can be found here:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

*Late Paper Policy:* In the absence of a legitimate excuse, a late paper will lose 5% per day late (including weekends). A legitimate excuse would be, i.e., an illness with a signed doctor's note.

*Lecture Attendance:* **Attendance at all lectures is mandatory.** You must check in with your section TA either before the lecture begins or immediately after. If you cannot attend a lecture, you must inform your TA *before* the lecture.

*Preparation:* You should do the reading for a given lecture prior to coming to class on that day. The lectures will only be helpful if you have already reflected upon the readings. This is a quite reading-intensive course, so keep up! I expect us to maintain a respectful, safe environment for individuals to express their views. If you have concerns about this or feel uncomfortable with the classroom environment, please come talk to me.

*Teaching Assistants and Sections:* We have three stellar Teaching Assistants for this course. They will run your discussion sections and, in close consultation with me, grade your assignments. Attendance and participation in the sections is mandatory and will be graded as part of your participation grade. **Attendance is the minimum for participation grades.** I expect you to come to sections having done the reading and ready to contribute to discussion. Your TA is your point-person for any questions about the readings or assignments. I strongly encourage you to discuss the assignments with your TA well before they are do. These are challenging assignments, and you will benefit from the help. If you end up having a problem with your grade, you must first take it up with your TA (or the TA who graded your work). If you are still unconvinced, or feel that you have been treated unfairly, then you may talk to me. However, I reserve the right to change the grade in either direction (up or down). But remember: political theory is not easy. Your TA is a valuable resource for your success in the course. S/he can help you to gain a firm grasp of the material in sections, and aid you in the development of your papers. Make us of them.

*Policy on Academic Integrity:* All students are required to abide by the University of Florida's Academic Honesty Guidelines, which may be viewed at <http://www.dso.ufl.edu/judicial/procedures/honestybrochure.php>. Most obviously, this means cheating on exams and plagiarism on papers is completely unacceptable. Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to: submitting entire papers written by others, submitting portions of papers written by others, copying text without quotations and proper citation, or paraphrasing text without proper attribution in a footnote. In general, I would discourage you from using any outside sources or materials. The assignments are designed so you can complete them just using the readings from the class. In addition to harming your professional career, academic dishonesty will destroy your ability to learn from this class. **If you ever have any questions about whether something counts as academic dishonesty, please contact me.** I am happy to clarify these rules further.

*Accommodations:* Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation. Please come see me as soon as possible regarding this matter.

*Evaluations:* You will be required to complete an evaluation of this course. I will also circulate a mid-term feedback form. Your evaluations constructive advice is essential for improving the class. The evaluation will be available at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

*Electronic Devices:* The most important part of this class is active listening and participation. You are required to turn off your cell phone **and put it away (bag, pocket, etc).** **You may not have a cell phone on your desk during class.** I strongly encourage you to take notes by hand. If you must use a computer, you should turn off your internet or use an application such as Freedom that will restrict your access during the class. You will get much more out of this course if you are focused and present.

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

**Jan 8 (M):** Syllabus

**Jan 10 (W):** What is political theory?

#### **Part I. Who Should Rule?**

**Jan 15 (M):** NO CLASS – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

**Jan 17 (W):** Plato, *Republic* (c. 380 BCE), Book I, Book II (up to 368d)

**Jan 22 (M):** Plato, *Republic*, Book II (368e to 376d), Book III (from 412a), Book IV (up to 434d), Book V (from 471c)

**Jan 24 (W):** Plato, *The Republic*, Book VI, Book VII (up to 521b), Book VII (from 555b) **\*\*First Paper Topics Distributed\*\***

**Jan 29 (M):** Confucius, *Analects* (c. 500 BCE), Books I, II, IV, VII, XII, XIII (available on Canvas)

**Jan 31 (W):** Machiavelli, *Discourse on Livy* (c. 1571), Book I, Preface, Chapters 1-9, 11-12, 16-18

**\*\*Feb 2 (F): Paper Introductions Due\*\***

**Feb 5 (M):** Machiavelli, *Discourse on Livy*, Book I, Chapters 29, 34, 49, 53-55, 58, Book II, Preface, Chapter 1-3, Book III, Chapters 1, 3

**Feb 7 (W):** Rousseau, *On the Social Contract* (1762), Book I and Book II

**\*\* Feb 9 (F): First Paper Due \*\***

**Feb 12 (M):** Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*, Book III and Book IV, Chapters 1-2

**Feb 14 (W):** Hamilton and Madison, *Federalist Papers* (1788), no. 1, 9, 10, 14-17, 39

Available: <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/1404>

**Feb 19 (M):** Hamilton and Madison, *Federalist Papers*, no. 47, 49-51, 53, 55-57, 62-63

## **Part II. When is inequality justified?**

**Feb 21 (W):** Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (1690), Chapters 1-6

Available: <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm>

**Feb 26 (M):** Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 7, 9-12, 14, 18

**\*\* Feb 28 (W): MIDTERM \*\***

**March 5 (M):** SPRING BREAK

**March 7 (W):** SPRING BREAK

**March 12 (M):** Rousseau, *A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (1755), Preface; Part I; notes 9, 15

**March 14 (W):** Rousseau, *A Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II; note 16

**March 19 (M):** Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Man* (1790), pgs. 1-14, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* (1792), Introduction, Chapters 1-2, 4

**March 21 (W):** Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, Chapters 6, 9, 12-13 **\*\*Second Paper Topics Distributed\*\***

**March 26 (M):** Karl Marx, *On the Jewish Question* (1844), selection (pgs. 2-21), *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts* (1844), sections on “Alienated Labor,” “Private Property and Communism,” *Theses on Feuerbach* (1845)

**March 28 (W):** Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), *The Civil War in France (excerpt)* (1871)

**April 2 (M):** Dubois, *Souls of Black Folks* (1903), The Forethought, Chapters 1-3, 6,

**April 4 (W):** Dubois, *Souls of Black Folks*, Chapters 8-10, 14, The Afterthought

**\*\* April 6 (F): Second Paper Due \*\***

**April 9 (M):** F. A. Hayek, *The Constitution of Liberty* (1960), Chapters 2, 6, 15, 17 (available on Canvas)

**April 11 (W):** John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement* (2001) [summarizing and refining *A Theory of Justice* (1974)], Part I, §1-2, 6, Part II, §12-18, 20-22, Part III, §41-42 (available on Canvas)

**Part III. When do the ends justify the means?**

**April 16 (M):** Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513), Dedication, Chapters 1-3, 5-9, 11

**April 18 (W):** Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapters 15-19, 21-23, 25-26

**April 23 (M):** Weber, *Politics as a Vocation*, pg. 32-39 (ending at "...acts of political expropriation."), 76-94 (starting at "We may inquire...") (available on Canvas)

**April 25 (W):** Gandhi, "Satyagraha, Civil Disobedience, Passive Resistance, Non-co-operation," "Satyagraha—Not Passive Resistance," "Civil Disobedience," "Some Rules of Satyagraha," "Fasting in Non-Violent Action," "Was it Coercive?" (available on Canvas)

Martin Luther King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (1963)

Available: [https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](https://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html)

**Final: Wednesday, May 2nd, 10 AM to 12 PM, CES A101**