

PHILOSOPHY 3330
Topics in the History of Political Philosophy:
Tuesday 2:30-5:30pm (Fall 2016)

Bela Egyed, Office: 3A56, E-mail: <bela.egyed@carleton.ca>
Office hours: Tuesday 11am – 12pm Tuesday, or by appointment.

Course Description:

This course aims to provide a survey of the history of political philosophy. The main focus of the course will be to see how, starting with Plato, such political ideas as “liberty”, “autonomy”, “authority” “contract”, “obligation”, “democracy”, “power” and “natural law” have received different interpretations. In addition to Plato’s *Republic*, Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* will receive special attention. This choice is motivated by the recognition that Hegel saw his political theory as an attempt to revive classical political values in the context of modernity: as a new way of articulating the relation between ethics and politics, setting the stage for future discussions of these subjects. Additional required readings for the course will include selections from Aristotle’s *Politics*, Machiavelli’s *The Prince*, Hobbes’ *Leviathan*, Locke’s *Second treatise on Government* and Rousseau’s *Social Contract*. In a course on the history of political philosophy, especially one focused on Plato and Hegel, religion, and its impact on politics needs to be mentioned. So, between discussing Aristotle and Machiavelli some time will be devoted in class to the views of St. Augustine and St Thomas. In particular, Hegel’s claim that “the principle of subjective freedom ... dawned in an inward form in the Christian religion” (Par. 185) will be examined.

Objectives:

The main objective of the course is to see how political philosophy is both a response to historical events and a function of the philosophical ideas of a given epoch. In addition, it is hoped that by the end of the course students will have gained an insight into how to read philosophical texts. (Key passages will be read out and discussed in class.)

Requirements:

Students will be required to read the assigned readings listed below, and to prepare questions or comments on them for each class. Emphasis should be placed on these selections. However, Plato’s and Hegel’s two texts listed below should be consulted regularly for the insights they provide for the whole history of western political philosophy.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments:

Sept. 13-20: Introduction to the course and to Plato’s *Republic*. **Reading:** *Republic* (Grube and Reeve’s Translation) Books II 357a-379a; Book III 411c-417b; and Book IV, VIII, IX.

Plato, the founder of political philosophy, examines the conditions for a just and harmonious society. He anticipates some of the main questions addressed by political thinkers of the west.

Sept. 27: A comparison of Aristotle’s and Plato’s political philosophies. **Reading:** Aristotle’s *Politics* Bk. II A1; Bk. III C; Bk. VI A, B; and Bk. VII A. Aristotle, Plato’s most famous student, addresses the problems raised by Plato’s conception of the state. The questions we need to ask is whether there are, in the end, **fundamental** differences between Plato’s and Aristotle’s views.

Oct. 4: From Rome to Machiavelli. **Reading:** Machiavelli *The Prince*. Chapters I-III, V, IX-XI, XV-XVIII, and XXV. After a brief discussion of St. Augustine’s and St. Aquinas’ views, the political views of the late Renaissance thinker, Machiavelli will be discussed. His main contribution is to disclose how political power is attained and maintained.

Oct. 11-18: Hobbes' theory of the absolutist state. **Reading:** *Leviathan* Chapters 12-15, 17-19, 21, 23, 29-31. Hobbes is considered by many to be the founder of modern political science. His main objective is to lay the foundations for the concept of political obligation. He is a critic of religion and natural law. He is the first to introduce the notion of "social contract" as a central concept of politics.

Nov. 1-8: Locke's critique of Hobbes theory. Locke is seen by many as the founder of the liberal theory of the state. **Reading:** *The Second Treatise on Government* Chapters I-V, VIII, IX-XIV and XVIII-XIX. Locke sees the "state of nature", and the social contract required to move beyond it, differently from Hobbes. For that reason, he denies the need for a "self-perpetuating" absolute monarchy. It remains to be seen whether Locke is able to provide an adequate version of liberalism.

Nov. 15: Rousseau on social contract, on the state of nature, and his critique of civilization. **Reading:** *The Social Contract* Bk. I Ch. I; Bk. II Ch. I-VIII; Bk. III Ch. I-VII; and BK' IV Ch. I, II, VIII. Rousseau is critical of both Hobbes' and Locke's conception of "state of nature" and of "social contract". His ideas are held by many to be the founding principles of the French Revolution. Today, many see him as the source of populist, if not fascist versions of, direct democracy.

Nov. 22 - Dec. 6: Hegel's political philosophy: the unity of freedom and reason: an evaluation of Hegel's contribution to the history of philosophy in the light of Marx's criticism of it. **Reading:** *Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (T. M. Knox' translation) The Preface (do not attempt the Introduction, it is far too difficult) Part III, including "Ethical Life" "Civil Society" and "The State". **Also:** Marx's "Preface to the Critique of Political Economy" and his "Introduction to Hegel's *Philosophy of Right*". (These two readings, as many other useful texts are available on line at the **Marxist Archive**. Hegel is thought by many to be the ultimate political philosopher. He has vast knowledge of not only the history of political philosophy, but also of the ethical, social and economic conditions of post-revolutionary Europe. The question we have to put to Hegel's immensely persuasive theoretical contribution is to what extent it applies to the hundred years of European history unleashed by the French Revolution. Marx's critique of Hegel offers a few hints about how to approach that question.

