

POT 4053: Great Political Thinkers (Machiavelli to Marx)

Professor Dan O'Neill
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 Class Location: CSE, E220

OH: Monday, 12-2
 Office: 218 Anderson tel. 273-2386
 Class Time: T, 1:55-2:45, R 1:55-3:50

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES:

This class is designed to familiarize students with a number of thinkers, concepts, and issues that are central to political modernity. While the course is in no way meant to be exhaustive in its scope, the authors we read have all been crucial to the articulation of a number of intellectual traditions that continue to exert a profound impact on the contemporary world (including political absolutism, classical and welfare liberalism, capitalism, socialism, American political thought, Black political thought, feminism, and anarchism). Topics to be covered include (but will not be limited to): the idea of the social contract; political obligation, political obedience, and resistance; the various sources, meanings and theoretical status of such topics as natural rights, popular sovereignty, private property, history, and human nature; and the salience of race and gender. We will also touch on additional topics such as political inclusion and exclusion, the relationship between ethics and politics, the relationship between commercial and political life, and the like. The broader goal of the course is to encourage critical thinking about the ways in which knowledge derived from reflection upon old texts might inform one's approach to political life in the present. No lecture or discussion, however, is intended to espouse, promote, advance, inculcate, or compel a particular feeling, perception, viewpoint or belief.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

The Portable Machiavelli (Penguin, eds. Bondanella and Musa) ISBN: 0140150927

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Cambridge, ed. Richard Tuck) ISBN: 0521567971

Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (Liberty Fund, eds., Raphael and Macfie)
 ISBN: 0865970122

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Writings* (Cambridge, ed. Collini) ISBN: 0521379172

The Essential Douglass (Hackett, ed. Buccola) ISBN: 1624664539

Emma Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays* (Graphyco) ISBN: 979862501579

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. 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 (20 points each); 1 final Blue Book exam (20 points); 12 one page written participation assignments (25 points: 2 points for each reflection weekly paper, plus one point for a final one-page reflection on the course); 15 points for lecture attendance and active participation. 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).

The Blue-Book exams will be entirely essay based. Reaction papers should highlight some portion of the week's reading you found particularly important or interesting, and explain 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 \(ufl.edu\)](#)

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: You should do the reading for a given session 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-conducthonor-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, Reading, and Discussion Schedule:

August 21 (TH): Introduction/syllabus walk through/Groundwork

August 26 (T): Machiavelli *Portable Machiavelli*, pp. 77-95 (*The Prince*)

August 28 (T) Machiavelli *Portable Machiavelli*, pp. 96-166 (*The Prince*)

September 2 (T) Machiavelli *Portable Machiavelli*, pp. 168-228, 252-253, 281-287 (*Discourses*)

September 4 (TH) Machiavelli *Portable Machiavelli*, pp. 287-301, 320, 314-316, 319-325, 326-338, 342-345, 351-356, 386-388, 400-402, 416-418 (*Discourses*)

September 9 (T) Hobbes, Leviathan, pp. 1-62

September 11 (TH) Hobbes, Leviathan, pp. 62-115

September 16 (T) Hobbes, Leviathan, pp. 117-182

September 18 (TH) Hobbes, Leviathan, pp. 183-254

September 23 (T): Discussion/Exam Questions handed out

September 25 (TH): First Blue Book exam

September 30 (T) Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, pp. 1-26, 308-314, 126-127, 200

October 2 (TH) Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, pp. 27-93,

October 7 (T) Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, pp. 135-161, 179-187,

October 9 (TH) Smith, The Theory of Moral Sentiments, pp. 213-264

October 14 (T) Mill, On Liberty and Other Writings, pp. 5-74

October 16 (TH) Mill, On Liberty and Other Writings, pp. 75-116

October 21 (T) Mill, On Liberty and Other Writings, pp. 221-248

October 23 (TH): Mill, On Liberty and Other Writings, pp. 249-279

October 28 (T) Discussion/Exam Questions handed out

October 30: Exam

November 4 (T) Douglass, *Essential Douglass*, pp. 12-20, 50-71, 76-89, 119-132,

November 6 (TH) Douglass, *Essential Douglass*, pp. 148-196, 216-231

November 11 (T): No Class (Veterans Day)

November 13 (TH) Douglass, *Essential Douglass*, pp. 235-331

November 18 (T) Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays*, pp. 1-122

November 20 (TH) Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays*, pp. 127-178

November 25 (T), and November 27 (TH): No Class (Thanksgiving)

December 2 (T): Goldman, *Anarchism and Other Essays*, pp. 179-222

Final Exam: Thursday, December 11 from 3-5 pm.