

Political Science 302
Spring, 2005
Syllabus

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 are based, and to some substantial degree this means considering the modern reaction to the ancient understanding of nature and things. We will consider 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 based either on no standards or on faith-based standards. In any case, they are not based on autonomous human reason. We will consider the sequence of thought that brought us to this existential condition.

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. 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.** My e-mail address is Shapiro@learnlink.emory.edu, which is the preferred mode of communication, and my phone number is 4-8334. My office is Seney 307. There is a conference for this class on learnlink, and you should consult it regularly. **My office hours are by appointment.**

The Honor Code is always in force.

Schedule of Classes
Classes begin at 10:40 and end at 11:30 AM.

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Jan. 19: | Introduction |
| Jan. 21, 24, 26, 28: | Machiavelli |
| Jan. 31; Feb. 2, 4, 7: | Hobbes |
| Feb. 9, 11, 14, 16: | Locke |
| Feb. 18, 21, 23, 25, 28; March 2, 4, 7: | Rousseau |
| March 9, 11, 21: | Hegel |
| March 23, 25, 28, 30; April 1: | Marx |
| April 4, 6, 8, 11: | DeTocqueville |
| April 13, 15, 18, 20: | Nietzsche |
| April 22, 27, 29: | Discussion |
| May 2: | Review |

There will be no classes between March 14th and 18th because it is mid-semester break. There will be no class on April 25 because I will be observing a religious holiday (Passover). Your final exam will be on Friday, May 6th, from 2:00pm to 3:00pm.