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PSC 150E.01: Introduction to Political Theory

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**University of Montana
Department of Political Science**

**PSC 150E
Spring 2004
MWF 11-12
TAs:**

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Office Hrs: MW 2-3, T 1-2

Introduction to Political Theory

Course Description:

Introduction to Political Theory (PSC 150) 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 the *public* and the *private*.

We will begin by considering the tension between politics and philosophy and continue with an examination of the major political philosophies— liberalism, conservatism, Marxism, feminism etc.— that have shaped our modern political discourse. We will conclude with the "end of ideology" debate. In other words, what does it mean to you when someone says, "today it is no longer possible to construct a genuine political philosophy"?

Texts:

Plato, *The Republic*

Aristotle, *Politics*

Huxley, *Brave New World*

Marx & Engels, *The Communist Manifesto**

FAC PAC #A: Western Political Theory; FAC PAC #B Political Ideas on Women

*In addition, short articles will be placed on reserved in the library.

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

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the political and ethical values associated with Plato, Aristotle, Locke, Hobbes, Bentham, J.S. Mill, Burke, and Marx.
2. Identify major themes and ideas associated with the ideologies of utopianism, classical and reform liberalism, utilitarianism, conservatism, Marxism, feminism as well as contemporary variations such as neo-Marxism and post-modern feminism.
3. Provide an interpretative, critical essay on a dystopian novel, examining how the ethical ideas of western political thinkers, including Plato, are satirized and/or negated. (See attached Paper Guidelines)

Grading:

The work of the course consists of reading all assignments, attending lectures, completing the scheduled **two-part midterm** (30% of course grade), and the **final** (35% of course grade.) In addition, each student must complete on time a **critical essay** of Huxley's *Brave New World* (35% of course grade.) Attendance will not be taken, but students who regularly attend class and ask questions usually have good lecture notes. Please see attached for instructions on the Huxley paper.

- Making up midterms, the final and later paper policy: Students must have a doctor's note, funeral notice, or letter from a coach to make up the midterms and final. Late Huxley papers will receive a grade reduction for every day it's late.
- If a student elects to take the course as a Pass or No Pass, he or she should be aware that a total of 65 pts or lower will be a NP.
- Please see me and UM catalog p. 21 for criteria on Incomplete Grades.

Course Schedule:

| | |
|---------------|--|
| 1/26 | Introduction to the Course <u>Read:</u> Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Book I & II |
| 1/28- 1/30 | Plato's Indictment <u>Read:</u> Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Books III & IV |
| 2/2 | Plato's Organic Theory of the State <u>Read:</u> <i>The Republic</i> , Book V |
| 2/4 | Utopianism: Plato's Ideal State & Perfect Justice: Community of Wives, Children, and Property <u>Read:</u> <i>The Republic</i> , Book VI <u>Recommend:</u> Sir Thomas More's <i>Utopia</i> ; Charles Fourier, <i>Social Organization</i> |
| 2/6- 2/9 | Possibility of the Ideal State: the Ship & Cave Allegories <u>Read:</u> <i>The Republic</i> , Book VII |
| 2/11 | Decline of the Ideal State <u>Read:</u> <i>The Republic</i> , Books VIII & IX |
| 2/13# | Plato v. Aristotle <u>Read:</u> Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book II |
| 2/16 | No Class: President's Holiday |

Last Day to Add/Drop by DIAL BEAR or Cyberbear

2/18 Review & Discussion of Plato

******* February 20th Midterm Part I: Plato's *Republic* *******

2/23 Aristotle: Politics As Science
Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, Books I

2/25 Aristotle's Biological Analysis: Family, Village, Polis
Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III

2/27-
3/1 Aristotle's Classification of Constitutions
Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book IV

3/3-
3/5 Aristotle on Revolution
Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book V

3/8 Classical Liberalism: Introduction

3/10 Review & Discuss Aristotle

******* March 12th Midterm Part II: Aristotle's *Politics* *******

3/15 Classical Liberalism: Hobbes, Locke on Maternity, Paternity, & Social Contract Theory
Read: FAC PAC vol. A section from Hobbes' *Leviathan*, Locke's *Toleration and Treatise on Government*; FAC PAC vol. B, selections from Hobbes' "Maternity & the Origins of Political Power" & Locke's "Maternity, Paternity, and the Origins of Political Power."

