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### PSC 250E.01: Political Theory

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# **POLITICAL THEORY POLSC 250E-1**

# 250

Spring 1996

Journalism 304 12:10-1 Mon Wed Fri

**Instructor:** Bill Chaloupka (office Rankin Hall 101A) 243-6111. I check my voice-mail regularly. Also, I welcome E-mail: [billc@selway.umn.edu](mailto:billc@selway.umn.edu)

**Office Hours:** 1:10-2 Monday; 10-11 Weds., 2:10-3 Thurs. If these office hours are not convenient, please call for an appointment, or just stop by.

**Teaching Assistants:** Peter Thompson and John Halliday (office location and hours to be announced)

**Catalog description:** 4 credits. Analysis of the various attempts (from Plato to Marx) to explain, instruct, and justify the distribution of political power in society. Emphasis is placed upon those theories whose primary concern is to define the nature of the "good" society.

**Additional description:** Politics differs from other fields of human knowledge and action. As opposed to many other human realms, many of the most important political questions remain essentially contested, even after 2500 years of posing those questions in surprisingly consistent ways. This course is an introduction to the outlines of that long discussion. In addition to the "good society" emphasis mentioned above, we will also emphasize ethical questions: that is, how people think about their decisions to act ethically, in view of their values and aspirations.

## **Texts:**

Portis, *Reconstructing the Classics: Political Theory from Plato to Marx* (Chatham House)

Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Penguin)

Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (Hackett)

Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, edited by Frederic Bender (Norton)

Williams, Patricia, *The Alchemy of Race and Rights* (Harvard)

photocopy packet, as explained in class; includes Plato's dialogue, "Crito," Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "Letter from the Birmingham Jail," and a selection from Hobbes's "Leviathan."

**Requirements:** Students are expected to attend all classes, and to take three exams. The first exam counts 20%, the second exam counts 30%, and the final (a comprehensive exam) counts 50%. An option will be available to write a paper in place of the third exam. No "extra credit" is available, but consideration will be given to those who improve their exam scores during the semester, and who actively contribute questions and discussion.

Although the concerns of this class may seem to be less timely than those encountered in other Political Science classes, we will be concerned with contemporary political questions. Therefore, as in all Political Science classes, students are expected to read a daily newspaper, or an equivalent. (Suggestions: the *Missoulian*, *Spokesman Review*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, or *Washington Post National Weekly Edition*. Newspapers are available to read without charge in the library and in several other locations around campus.)

(more)



