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### PSCI 250E.01: Introduction to Political Theory

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**University of Montana**  
**Department of Political Science**

**PSC 250E**  
**Spring 2022**  
MWF 9-9:50am

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TA Office Hrs:

Austin Ladd-- Mondays 10:30 -12:30 in Corbin 347 and by appt.

Ashli Jaschke—Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 via Zoom (link on Moodle) and by appt.

***Introduction to Political Theory***

***Course Description:***

Introduction to Political Theory (PSCI 250E) familiarizes students with the basic concepts and issues that preoccupy the political theorist, including the origins of government and society, the nature of justice, and the meaning of political legitimacy. We will begin by considering the tension between politics and philosophy and continue with an examination of the major political thinkers, from Plato to Marx, who have influenced the way we think about human nature, justice, the good life, government, freedom, citizenship, etc. We will conclude with the "end of political theory" debate.

At the outset, let us consider some basic questions about the relationship between political philosophy and ideology. First, is there a political theory that is not an ideology, or a theorist that is not an ideologue? If ideology is not the same as political philosophy or as good (as Plato suggests), then how does one avoid being labeled an ideologue? Lastly, what does it mean to you when someone says: "today it is no longer possible to construct a genuine political philosophy"?

***Course Objectives:*** upon successfully completing the course work, the student should be able to:

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the political and ethical standards associated with classical and modern thinkers, including Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Burke and Marx.
2. Identify major ideas and key principles associated with utopianism, classical and reform liberalism, utilitarianism, conservatism, feminism, Marxism, as well as contemporary variations such as neo-Marxism.
3. Provide a clear, well-written analytical essay on a utopian novel, examining how the ethical ideals of Plato are embraced, perverted and/or negated. (See attached Paper Guideline.)

***Texts:***

R. Grey (editor) **POLITICAL THEORY & THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT: AN INTRODUCTION TO MAJOR POLITICAL THINKERS**, San Diego: Cognella Publishing, 2014; can be purchased on-line at: <https://store.cognella.com/94880>

Huxley, **Island** (any edition)

***Grading:***

The work of the course consists of reading all assignments, participating by raising questions and attending lectures (students who ask questions usually have good lecture notes), completing the scheduled **two-part midterm** (30% of course grade), and the **final** (35% of course grade.) In addition, each student

must complete **an analytical essay** of Huxley, *Island* (35% of course grade.)\* Please see attached for instructions on the *Island* paper. Late papers will receive a grade reduction for every day it's late.

### *Extra Credit Assessment Essay Exam (2 pts each exam):*

University of Montana & Political Science Department is asking you to take an essay exam as part of the University's require Assessment of Student Learning in the Ethics Perspective of General Education.

Your score on the exam will **NOT** affect in any way your course grade or academic standing in the Department or at the University. You will receive *two extra points* for taking the first assessment exam, and two *extra credit points* or taking the second assessment exam during the last week of classes.

### *Academic Misconduct*

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or disciplinary sanction by the University of Montana. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code, which is available for review online at: <http://life.umt.edu/VPSA/name/StudentConductCode>.

### *Accessibility and Students with Disabilities*

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that requires accommodation, please present the instructor with a letter from Office of Disability Equity (ODE), Lommasson Center 154 (406-243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and suggested accommodations.

The instructor has attempted to make all course materials accessible. If you find course material that has barriers to accessibility, please notify the instructor as soon as possible so the oversight can be corrected as quickly as possible.

