

POT 2002: Introduction to Political Theory (3 Credits)

Instructor: Professor Daniel O'Neill
Contact: doneill@ufl.edu
Class Location: Pugh Hall 170

Office: 218 Anderson Hall
Office Hours: Mondays, 12-2
Class Time: MW 10:40-11:30

Teaching Assistants:

Joe Bilsbrough, Zhen Han, Carl DeMarco, Timmy Stolz

Discussion Sections:

Section 18CB, TH (9:35-10:25)
 Section 18CA, TH (10:40-11:30)
 Section 18B2, TH (11:45-12:35)
 Section 12EH, TH (12:50- 1:40)

Section 18B1, F (9:35-10:25)
 Section 18CD, F (10:40-11:30)
 Section 18BG, F (1:55-2:45)
 Section 18CF, F (3:00-3:50)

Course Description and Objectives:

Per the approved General Education description taken from the course catalog, this class covers the following material: “Basic principles of political thought. Examination of nature of state and relationship between individual and state. Covers topics such as authority, consent, freedom and obligation. Exploration of these concepts throughout western tradition as well as in other areas.”

The Objective of this class is to familiarize students with a number of thinkers and intellectual traditions that have shaped political thought and action from antiquity to the present.

Required Text:

The Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought: Essential Readings (Ancient, Modern, and Contemporary). Edited by Andrew Bailey, Samantha Brennan, Will Kymlicka, Jacob Levy, Alex Sager, and Clark Wolf (Toronto: Broadview Press, 2012)

ISBN: 9781554811021 / 1554811023

Humanities (H):

This class counts toward the fulfillment of UF's General Education requirement. For More information, see [Subject Area Objectives - Undergraduate Affairs - University of Florida](#)

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Become familiar with important political ideas and thinkers.
- Learn to identify and analyze complex theoretical arguments.
- Apply analytical tools to address controversial issues and make informed choices about them.

For a discussion of Student Learning Outcomes in Humanities General Education courses, please see: [Student Learning Outcomes - Undergraduate Affairs - University of Florida](#)

Course Requirements:

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For more information on those policies and for resources for students, please see [this link](#).

This is a face-to-face, in person lecture and discussion class. There is no hybrid or online option for the course. Lecture attendance is not a formal part of your grade, but I will not post my PowerPoint slides on Canvas. Therefore, it is important that you attend lecture regularly and take good notes.

Assignments and Grading: Grades for the course will be determined by 5 components: 2 in-class Blue Book exams (15 points each); 1 final Blue Book exam (34 points); weekly 1-page written participation assignments (26 points); and section attendance (10 points). Points for section attendance will be calculated as a percentage of 13 total discussion sections (e.g. 13 sections attended would be 100% or 10 points, on down to 0% sections attended, or zero points). 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](#). Alternative assignments for attendance and participation grades in discussion section and/or makeup exams will be provided upon receipt of a legitimate excuse (e.g., a doctor's note for an illness). A minimum grade of C is required for general education credit.

The Blue-Book exams will be entirely essay based. Your participation grade will be fulfilled by writing a one-page response paper each week (due on Canvas by Friday at 5 p.m. each week; 2 points for each of 13 weekly reading assignments). These short reaction papers should highlight some portion of that week's reading you found particularly important or interesting, and explain to the reader why you think it is so important or interesting. In order to get full credit, passages from the reading that you are addressing--including specific page numbers drawn from the textbook---must be directly referenced.

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies. Click here to read the university attendance policies; [Attendance Policies < University of Florida \(ufl.edu\)](https://ufl.edu/attendance-policies/)

The course is out of 100 total points, and the Grading Scale is as follows: 92.5-100 (A); 89.5-92.4 (A-); 86.5-89.4 (B+); 82.5-86.4 (B); 79.5-82.4 (B-); 76.5-79.4 (C+); 72.5-76.4 (C); 69.5-72.4 (C-); 66.5-69.4 (D+); 62.5-66.4 (D); 59.5-62.4 (D-); 0-59.4 (E; failing)

Preparation: Ideally, you should do the reading for a given lecture prior to attending it, but you should definitely do the reading prior to your discussion section for that week. If you are playing catch up on the reading, you will be in trouble in this course.

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-conduct/honor-code>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions.

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 or entities. Examples include submitting assignment that you did not write (e.g., old assignments written by other students, new assignments written by other students, or assignments written by an Artificial Intelligence robot). Do not ruin your experience in this or any other class by engaging in academic dishonesty.

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 at 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, X (formerly known as Twitter), TikTok, etc., until your free time. While the Alligator is a very good student newspaper, please do not read it during class time.

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. Students can complete evaluations in three ways:

1. The email they receive from GatorEvals,
2. Their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or
3. The central portal at <https://my-ufl.bluera.com>

• Guidance on how to provide constructive feedback is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>.

Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

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.

Policy Regarding in Class Recording:

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without the permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. *A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.*

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

August 25 (M): Introduction (Plato, *Republic*, pp. 29-59)

August 27 (W): Plato (*Republic*, pp. 59-74)

September 1 (M): Labor Day Holiday (No Class)

September 3 (W): Plato (*Republic*, pp. 75-112)

September 8 (M): From Greece to Rome to the Renaissance (Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, pp. 198-214)

September 10 (W): Machiavelli (*The Prince*, pp. 214-227)

September 15 (M) Machiavelli (*The Discourses*, pp. 227-241)

September 17 (W): The Great Transformation (John Locke, *Second Treatise*, pp. 332-351)

September 22 (M): Locke (*Second Treatise*, 352-375)

September 24 (W): Locke (*Second Treatise*, pp. 376-396)

September 29 (M): Jean-Jacques Rousseau (*Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, pp. 425-459)

October 1 (W): Rousseau (*The Social Contract*, pp. 466, 470-481, 501-502, 504-506, 515-520)

October 6 (M): First Bluebook Exam (In Class)

October 8 (W): The American Experiment (*The Declaration of Independence, The Federalist*, pp. 546-562)

October 13 (M): Edmund Burke (*Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 606-610); *Additional Burke Reading will be posted on Canvas.

October 15 (W): Mary Wollstonecraft (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, pp. 563-605)

October 20 (M): John Stuart Mill (*On Liberty*, pp. 627-640)

October 22 (W): Mill (*On Liberty*, pp. 640-652)

October 27 (M): Karl Marx (*Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, pp. 692-699, *German Ideology*, p. 707, *Theses on Feuerbach*, pp. 716-717)

October 29 (W): Marx (*Communist Manifesto*, pp. 717-727)

November 3 (M): Second Blue Book Exam (In Class)

November 5 (W): Martin Luther King, Jr. (*Letter From a Birmingham Jail*, pp. 850-858)

November 10 (M): John Rawls (*A Theory of Justice*, pp. 862-867, 872-877, 887-890)

November 12 (W): Robert Nozick (*Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, pp. 907-926)

November 17 (M): Postmodernity? (Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 926-936)

November 19 (W): Foucault (*Discipline and Punish*, pp. 937-943)

November 24 (M) and November 26 (W): No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

December 1 (M): Conclusion, Part I (No Reading)

December 3 (W): Conclusion, Part II (No Reading)

FINAL BLUEBOOK EXAM: Wednesday, December 10th from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