## Assignment Schedule

**NOTE:** Assignments should be read before the class session on the line where they are listed.

WEEK	Day	DATE	DAY	READINGS	TOPIC
1	1	28-Jan	MON		Introduction
	2	31-Jan	WED	Portis, preface, ch. 1 & 2	Theory/ Knowledge/ Opinion
	3	2-Feb	FRI	King, "letter...." (in readings packet)	Legitimacy and change
2	4	5-Feb	MON	Plato, "Crito" (in readings packet)	Legitimacy and moral commitments
	5	7-Feb	WED	Review Portis 2, King, and Crito	Plato and Socrates: Truth, Beauty, Justice & the Athenian Way
	6	8-Feb	FRI	Review & catch up <i>Department approved applications for Fall 96 graduation due in the Registration Center</i>	Discussion
3	7	12-Feb	MON	Plato "Republic" (in readings packet)	Plato; Ideals and Politics
	8	14-Feb	WED	Portis, chpt. 3	Aristotle; Nature (with a cap N)
	9	16-Feb	FRI	catch-up day <i>Last day to add classes or pay fees.</i>	Conclude Aristotle; Discussion
4		18-Feb	MON	<b>HOLIDAY</b>	
	10	21-Feb	WED	Portis, chpt. 4	Augustine & Christianity
	11	23-Feb	FRI	<b>REVIEW</b>	Bring Questions.
5	12	28-Feb	MON	<b>EXAM ONE</b>	No blue books needed. If you know you are going to miss the exam, you must notify the instructor or TA before the exam.
	13	28-Feb	WED	Portis, chpt. 5	Machiavelli, intro, with comments on Aquinas & medievalism
	14	1-Mar	FRI	Mach., through chpt. 5	Necessity and Virtue
6	15	4-Mar	MON	Mach., through chpt. 13	Public & Private ... & why de Borgia, MT is a great name
	16	6-Mar	WED	Finish Machiavelli	Patriotism & Nationalism
	17	8-Mar	FRI	catch-up day	Discussion
7	18	11-Mar	MON	Portis, chpt. 6 <i>LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES OR CHANGE GRADE OPTIONS is March 11</i>	Hobbes: Modernity arrives
	19	13-Mar	WED	Hobbes reading (in readings packet)	Individualism and public morality
	20	15-Mar	FRI	catch-up day	Discussion
8	21	18-Mar	MON	Portis, chpt. 7	Introducing Locke
	22	20-Mar	WED	Locke, intro, pp. 5-18	Locke: Human nature, Citizenship and contract
	23	22-Mar	FRI	Locke, 18-32, 52-65	Freedom (Rights) & Authority (Stability)
9	24	25-Mar	MON	Locke, 65-83	Life, Liberty, & Property
	25	27-Mar	WED	Locke, 101-116	Politics and minimalism
	26	28-Mar	FRI	<b>REVIEW</b>	Bring Questions.

(more)



WEEK	DAY	DATE	DAY	READINGS	TOPIC
10	27	1-Apr	MON	<b>EXAM TWO</b>	No blue books needed. If you know you are going to miss the exam, you must notify the instructor or TA before the exam.
	28	3-Apr	WED	Portis, chpt. 8	Wisdom and politics/ Rousseau: Popular will
	29	5-Apr	FRI	no reading	Burke: Conservatism, authority
	8-Apr	MON		Spring Break	
	10-Apr	WED		Spring Break	
	12-Apr	FRI		Spring Break	
11	30	15-Apr	MON	Portis, chpt. 9	Liberalism after Locke (Bentham)
	31	17-Apr	WED	catch-up day	More modern liberalism; Mill
	32	19-Apr	FRI	Bender, Preface (vii) and "Historical Backgrounds"	Hegel: the extended state
12	33	22-Apr	MON	Manifesto, I <i>Preregistration for Spring Semester—April 22 to May 3.</i>	Marx & radicalism
	34	24-Apr	WED	Manifesto, II	alienation, revolution and the dialectic
	35	26-Apr	FRI	Manifesto, III & IV	conclusion Marx, comments on political thought in this century
13	36	29-Apr	MON	Williams, I-1 and I-2	Excluded Voices and Contemporary Theory
	37	1-May	WED	Williams, I-3, all of II	Knowledge and Power
	38	3-May	FRI	Williams, III-7 and III-8	Politics and Faith
14	39	6-May	MON	Williams, III-9 and IV-10	Self and Rights
	40	8-May	WED	Williams, finish; Portis, chpt. 11	Identity and Politics; Conclusions
	41	10-May	FRI	REVIEW	Class evaluation, review questions answered, review sheet distributed
<b>NOTE 10:10 TIME - noon</b>	13-May	MON		<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	No blue books needed. If you know you are going to miss the exam, you must notify the instructor or TA before the exam.

This is the official time for the PSc 250 final. If you have a conflicting final, consult the teacher of that class—they are in violation of the schedule. University rules permit finals make-ups only if you have three finals on one day. Please plan your travel accordingly.

Grades will be posted at noon, Monday May 20, at Rankin 101A. Please don't try to inquire before then. Bring a self-addressed envelope (to class, or to the instructor's mailbox in the Pol Sci office) to receive your test and grade by mail. Or you can get your exam and course grades by e-mail (notify instructor). Exams will be available at the beginning of fall term in the instructor's office.