

**The College of the Humanities**  
**HUMS4000: Politics, Modernity and the Common Good**

Prof. G. Kellow  
Office: Paterson 2A59  
Phone: 520-2600 X 2473

Prof. Farhang Rajaei  
Office: Paterson 300  
Phone: 520 2600 X 8143

**Lectures:** Wednesday 11:35-12:55 and Friday 11:35-12:55 (Paterson 303)

**Tutorials:** G-1, Wednesday 13:05-14:25; G-2, Wednesday 16:05-17:25; G-3, Thursday 11:35-12:55 (Paterson 302)

**Course description**

The Bachelor of Humanities program focuses on the human condition and the civic virtues. Year one approached humanity as *homo dei*, year two centered on human reason, and year three considered humanity in its cultural dimensions. Year four looks at humanity as *zoon politikon*. Each year also roughly follows a historical period. The first year covers the mythological era to ancient Greece. The second covers the ancient and medieval periods. The third extends from the early Renaissance to the eve of the French Revolution. Finally the fourth year could be subtitled “From Revolution to Revolution,” meaning from the French revolution of 1789 to the Iranian Revolution of 1979 that challenges some of the assumptions of the modernity process. With the French Revolution, the public space is marked with a dialectical interaction between secular subjectivity, liberty and equality. The Iranian Revolution in turn aimed at the possibility of re-connecting subjectivity, liberty and equality with the sacred. How did this novel condition emerge and what efforts were made either to restrain or intensify it?

In the first term, we will treat the seminal event of the nineteenth century, the French Revolution. The French Revolution itself began in 1789 but the consequences, in politics, art, philosophy and literature fundamentally transformed the substance, promise and essential experience of modernity. We will begin with Edmund Burke’s remarkable and tragically prescient assessment of the likely course of the Revolution and its larger significance as a resounding rejection of Enlightenment hopes for the triumphant rule of reason. Next we will consider two influential French philosophers of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Constant and Toqueville. These two meditate at length on the Revolution’s terrible lessons for the France of the Restoration and Second Empire. We will look beyond the borders of France to consider the world the Revolution left in its wake, beginning with Hegel’s historical/philosophical attempts to discern a Reason at work in the actions of Danton, Robespierre and ultimately Bonaparte. We will then turn to the four most powerful rejections of the world violently born in the aftermath of Waterloo, Marx, Nietzsche, Kierkegaard and Dostoyevsky. Finally, with Mill and Conrad, the course will consider the English speaking liberalism that owed as much to 1789, for better or worse, as it owed to 1776 & 1688.

The second term begins with the French Revolution’s ideas of autonomy, freedom and equality that in turn led to the emergence of the self as agent/actor, but also to the societal form of the sovereign state, and the anarchical society of states. What are the

nuances of this transformation? What did it entail? Since modernity became a universal phenomenon, the unfolding of it in the twentieth century will be studied through the works of both Western and Non-Western thinkers. From the West, we shall concentrate on the works of the Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor, who considers the modern condition of secularity as the great dis-embedding. We continue with the German-American philosopher, Hannah Arendt, who provides a giant revival of the Aristotelian question of how do we order our life together, then with the other German-American philosopher, Eric Voegelin, who considers the great dis-embedding as the Gnostic notion of conflating power with knowledge, ending with the French philosopher, Michael Foucault, who elaborates on power and “the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge.” From the East, we shall begin with Al-Afghani (d. 1897), who hopes for Muslims’ adoption of modern civilization, and then consider Said’s who sees the relation of the West and the Muslim world as “othering.” We shall continue with the Iranian thinker, Ali Shari’ati, who cast the west as deprived of depth and mysticism and end with Khomeini who led the first non-Western Classical revolution, challenging secular order. They provide insightful meditation on our present epistemology, the nature of our relation with the world and the divine.

**Course Requirements:** The final grade of this course is based on the followings:

- (a) Class participation\* (30%)
- (b) Two papers\*\* (one for each term, 40%)
- (c) Two take-home exams\*\*\* (one in each term, 30%)

\* This includes regular class and discussion attendance, participation (asking questions and offering comments) and discussion presentation(s).

\*\* Due date for Fall term will be November 20<sup>th</sup> and for Winter term will be March 17<sup>th</sup>. Late papers will be fined by a fraction of a grade (i.e., A to A-) for each day.

\*\*\* Specifics of the take home exam will be discussed in lecture. The deadline for the take home exam is the final day of the formal scheduled exam in each semester. (**No exam will be accepted after the date**).

### **Texts**

**Fall Term:**

Edmund Burke *Reflections on the Revolution in France*(Hackett)

Benjamin Constant *Speech at the Atheneum* (Reserves)

De Tocqueville *The Old Regime and The French Revolution* (Anchor)

Mill *On Liberty* (Pearson)

Marx, *Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon & On the Jewish Question* (Reserves)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel. *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*. (Hackett)

Friedrich Nietzsche. *Beyond Good and Evil*. (Penguin)

Kierkegaard *The Present Age* (Harper Torchbooks)

Dostoyevsky *Notes From Underground* (Penguin)

Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent*, (Signet)

**Winter Term:**

Charles Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*

Hannah Arendt. *The Human Condition*

Eric Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*  
Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*  
Jamal ad-Din "al-Afghani," *Refutation of the Materialists*  
Edward W. Said. *Orientalism*  
Ali Shariati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies*  
Rohullah Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*