3/17 Classical Liberalism: Locke & Revolution
Read: FAC PAC, vol. A section from Locke's *Two Treatises on Government*

3/19 Classical Liberalism: Locke & Property Rights
Read: FAC PAC, vol. A section from Locke

3/22 Classical Liberalism: Smith & "the Automatic Social Mechanism"
Read: FAC PAC, vol. A sections from Smith

++Start reading Huxley *Brave New World*.

3/24-
3/26 Utilitarianism & John Stuart Mill
Read: FAC PAC vol. A, selections from J.S. Mill's *Democratic Participation; Liberty & the Individual*

*******March 29th-April 4th Spring Break*******

- 4/5 Reform Liberalism: John Dewey & T.H. Green
Read: FAC PAC vol. A. selections from T.H. Green
- 4/7- Conservatism: Edmund Burke & the Critique of Political Idealism
4/9 Read: FAC PAC vol. A., selections from Burke, Wordsworth,
 Oakeshott
- 4/12 Conservative Feminism
Read: FAC PAC vol. A selections from Genesis, Aristotle, Pluarch, Paul,
Augustine, Aquinas, Bacon, Schopenhauer, Nietzsche
- 4/14 Liberal Feminism
Read: FAC PAC vol. B selections from Wollstonecraft, J.S. Mill,
Darwin, De Beauvoir, Montagu, Friedan
- 4/16- Radicalism: Marx's Critique of Liberalism & Conservatism
4/19 Read: FAC PAC vol. A. selections from Engels' *Socialism: Utopian &*
Scientific
- 4/21 Radicalism: Marxism & the "Earthquake Theory" of Revolution
Read: FAC PAC vol. A selection from Marx's & Engels *The Communist*
Manifesto

*******April 23rd Huxley Paper Due*******

- 4/23- Neo-Marxism: the Orthodox School vs. Revisionists
4/28 Read: FAC PAC vol. A selections from Bernstein's *Evolutionary*
Socialism; *Karl Kautsky, * Rosa Luxemburg (*Select Readings On
Reserve); *George V. Plekhanov (*On Reserve)
- 4/30 Neo-Marxism: Lenin,
Read: FAC PAC vol., A selections from Lenin's *Imperialism*;
- 5/3 Feminism: Socialist & Radical
Read: FAC PAC Vol. B. selections from Marcuse; United Nations
Declaration of Women's Rights; Engels' "The Origin of the Oppression
of Women"
- 5/5- End of Ideology Debate
5/7 Read: FAC PAC vol. A. selections from Fukuyama's *End of History*
- 5/7 Review/Questions for Final

******* Final May 13th, Thursday at 10:10-12:10 *******

Guidelines for Essay

"Brave New World: Politics & Society in 2004?" (35% of course grade)

Format: essay should comprise **5-6** typed, double-spaced pages; please use 12-10 pt. font.

I. Purpose

A. Objective: Provide ***an analytical essay*** comparing and contrasting the ideas/themes found in *Brave New World* with the political theories we have covered in the course. An interpretive essay is not a book review or an editorial. A good 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

A. Description & Thesis (10% of essay value)

Do not provide more than a cursory description of the content of Huxley's *Brave New World*. Assume that the reader is familiar with the plot of the book. (No more than one paragraph.) Provide clear thesis, indicated with themes, thinkers, works will be used for analysis.

B. Analysis (60% 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 ideologies covered in class. Can you identify radical, conservative, and/or liberal ideas in his model community? (To what degree does Huxley mock Plato's notion of justice?)

Also consider: What are the underlying assumptions about human nature? What is the role of the state? And what role does political ideology (Fordism?) play in Huxley's novel? What is the value system of the society? (Look at, for instance, the education system of the different classes: what are they taught, if anything, regarding the party doctrine, slogans, and history?)* What are the sources of discontent among the inhabitants? (* These questions are only a suggested list to help you get started, but do not feel confined to only them.)

C. Conclusion: (30% of essay value)

Does Huxley convince the reader that this dystopia is possible or inevitable? Do you see things in our present society that might lead to Huxley's *Brave New World*? And if not, why not?

D. Planning

Part B should comprise the major part of your paper. In other words, provide 4 pages on analysis and 1 page on your conclusion. I am looking for your ability to come to logical conclusions concerning the "real world" of society and politics.

II. Style

A. Additional Reading

You may want to do some additional reading to substantiate your positions for parts IB and IC. However, this is not necessary. You will probably be better served by reviewing lecture and discussion notes, not to mention reading Huxley's work carefully.

B. 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.)

C. Bibliography

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

D. Editing:

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