

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THOUGHT
Pols 3 – Spring 2012
Professor Lawrence Quill
San Jose State University

LECTURES HELD:

Section 2 Tu/Thu 9:00-10:15am
Section 2 Clark 303

Section 3 Tu/Thu 12:00-1:15pm
Section 3 Clark 303

OFFICE HOURS:

1:30-3:00pm

Clark Hall, 402E
(408) 924-5563

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will focus on four broad categories of political thought. We begin with the relationship between individual citizens and the societies in which they live. Is there a fundamental conflict between being a good person and being a good citizen? Then we will examine political power. How should we deal with the darker side of politics – the violence and coercion that lies behind the state? Then we will turn to the subject of justice and equality. Would we really want societies that were perfectly equal? Finally, we will consider revolution and change in political life. How have reformers sought to justify greater equality in the human condition, especially for groups that have been deprived of equal social and political power?

PREREQUISITES

Students should be aware that this is a reading and writing intensive course. All students need some background in the critical reading of original texts. Political Science 3 offers an opportunity to develop the skills required in reading original sources. It is the suggested prerequisite for other theory courses offered in the department.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Plato, The Trial and Death of Socrates/The Last Days of Socrates
Machiavelli, The Prince
Mill, On Liberty
Etienne de la Boétie, Discourse on Voluntary Servitude
More, Utopia
Rousseau, Basic Political Writings
Marx, Selected Political Writings

Students are required to check the website each week for specific reading assignments and additional handouts.

WEBSITE

<http://www.lawrencequill.com/Intro>

(case sensitive!)

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES

This course is a required “core” course for Political Science majors. For minors, this course may be counted towards the 6 units of lower division courses required for the minor, Majors may count this course both for their major and for the GE Core. For General Education, this course satisfies the C2 “Letters” requirement of the GE core. This course is designed both for political science students and those from other majors.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Essays (50%) Midterm (20%)
Final (20%)
Participation (10%)

Students are required to check the website every week for instructions regarding essays and exams. Missed or late assignments receive an automatic F.

CALENDAR

Tuesday		Thursday	
		1/26	Introduction
1/31	Plato	2/2	Plato
2/7	Plato/King	2/9	Plato
2/14	More	2/16	More
2/21	More	2/23	More
2/28	Machiavelli	3/1	Machiavelli
3/6	Machiavelli	3/8	Machiavelli
3/13	Boetie	3/15	Boetie
3/20	Boetie	3/22	Boetie
3/27	SPRING BREAK	3/29	SPRING BREAK
4/3	Rousseau	4/5	Rousseau/Vonnegut
4/10	Rousseau	4/12	Rousseau/Smith
4/17	Marx	4/19	Marx
4/24	Marx	4/26	Marx
5/1	Mill	5/3	Mill
5/8	Mill	5/10	Mill/LeGuin
5/15	Revision		Final TBA.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found with the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development at http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct

CAMPUS POLICY IN COMPLIANCE WITH THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR: STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

See <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/s90-5.htm> about Academic Senate Policy S90-5

PLAGIARISM

See http://sa.sjsu.edu/student_conduct (Office of Student Conduct & Ethical Dev)

DEPARTMENTAL WRITING POLICY

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm.

For assistance, please visit the SJSU Writing Center staffed by professional instructors and upper-division or graduate-level writing specialists. Writing specialists have met a rigorous GPA requirement, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. It is your responsibility to arrange a time to meet with the instructors. Consult with your professor in advance to determine whether you need assistance with your writing.

Arguably the best way to improve your own writing is to read quality material on a regular basis. To that end, students are encouraged to read articles from scholarly sources but also newspapers such as The Wall Street Journal, The Financial Times, The New York Times, and The Economist. These publications also contain articles of direct relevance to their political science classes.

QUESTIONS?

Finally, if you get stuck, feel overwhelmed, or just want to clarify something from the reading or lectures, please ask me. I am here to help.