### Course Calendar

#### Fall Term:

**September 11<sup>th</sup>** Introduction to the Course  
**September 16<sup>th</sup>** The French Revolution  
**September 18<sup>th</sup>** Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*  
**September 23<sup>th</sup>** Burke, *Reflections*  
**September 25<sup>th</sup>** Constant, *Speech at the Atheneum*  
**September 30<sup>th</sup>** Alexis de Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*  
**October 2<sup>nd</sup>** Tocqueville, *Old Regime*  
**October 7<sup>th</sup>** Tocqueville, *Old Regime*  
**October 9<sup>th</sup> University Day**  
**October 14<sup>th</sup>** Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*  
**October 16<sup>th</sup>** Hegel, *Introduction to the Philosophy of History*  
**October 21<sup>st</sup>** Marx, *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Napoleon*  
**October 23<sup>rd</sup>** Marx, *On the Jewish Question*  
**October 28<sup>th</sup>** Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*  
**October 30<sup>th</sup>** Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*  
**November 4<sup>th</sup>** Nietzsche, *Beyond Good & Evil*  
**November 6<sup>th</sup>** Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*  
**November 11<sup>th</sup>** Kierkegaard, *The Present Age*  
**November 13<sup>th</sup>** Dostoyevsky, *Notes From Underground*  
**November 18<sup>th</sup>** Dostoyevsky, *Notes From Underground*  
**November 20<sup>th</sup>** Mill, *On Liberty*  
**November 25<sup>th</sup>** Mill, *On Liberty*  
**November 27<sup>th</sup>** Mill, *On Liberty*  
**December 2<sup>nd</sup>** Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent*  
**December 4<sup>th</sup>** Review and Summary

#### Winter Term:

**January 6<sup>th</sup>** Introduction to the Course  
**January 8<sup>th</sup>** Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*  
**January 13<sup>th</sup>** Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*  
**January 15<sup>th</sup>** Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*  
**January 20<sup>th</sup>** Taylor, *Modern Social Imaginaries*  
**January 22<sup>nd</sup>** Arendt. *The Human Condition*  
**January 27<sup>th</sup>** Arendt. *The Human Condition*  
**January 29<sup>th</sup>** Arendt. *The Human Condition*  
**February 3<sup>rd</sup>** Arendt. *The Human Condition*  
**February 5<sup>th</sup>** Arendt. *The Human Condition*

**February 10<sup>th</sup>** Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*  
**February 12<sup>th</sup>** Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*  
**February 15<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup>** **Winter Break**  
**February 24<sup>th</sup>** Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*  
**February 26<sup>th</sup>** Foucault, *Discipline & Punish*  
**March 3<sup>rd</sup>** Afghani, *Refutation of the Materialists*  
**March 5<sup>th</sup>** Afghani, *Refutation of the Materialists*  
**March 10<sup>th</sup>** Said. *Orientalism*  
**March 12<sup>th</sup>** Said. *Orientalism*  
**March 17<sup>th</sup>** Said. *Orientalism*  
**March 19<sup>th</sup>** Shariati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies*  
**March 24<sup>th</sup>** Shariati, *Marxism and Other Western Fallacies*  
**March 26<sup>th</sup>** Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*  
**March 31<sup>st</sup>** Khomeini, *Islam and Revolution*  
**April 7<sup>th</sup>** Summary and Review

## REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

### COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

### PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They range from a mark of zero for the plagiarized work to a final grade of “F” for the course, and even suspension from all studies or expulsion from the University.

### GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

|                  |                 |                 |
|------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| A+ = 90-100 (12) | B+ = 77-79 (9)  | C+ = 67-69 (6)  |
| A = 85-89 (11)   | B = 73-76 (8)   | C = 63-66 (5)   |
| A - = 80-84 (10) | B - = 70-72 (7) | C - = 60-62 (4) |
| D+ = 57-59 (3)   | D = 53-56 (2)   | D - = 50-52 (1) |

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| F   | Failure. No academic credit  |
| WDN | Withdrawn from the course  |
| ABS | Absent from the final examination  |
| DEF | Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)   |
| FND | Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline. |

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

### WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from Fall term courses is November 16, 2009. The last day to withdraw from Fall/Winter (full year) and Winter term courses is March 12, 2010.

### REQUESTS FOR 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 me 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://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student\\_guide.htm](http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm)

**Religious obligation:** write to me 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://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student\\_guide.htm](http://www.carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/student_guide.htm)

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but are not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that I receive your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you **only** require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by the last official day to withdraw from classes in each term. For more details visit the PMC website: [http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad\\_accom.html](http://www.carleton.ca/pmc/students/acad_accom.html)

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

### PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to complete a **final** term paper or write a **final** examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control or whose performance on an examination has been impaired by such circumstances may apply in writing within five working days to the Registrar's Office for permission to extend a term paper deadline or to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully and specifically supported by a medical certificate or other relevant documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered.

### ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

|  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| College of the Humanities 520-2809       | 300 Paterson                  |
| Classics and Religion Office 520-2100    | 2A39 Paterson                 |
| Registrar's Office 520-3500              | 300 Tory                      |
| Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850 | 302 Tory                      |
| Paul Menton Centre 520-6608              | 500 Unicentre                 |
| Writing Tutorial Service 520-6632        | 4 <sup>th</sup> floor Library |
| Learning Commons 520-1125                | 4 <sup>th</sup> floor Library |