### *Tentative Course Schedule:*

1/19	Introduction to the Course & Political Theory
1/21	<u>Read:</u> <i>Political Theory &amp; the Human Predicament</i> : Introduction & Chapter I, Plato, <i>The Apology</i> (pp. 1-27) ***Assessment Exam***
1/24- 1/26	Plato's Socrates: Who is the just individual? <u>Read:</u> Chapter II: Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Books I- II (pp. 39-64)
1/28- 1/31	Plato's Organic Theory of the State <u>Read:</u> Chapter 2: Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Books II-IV (pp. 64-78)
2/2- 2/4	Utopianism: Plato's Ideal State & Perfect Justice: Community of Wives Children, and Property <u>Read:</u> Chapter 2: Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Book III, V, VII (pp. 78-91) <u>Recommend:</u> Sir Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i>
2/7- 2/9	Possibility of the Ideal State: the Ship & Cave Allegories <u>Read:</u> Chapter II, Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Book VI, VII (pp.91-100)
2/11	Decline of the Ideal State <u>Read:</u> Chapter 2, Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Books VIII (pp. 100-108)

2/14 Plato v. Aristotle  
Read: Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book II (pp. 129-136)

2/16 Review & Discussion of Plato

**\*\*\*\*\* Friday, February 18th Midterm Part I: Plato's Republic \*\*\*\*\***

**\*\*\*\*\* Monday February 21th, President's Day Holiday. . .no class \*\*\*\*\***

2/23 Aristotle: Politics As Science  
Read: Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I (pp. 119-129)

2/25 Aristotle's Biological Analysis: Family, Village, Polis  
Read: Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book II; Book III (pp. 130-135)

2/28-3/2 Aristotle's Classification of Constitutions & the Best Practical State  
Read: Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III (pp. 141-161)

3/4-3/7 Aristotle on Revolution  
Read: Chapter 3: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book V (pp. 161-170)

3/9-3/11 Machiavelli: Political Realist or Idealist?  
Read: Chapter 4: Machiavelli, *The Prince* (pp. 181-198)

3/14 Review & Discuss Aristotle

**\*\*\*\*\* Wednesday March 16th Midterm Part II: Aristotle's Politics \*\*\*\*\***

3/18 Hobbes, Locke: the State of Nature & Social Contract Theory  
Read: Chapter 5: Hobbes, *Leviathan*; Chapter 6: Locke, *Two Treatises on Government* (pp. 222-232; pp. 255-261)

**\*\*\*\*\* March 21<sup>st</sup> to March 25<sup>th</sup> \*\*\*\*\* Spring Break \*\*\*\*\***

*++Reading Huxley, Island*

3/28 Discussion of *Island* analytical essay

3/30 Classical Liberalism: Locke & Revolution  
Read: Chapter 6: Locke, *Two Treatises*, (pp. 280-292)

4/1 Locke & Property Rights  
Read: Chapter 6: Locke, *Two Treatises* (pp. 261-267)

4/4 Classical Liberalism: Hume, Smith & "the Automatic Social Mechanism" of the Free Market  
Read: Chapter 6 Intro: Hume & Smith; (pp. 248-253)

**\*\*\* Island Essay Due Monday, April 4<sup>th</sup> \*\*\* See last page of syllabus \*\***

- 4/6 Utilitarianism: Bentham, James Mill & John Stuart Mill  
Read: Chapter 10: Bentham, *Principles of Morals* (pp. 423-456)
- 4/8 John Stuart Mill & Reform Liberalism  
Read: Chapter 11 J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* (pp. 465-498)
- 4/11- Edmund Burke & the Critique of Political Idealism  
4/13 Read: Chapter 8: Burke, *Reflections* (pp.347-367)
- 4/15 Anti-Feminist Thought v Feminist Political Theory: Mary Wollstonecraft & J.S. Mill  
Read: Chapter 3: Aristotle, *History of Animals*, Book IX (pp. 164-165); Chapter 9: Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men & A Vindication of the Rights of Women*; (pp. 377-410)  
Recommended: J.S. Mill, *The Subjection of Women*
- 4/18- Marx's Critique of Liberalism & Conservatism  
4/20 Read: Chapter 13: Marx, *Economic & Philosophical Manuscript* (pp. 509-515)
- 4/22 Marx & the "Earthquake Theory" of Revolution  
Read: Chapter 13: Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (pp. 515-540)
- 4/25 Neo-Marxism: the Orthodox School vs. Revisionists  
Recommend: Bernstein's *Evolutionary Socialism* (1899); Karl Kautsky, *The Class Struggle* (1899)
- 4/27 Neo-Marxism: Luxemburg-Lenin  
Recommend: Rosa Luxemburg, selections from *Rosa Luxemburg Speaks* (1970); Lenin's *Imperialism* (1917)
- 4/29 Neo-Marxism: Totalitarianism/Stalinism
- 5/2 Neo-Marxism: Western Democratic Socialism & Marxist Humanism
- 5/4 End of Political Theory?  
Recommend: Bell, *The End of Ideology* (1962) & Fukuyama, *End of History* (1992)  
\*\*\*Assessment Exam\*\*\*
- 5/6 Review for Comprehensive Final  
Read: Lecture notes & review selected readings.

