

## POLITICAL THEORY

POLS 210 ~ Fall 2017

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### Instructor Information

Dr. Noah R. Eber-Schmid  
Dept. of Political Science  
Email: noah.eber-schmid@bucknell.edu  
Office: Academic West, Room 220  
Office Hours: Tu/Thu 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM  
& By Appointment

### Course Information

#### Section 01

Meeting Times: M/W/F 8:00 AM – 8:52 AM  
Location: Academic West, Room 112

#### Section 02

Meeting Times: M/W/F 10:00 AM – 10:52 AM  
Location: Academic West, Room 210

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This course will introduce students to core concepts and enduring debates in political thought by exploring selected texts from across the canon of Western political theory. Throughout the semester we'll use these texts to investigate a variety of political questions including: what do we mean by "politics?" how do we *do* political theory or think *politically*? what is the function of government and what should guide how we govern? how should political communities be organized? what does it mean to be a citizen? what are liberty, justice, and equality? and how do politics and economics shape each other? Organized thematically around theories of citizenship and authority, equality and justice, freedom and liberty, and the relationship between politics and economics, students will use key works of historical and contemporary political thought as a foundation to clarify the meaning of some of the key concepts we use to think about politics, and to critically examine and normatively reevaluate the political world around them.

### Class Goals

1. Students will demonstrate an understanding of some of the major theories and concepts in Political Science and the major sub-field of political theory.
2. Students will demonstrate proficiency in thinking systematically about the ethical dimensions of politics.
3. Students will write effectively, engage in intellectually grounded oral debate, and from and express cogent arguments.
4. Students will synthesize, analyze, and critically evaluate major arguments in the discipline.
5. Students will assess original and secondary sources of argumentation and evidence, and apply scholarly findings to new situations.
6. Students will develop intellectual skills for graduate work and employment.

## II. COURSE OVERVIEW

**Required Materials:** The following texts will be used during this course and students should acquire them in advance. Some of the assigned readings may be found in alternate editions to those listed here. Shorter selections will be made available on reserve in the library and/or online through the course site when possible. If there are any questions regarding the use of alternate editions, please contact me.

- Aristotle. *The Politics* (Oxford). ISBN: 9780199538737
- Niccolò Machiavelli. *The Prince* (Hackett). ISBN: 97808722203167
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau. *Discourse on Inequality* (Oxford). ISBN: 9780199555420
- Sophocles. *Antigone* (Hackett). ISBN: 9780872205710

**Course Format, Expectations, and Grades:** This course will take the form of a modified lecture, combining instructor-led presentations, in-class discussions, in-class group work, and written assignments. Bring the assigned reading with you to class and come prepared to talk and ask questions about what you've read. You will be responsible for completing occasional in-class reading quizzes and group assignments, short take-home writing assignments, a midterm exam, a midterm take-home essay, and a final exam. Assignments should be completed on time. Late and missing assignments may be penalized.

Assignment	Percentage of Final Grade
Attendance & Participation	5%
Reading Quizzes & Class Work	15%
Short Writing Assignments (3)	30%
Midterm Exam	25 %
Final Exam	25%

## III. COURSE POLICIES AND ADMINISTRATION

**Attendance:** Students must attend all scheduled course meetings and abide by the university's attendance policies regarding absences. This means that **you must arrive to class on time and stay for the duration. If you have 3 or more unexcused absences, you are at risk of failing this course.**

It is the policy of this course to excuse without penalty students who are absent from class because of religious observance, and to allow the make-up of work missed because of such absence. Examinations and special required out-of-class activities shall ordinarily not be scheduled on those days when religiously observant students refrain from participating in secular activities. It is the responsibility of the student to provide timely notification about necessary absences for religious observances. Students are also responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule. All make up exams must be arranged with me prior to the missed exam.

**Participation:** This class depends on the active involvement of each student. Your participation is essential to discussing and learning about the subject matter. Participation will be considered when determining your final grade and you will have a variety of ways to earn credit for your participation. Aside from impacting your final grade, active participation and in-class discussion is central to getting the most out of this course for yourself and your peers.

**Email, Announcements, and Classroom Technology:** You are required to regularly check your Bucknell student email account and the course site. Failure to regularly check your student email account is not an acceptable excuse. You may contact me with questions and concerns through my email address, noah.eber-schmid@bucknell.edu. Please allow 24 hours (Monday–Friday) or 48 hours (Saturday, Sunday, and Holidays) from the time your email is sent to receive a response. The use of phones and other mobile devices to make or receive, calls (telephone or other), text messages, tweets, snapchats, status updates, or any communication with your physical, digital, or imaginary social network during class is strictly prohibited. Your phone, computer, or tablet should only be used for taking notes during class or working on in-class assignments. The use of smartphones, tablets, netbooks, laptops, etc. during class is at my discretion. I reserve the right to prohibit the use of technological devices if they prove disruptive or distracting, and to request electronic copies of your notes.

