

PHIL 5900/4900

SURVEY OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

FALL, 2003

Syllabus

Meeting time: Monday, 7:00-10:00 PM, 607 Dale Hall Tower

Instructor: Zev Trachtenberg, 610 DaHT, 325-6324,
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Office hours: W, 10:00–11:00 AM; R, 2:00-3:00 PM; and by appointment

Course goals:

This course will survey important theories in the history of social and political philosophy. The course will begin by considering ancient theories (Plato and Aristotle), move on to modern social contract theories and the foundations of liberalism (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Mill), and conclude with the contemporary debate between liberals and communitarians (Rawls and his critics). In addition to reading and analyzing primary texts, students will gain experience in conducting bibliographic research in the secondary literature.

Course work and grading:

Graduate students

Your main work for the course will consist of an APA style conference paper (3000 words max.). By mid-September you should schedule a meeting with me to discuss possible topics and a research strategy. On Sept. 29 you will submit an abstract and proposed bibliography with 15 entries. On Oct. 20 you will submit an annotated bibliography with 8 entries. On Nov. 10 you will submit a first draft, which I will return with comments, but ungraded. The final version of your paper will be due Dec. 8.

In addition, for each class (except for Oct. 8, Nov. 10, and Dec. 8) you will submit a paraphrase of an assigned passage from the primary text for that day (max. 500 words). The purpose of the paraphrase is to reveal the structure of the author's argument; I will ask you to begin the class discussion of the passage by presenting your paraphrase.

The grade for your term paper will count for 50% of your final grade. Your abstract, annotated bibliography, and draft will count for 20%, on a pass/fail basis. The remaining 30% of your final grade will be based on the number and

quality of your paraphrases and the regularity and quality of your participation in class discussions.

Note that I will accept late work only if arranged in advance and due to a substantial and verifiable conflict. I will accept late work that has not been arranged in advance only in case of an extreme and verifiable emergency. In no case will I accept late paraphrases; however, you may submit a paraphrase even if you miss class as long as I receive it by class time. I will give you an Incomplete only if you are unable to finish your work for the course on time due to an extreme and verifiable emergency.

Undergraduate students

Your main work for the course will be a 2500 word (10 pp.) term paper comparing scholarly interpretations of one of the authors on the syllabus. By early October you should schedule a meeting with me to discuss possible topics and a research strategy. On Oct. 6 you will submit a topic proposal and bibliography with 10 entries. I will approve a two or three of the entries for you to use for your paper. On Nov. 3 you will submit a first draft, which I will return with comments, but ungraded. The final version of your paper will be due Dec. 1.

In addition, for each class (except for Nov. 3 and Dec. 1) you will submit a paraphrase of an assigned passage from the primary text for that day (max. 500 words). The purpose of the paraphrase is to reveal the structure of the author's argument; I will ask you to begin discussion of the passage by presenting your paraphrase.

The Final Exam for this course will be during class on Dec. 8. It will consist of a paraphrase of an assigned passage from the reading for that day.

The grade for your term paper will count for 40% of your final grade. Your proposal and draft will count for 5% and 15%, respectively, on a pass/fail basis. 30% of your final grade will be based on the number and quality of your paraphrases (including your Final Exam); each paraphrase is worth 2.5%. The remaining 10% will be based on the regularity and quality of your participation in class discussions. Note that I will give you an Incomplete only if you are unable to finish your work due to an extreme and verifiable emergency.

Note that I will accept late work only if arranged in advance and due to a substantial and verifiable conflict. I will accept late work that has not been arranged in advance only in case of an extreme and verifiable emergency. In no case will I accept late paraphrases; however, you may submit a paraphrase even if you miss class as long as I receive it by class time. I will give you an Incomplete only if you are unable to finish your work for the course on time due to an extreme and verifiable emergency.

Note to Philosophy Majors:

In order to aid in the assessment of its program, the Philosophy Department has a specific requirement for majors in Philosophy and in Ethics and Religion. Majors will be required to assemble a portfolio of written philosophical work--typically papers or exams written for philosophy classes--produced over several semesters. Majors will NOT be graded on their portfolios. Instead, portfolios will be sent, anonymously, to outside readers, to help them evaluate the quality of the Philosophy Department's teaching. Majors will discuss the progress of their portfolios with their advisors.

You should submit the term paper for this course for your portfolio. To do so, simply turn in two copies of the final version of your paper, one of which must include a title page that lists: the paper title; the course name and number; this semester and year; and the date the paper is turned in. This portfolio copy must not show your name anywhere except on the title page.

University policies:

Academic conduct

I will rigorously enforce the University's policies on academic conduct, as set forth in the Student Handbook. In written work you must cite all the sources you consult. However, respect for academic honesty is consistent with discussing the ideas of the course with others. I urge you to discuss the issues of the course outside of class--but you must do your written work on your own, and must cite any assistance you receive from others. Please ask me if you have any questions about academic honesty in general, or about specific situations that might arise during this course.

Religious observances

It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays. If any assignment in this class conflicts with your religious observance, or if you have any questions on this matter, please contact me.

Reasonable accommodation

If you have a disability that may prevent you from fully demonstrating your understanding of the material in this course you should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure your full participation and to facilitate your educational opportunities. Students with disabilities must be registered with the Office of Disability Services prior to receiving accommodations in this course. The Office of Disability Services is located in Goddard Health Center, Suite 166, phone 405/325-3852 or TDD only 405/325-4173.

Assigned texts:

You may use any edition of the following titles; the bookstore should have the editions listed.

Plato, Republic (Viking Pr; ISBN: 0140440488)
Aristotle, Politics (Viking Pr; ISBN: 0140444211)
Hobbes, Leviathan (Viking Pr; ISBN: 0140431950)
Locke, Second Treatise (Hackett Pub Co; ISBN: 0915144867)
Rousseau, Discourse on Inequality (Viking Pr; ISBN: 0140444394), The Social Contract (Penguin USA (Paper); ISBN: 0140442014)
Mill, On Liberty (Hackett Pub Co; ISBN: 0915144433)
Rawls, A Theory of Justice (Belknap Pr; ISBN: 0674000781)
Mulhall & Swift, Liberals and Communitarians (Blackwell Pub; ISBN: 0631198199)

Week-by-week schedule:

- Aug. 25: Introduction to the course; researching secondary sources.
- Sept. 1: NO CLASS
- Sept. 8: Plato, Republic: Bk II – Bk IV
- Sept. 15: Plato, Republic: Bk V– VII, 521c
- Sept. 22: Plato, Republic: Bk VII, 521c – Bk X
- Sept. 29: Aristotle, Politics: Bk I-II.v, Bk III.i-xiii
- Oct. 6: Hobbes, Leviathan: Ch. 11 – 18, 29-30
- Oct. 13: Locke, Second Treatise of Government
- Oct. 20: Rousseau, A Discourse on Inequality
- Oct. 27: Rousseau, The Social Contract: Bk I, II, IV.1-2, 7-8
- Nov. 3: Mill, On Liberty: Ch I - V
- Nov. 10: Rawls, A Theory of Justice: Ch I – II
- Nov. 17: Rawls, A Theory of Justice: Ch III
- Nov. 24: Mulhall & Swift, Liberals and Communitarians: Part I
- Dec. 1: Mulhall & Swift, Liberals and Communitarians: Part II
- Dec. 8: Mulhall & Swift, Liberals and Communitarians: Part III