- \*\*\*\* **Final is Wednesday, May 11<sup>th</sup>, at 10:10 am-12:10pm in SS352** \*\*\*\*

**Guidelines for Essay**  
*"Island: Politics & Society on Pala"*  
(35% of course grade)

**I. Purpose**

Objective: Provide an **analytical essay** comparing and contrasting the ideas/themes found in *Island* with the political theories we have covered in the course. An interpretive essay is not a book review or an editorial. A critical essay supports its analysis with direct references to the novel, showing the extent Huxley borrows, satirizes, and/or negates the ideas of other western political thinkers.

**II. Content**

Description & Thesis (10% of essay value)  
There is no need to provide a summary of the book. Assume that the reader is familiar with the plot of the book. (No more than one paragraph.)

**III. Analysis** (70% of essay value)

This part of the paper should constitute the major portion of your work. Look for the ideas that Huxley draws upon in terms of the ideologies covered in the class. Can you, for instance, identify radical, conservative, and/or liberal ideas in his model community? (i.e. what extend does Huxley borrow from Plato's notion of justice?)

Or you *might* examine his underlying assumptions about human nature, "male" & "female" natures. Is there a class, caste, or elites in this society? What is the role of their political leaders (what legitimizes their authority). Explain. What is the character of the economic system and the nature of social relationships in Huxley's utopia? What is the value system of Palanese society? Consider, for instance, the political socialization process of the inhabitants: what they are taught, if anything, regarding gender roles, history, community etc.

**IV. Conclusion:** (20% essay value)

Finally, does Huxley's vision of a utopian state offer us a unique contribution to political philosophy or is it merely a hybrid of political theories we have studied in class? Explain.

**V. Format**

**a. Quotations**

All quotations or paraphrasing in your work from any material must be enclosed in quotation marks and properly cited as to their origin. See a writing manual for consistent format. **Plagiarism:** *Representing another person's words, ideas, data, or materials as one's own* is a violation of the university code of conduct and will result in a grade of F on the paper, please see:  
<http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/documents/StudentConductCode>

**c. Bibliography**

You should include a complete bibliography for all outside books used for this paper. Chicago style preferred.

**d. Editing:**

Be sure to edit and proof your final copy! Points will be deducted for grammatical and spelling errors.

**Please attach grading sheet (next page)**

**Please Attach To Your Paper**  
**PSC250E: Introduction to Political Theory**  
**Spring 2022**

**Description & Thesis – 10% (3.5 points)** \_\_\_\_\_

- Clear and coherent thesis statement
- Relevant to materials presented in lectures and throughout course materials

**Analysis – 55% (20 points)** \_\_\_\_\_

- Strong supporting evidence of the thesis
- Relevant information is clearly presented
- Fully developed arguments
- Credit is given to outside sources, where appropriate

**Conclusion - 30% (7.5 points)** \_\_\_\_\_

- Conclusion: a clear restatement of the answer to the central question

**Format, Mechanics & Bibliography - 5% (4 pts)** \_\_\_\_\_

- Format: 5-6 typed, double-spaced pages, 10-12 point font
- Grammar: Neatness, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and organization
- Bibliography: Follows Chicago/Turabian citation style guidelines

**TOTAL: (35 points)** \_\_\_\_\_

**Additional Comments:**

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Huxley