**Plagiarism and Academic Integrity:** All students should be familiar with and abide by the University’s policy on academic integrity. Plagiarism and the University’s policy on academic integrity can be complicated. You are expected to make an effort to learn about plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity, as well as how to avoid them. Taking the time to do so will help ensure that you do not violate the University’s policy. Bucknell University is an academic community that assumes personal and professional integrity on the part of all its members. The university’s policies and procedures regarding academic responsibility were designed in accordance with our commitment to the five fundamental values that define academic integrity according to Duke University's Center for Academic Integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility. These values are inscribed in the Bucknell University Honor Code, which was adopted in spring of 2005. Supporting these values in word and deed is the responsibility of each member of the community and alleged acts of academic misconduct should be taken seriously and dealt with according to the university’s policy.  
<http://www.bucknell.edu/AcademicResponsibility.xml>

### **Bucknell University Honor Code.**

As a student and citizen of the Bucknell University community:

1. I will not lie, cheat, or steal in my academic endeavors.
2. I will forthrightly oppose each and every instance of academic dishonesty.
3. I will let my conscience guide my decision to communicate directly with any person or persons I believe to have been dishonest in academic work.
4. I will let my conscience guide my decision on reporting breaches of academic integrity to the appropriate faculty or deans.

**Office Hours:** I will be holding regular office hours on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM. If you would like to attend office hours but are unable to do so at the regularly scheduled time, please email me to make alternative arrangements. I am happy to answer any questions you may have during the semester and always enjoy the opportunity to discuss your thoughts on the material we'll be covering.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student who needs an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact Heather Fowler, Director of the Office of Accessibility Resources at [hf007@bucknell.edu](mailto:hf007@bucknell.edu), 570-577-1188 or in room 212, Carnegie Building who will coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

**Please Note:** This syllabus is subject to change and students should regularly check the course site for the most recent version. Readings and assignments may be removed, added or modified at my discretion. All major changes will be announced in class and through the course site.

#### IV. COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND SCHEDULE

Readings marked with an asterisk "\*" will be made available electronically through the course site or library course reserves. All other readings appear in the texts listed above under "required materials."

August 21 Introduction: Defining "Politics"

##### I. CITIZENSHIP AND AUTHORITY

August 23-28 Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation" \*

August 30-September 1 \*\*\* **Class does not meet** \*\*\*  
\*\*\* **Take-home assignment TBA** \*\*\*

September 4-8 Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*

September 11-15 Aristotle, *The Politics*  
Book I: Chs. 1-3, 5-6, 13  
Book III: Chs. 1-2, 4-9, 11, 12  
Book IV: Chs. 1-2, 4, 8-9, 11  
Book V: Chs. 1 & 9  
Book VII: Chs. 1, 2-5, 13-15  
Martha Nussbaum, "Aristotelian Social Democracy" \*

September 18-22 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* \*  
Dedication  
Part I: Introduction, Chs. 13–15  
Part II: Chs. 17–19, 21, 29

## II. EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

September 25- September 29 Sophocles, *Antigone*  
Daniel Mendelsohn, “Unburied: Tamerlan Tsarnaev and  
the Lessons of Greek Tragedy” \*

September 29-October 4 Martin Luther King Jr., “Letter from Birmingham Jail” \*

October 6 \*\*\* Midterm exam \*\*\*

October 9 \*\*\* Fall break, class does not meet \*\*\*

October 11 Publius, *The Federalist* #1 and #10 \*

October 13 \*\*\* Class does not meet \*\*\*  
\*\*\* Take-home assignment TBA \*\*\*

October 16-20 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

October 23-25 John Rawls, “Principles of Justice” \*

October 27-November 1 Martha Nussbaum, “Beyond Compassion and  
Humanity” \*  
Judith Shklar, “Giving Injustice Its Due” \*  
Bernard Yack, “Active and Passive Justice” \*

November 3-November 6 Iris Marion Young, “Democracy and Justice” \*

## III. FREEDOM AND LIBERTY

November 8-13 J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*\*  
Benjamin Constant, “Liberty of the Ancients...” \*  
Additional

November 15-17 Reading assignment TBA

November 20-24

**\*\*\* Class does not meet, Thanksgiving recess \*\*\***

**IV. ECONOMICS AND POLITICS**

November 27-December 1

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, *The Communist  
Manifesto* \*

Karl Marx, "Preface to *A Contribution to the Critique of  
Political Economy*" \*

—, "Estranged Labor" \*

December 4

Final exam review

**\*\*\* Final exam date and time TBA \*\*\***

Grading rubric for all written work submitted in this course

	<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D/F</b>
<b>Argument/Analysis</b>	Makes clear and compelling argument. Solid reasoning. Offers insightful analysis	Makes clear argument, based on plausible readings. Some effort to sustain argument throughout the analysis.	Attempts to offer a cogent argument and analysis, but argument and analysis are based on faulty reasoning.	Failure to make a cogent argument or to offer sound analysis.
<b>Writing/Grammar</b>	Well-written. Appropriate word choices. Free of grammar and spelling mistakes.	Well-written, but may include a handful of grammar, spelling, or word choice mistakes.	Multiple errors, but still clearly intelligible.	Multiple errors that interfere substantially with comprehension.
<b>Organization/Structure</b>	Clear, easy to follow organization with intro, body, conclusion. Provides reader with a “road map” of essay.	Clear organization with some road map for reader.	Some effort to structure the paper, but organization is problematic or difficult to follow.	Disorganized and difficult or impossible to follow.
<b>Use/mastery of readings</b>	Uses multiple readings and demonstrates mastery of facts and arguments made in readings.	References multiple readings and demonstrates a good degree of understanding.	Minimal use of readings and/or failure to demonstrate adequate mastery of readings.	Failure to use readings