Required Readings: All those mentioned in the previous section.

Recommended Readings:

Julia Annas: *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*,

Herbert Marcuse: *Reason and Revolution*.

Shlomo Avineri: *Hegel's Theory of the Modern State*.

Steven B. Smith: *Hegel's Critique of Liberalism*.

C. B. Macpherson: *The Political Philosophy of Possessive Individualism*.

L. Strauss and J. Copsley (Eds.) *History of Political Philosophy*.

Grading:

Attendance and participation in class discussion will count for 10% of the final grade. (Questions and comments sent to me before class will also be considered for this grade.) A take-home assignment on the material covered, up to and including Hobbes will be worth 40%. **This assignment will be due on Nov. 1, at the first class after the study break.** A final take home assignment, worth 50%, covering the whole course, will be due **on the last day of the exam period: Dec. 22.**

Department of Philosophy and Carleton University Policies (2016-17)

Assignments:

Unless specifically told otherwise by their instructors, students:

- must not use a plastic or cardboard cover or paper clips
- must staple the paper (there is a stapler on the essay box)
- must include the following:
 - student name
 - student number
 - course number and section
 - instructor's name
- No assignments will be accepted after the last day for handing in term work – see dates in next column.
- Assignments handed in through the essay box (just inside the glass doors, Paterson Hall, Floor 3A) must be dropped into the box by **4:15** on a regular business day in order to be date-stamped with that day's date. Assignments handed in after 4:15 or on a non-business day will be stamped as having been handed in on the next business day.
- Students are required to keep copies of their assignments. If your paper is lost at any point, you will be considered not to have submitted it if you cannot produce a copy immediately on request.

Deferrals for Term Work:

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a final assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply for a deferral of examination/assignment. For deferred examinations, you must apply within 5 working days after the scheduled date of your exam. To apply for deferral of a final assignment, you must apply within 5 working days of the last scheduled day of classes. Visit the Registrar's Office for more information.

Plagiarism:

It is the responsibility of each student to understand the meaning of 'plagiarism' as defined in the Undergraduate or Graduate Calendars, and to avoid both committing plagiarism and aiding or abetting plagiarism by other students. (Undergraduate Calendar Academic Regulations, section 14.3, or <http://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv14/>)

Academic Accommodation:

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Religious obligation: write to your professor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details visit the Equity Services website: <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: The **Paul Menton Centre** for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your professor to ensure

accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*) at <http://www2.carleton.ca/pmc/new-and-current-students/dates-and-deadlines/>

You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at <http://www2.carleton.ca/equity/>

Important Dates:

Sept. 7	Classes start.
Sept. 20	Last day for registration and course changes in Fall and Fall/Winter courses.
Sept. 30	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from Fall term or two-term courses.
Oct. 10	Thanksgiving Day – University closed.
Oct. 24-28	Fall Break – no classes.
Nov. 25	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Dec. 9	Last day of classes, Fall term. Classes follow a Monday schedule.
Dec. 9	Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for Fall term courses.
Dec. 9	Last day to withdraw from Fall term courses (academic purposes only).
Dec. 10-22	Final examinations for Fall courses, mid-terms for Fall/Winter courses. Exams are normally held all seven days of the week.
Dec. 22	Take-home exams are due.
Jan. 5	Winter term classes begin.
Jan. 18	Last day for registration and course changes in Winter term classes.
Jan. 31	Last day for entire fee adjustment when withdrawing from winter courses or winter portion of two-term courses.
Feb. 20	Family Day – University closed.
Feb. 20-24	Winter Break, no classes.
Mar. 24	Last day for tests or examinations in courses below 4000-level before the Final Examination period.
Apr. 7	Last day of Fall/Winter and Winter term classes. Last day for handing in term work and the last day that can be specified by a course instructor as a due date for term work for Fall/Winter and Winter term courses.
Apr. 7	Last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter and Winter term courses (academic purposes only).
Apr. 10-25	Final Examinations. Exams are normally held all seven days of the week.
Apr. 14	Good Friday – University closed.
Apr. 25	Take-home exams are due.

Addresses:

Department of Philosophy:	3A35 Paterson Hall www.carleton.ca/philosophy 520-2110
Registrar's Office:	300 Tory www.carleton.ca/registrar 520-3500
Student Academic Success Centre:	302 Tory www.carleton.ca/sasc 520-7850
Writing Tutorial Service:	4 th Floor, Library http://www1.carleton.ca/sasc/writing-tutorial-service/ 520-6632
MacOdrum Library	http://www.library.carleton.ca/ 520-2735