

**Modern Political Thought**  
**Political Science 302**  
**Spring, 2008**  
**Syllabus**

**Read all the information in this document**  
**carefully, so you are not surprised by**  
**requirements you may find onerous.**

**January 23, 2008 – Last day for changing courses.**  
**March 7, 2008 – Last day for dropping courses**  
**without academic penalty.**

**The Honor Code is in force and will be**  
**followed completely in this course.**

### **The Course**

This is a course in modern political thought, in which we will be discussing primary sources. Our goal is to achieve some understanding of the principles on which modern politics is based, and to some substantial degree this means considering the modern reaction to the ancient understanding of nature and things. We will have to mention how modern “natural right” differs from ancient views thereof. We will also consider how History and Historicism have influenced political life by redefining the principles by which we take our bearings. And finally, we will consider how the modern project has culminated in a relativistic understanding of the world (i.e., The Death of God) that is pierced only by religious faith, which is by definition not based on reason. In other words, the principles of modern politics are not based on reasonably accessible standards or are based on faith-based standards. In any case, they are not based on autonomous human reason. We will consider at least part of the sequence of thought that brought us to this existential condition.

### **Course Requirements and Policies**

All the readings are difficult, though some are more “readable” than others. Also, they are of varying lengths, so that it will be important for you to begin reading some of the longer ones earlier in order for you to be able to comply with the main priority of the course. **Do not be surprised by lengthy readings; take this into account before you decide to remain enrolled in this class. Each reading should be completed by the first day that I begin to lecture on it.** In addition, you should refresh your memory of what you have read and what we have discussed in our previous class before you come to class on any given day. That is the best method to prepare for this course and to achieve the grade you desire.

There are eight readings for the course. You will be quizzed on them, both when we begin studying a thinker and when we conclude studying that same thinker, and the six highest grades will account for 60% of your grade. Alternatively, you can hand in a two-page paper (about 600 words) **summarizing the main arguments of the reading.** These would be due on the **first** day a reading is due at the beginning of class. You may hand in a hard copy or send it to me electronically. **If it is late for any reason other than documented illness, I will not accept it.** We will adhere to the scheduled reading for each day. If we require more time to complete a given thinker, we will take that time toward the end of the semester in the time prescribed for “Discussion.” The other 40% of your grade will be determined by a final exam to be given during finals week, or a final paper, due on **April 27th, at the beginning of class for that day.** **Late papers will not be accepted.** Plus/minus grading will be utilized in this course.

## Political Science 302 (Modern Political Thought)

### Syllabus

#### Page 3.

I take attendance every day because it is my legal obligation to know who is in my class, and it is my community obligation to be able to inform other professors and appropriate people if you are cutting class. However, I do not penalize your grade for a specific number of cuts. On the other hand, if you have read this syllabus carefully, you do understand that it is impossible to do well in this course without attending and being prepared.

You need to check the class conference regularly. Material on it is part of the course, and you can be quizzed on it.

From time to time it is possible I will have to cancel class because of circumstances beyond my control. Should this occur, these classes will be made up, usually early mornings, because that is when there are no conflicts. If you consider this an undue hardship, you should think twice about taking this course with me as the instructor.

My e-mail address is bshapir@emory.edu, which is the preferred mode of communication, and my phone number is 4-8334. My office is Seney 303. There is a conference for this class on learnlink, and you should consult it regularly. **My office hours are by appointment.**

**Schedule of Classes**  
**Classes begin at 9:35 and end at 10:25 AM.**

Jan. 16:	Introduction
Jan. 18, 21, 23, 25:	Machiavelli
Jan. 28, 30; Feb. 1, 4:	Hobbes
Feb. 6, 8, 11, 13:	Locke
Feb. 15, 18, 20, 22, 25, 27; March 3, 5:	Rousseau
Feb. 29:	No class
March 7, 17, 19:	Hegel
March 21, 24, 26, 31; April 2:	Marx
March 28:	No class
April 4, 7, 9, 11, 14:	deTocqueville
April 16, 18, 23, 25:	Nietzsche
April 21:	No class
April 28:	Discussion, Review

**There will be no classes on Feb. 29 and March 28 because personal commitments out of town I must honor on those days. There will be no**

classes between March 10<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> because it is mid-semester break. There will be no class on April 21 because I will be observing a religious holiday (Passover). Your final exam will be on Friday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, from 2:00pm to 3:00pm.

**Machiavelli:**        **The Prince, Pages 3-105.**

**Hobbes:**            **Leviathan, Pages 1-24, Parts I and II, Pages 289-298.**

**Locke:**             **The Second Treatise of Government, Pages 3-139.**

**Rousseau:**        **The First and Second Discourses, Pages 30-228**

**Hegel:**             **The Philosophy of History, Pages xv-xvi, Pages 1-110.**

**Marx:**              “The Communist Manifesto,” (entire).  
Handout.

**deTocqueville:**   **Democracy in America, Pages 3-15, 27-55, 105-161,  
348-398, 403-443, 450-451, 479-534, 639-676.**

**Nietzsche:**         “The Use and Abuse of History,” (entire).

**Do not read any secondary sources, including introductions, prefaces, or forwards in these books. You may read more than what is assigned, and you may read more from other primary sources from these authors. Use of commercial summaries like Spark Notes, Monarch Notes, etc., is considered an honor violation.**