

GOV 314E
CLASSICS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT:
FOUNDATIONS OF ECONOMIC THOUGHT
The University of Texas at Austin

Instructor: Nate Gilmore

Form: Hybrid (though all classes online until end of January, and we may stay online afterwards)

Classes: Monday and Wednesday, 1:00-2:30 PM (section 1); 2:30-4:00 PM (section 2)

Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:00-4:00 PM—via Zoom

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The modern world is, among other things, the world of capitalism. When we speak of progress today we ordinarily mean economic progress or at least that progress—technological, scientific—that depends on the economy and feeds it in turn; wherever we are going—where is that, exactly?—capitalism is our fuel.

But the world wasn't always modern, and it wasn't always capitalist. To understand our world, we must understand where our economic order came from and what effects it has had. How has it changed us? What has it unlocked? What has it suppressed? What, really, have we gained, and what have we lost? How can we maximize the good and minimize the bad in this rapid, disorienting, sometimes nauseating, spectacular, suffering world?

This is a political science course (you do not need any background in economics), but our first premise is an economic premise: nothing, not even economics itself, is without cost.

After a few comments on Aristotle and Sallust, we will study John Locke and Adam Smith, who described and desired the modern world. We will then move to this world's greatest critic, Rousseau, and three German discontents who followed him. Finally, we will arrive in the twentieth century and examine arguments by those who wish to restrain or channel capitalism (Polanyi, Piketty) and those who wish to unleash it (Hayek, Friedman). We'll conclude with Raghuram Rajan, who wants something in between.

This is an upper-level course at one of the finest universities in the country; it will push you, and I will push you, but you will hike the trail yourself—what you accomplish here will be your own. Most readings will be relatively short so that you have time to read them slowly; the papers will be short because concision is the first virtue of a good writer.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The translations listed are the translations that each student is expected to have and to use both in class and on all assignments. Additional readings will be provided online via Canvas. All texts listed below will be available at the University Bookstore, but they can be purchased elsewhere.

- Hayek, Friedrich. 2007. *The Road to Serfdom*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Locke, John. 1982. *Second Treatise on Government*. Wheeling: Harlan Davidson.
- Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels. 1978. *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Ed. Robert C. Tucker. 2nd edition. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Polanyi, Karl. 2001. *The Great Transformation: The Political and Economic Origins of Our Time*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. 1997. *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*. Ed. Victor Gourevitch. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Smith, Adam. 1982. *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Indianapolis: Liberty Fund.
- Weber, Max. 2002. *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism: and Other Writings*. New York: Penguin.

OPTIONAL TEXTS

You and I are not Margaret Atwood. Since we are not Margaret Atwood, we can improve our writing (as Atwood herself has done every day for 60 years). To improve your writing, you need teachers who know how to write well. Luckily, good writers like writing books.

- Cook, Claire. 2003. *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
Cook will teach you how to slice the fat off of your essays. More technical than the others; best read after them.
- Garner, Bryan. 2013. *Garner on Language and Writing*. Chicago: American Bar Association.
Especially handy for those of you interested in law school; chapters one and five, however, will appeal to everyone.
- Garner, Bryan. 2016. *Garner's Modern American Usage*. New York: Oxford University Press.
The modern author's usage bible, written by a genius. Also available in App form.
- Norris, Mary. 2015. *Between You and Me: Confessions of a Comma Queen*. New York: W.W. Norton. Light, informal, and often hilarious. Just what you'd expect from a copy editor at the *New Yorker*, right?
- Trimble, John. 1975. *Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing*. Englewood: Prentice-Hall. Trimble is one of Garner's BFFs here in Texas and a man who took teaching as a vocation; aristocratic and generous, he is the grandfather you always wished you had.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Survive hand-to-hand combat with excellent books; write well; think freely; make it through this virus-cursed year.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grade:

Participation	30%
Midterm Paper (1500-2100 words)	30%
Final Paper (2400-2750 words)	40%

Due Dates:

1st Essay due: March 10

2nd Essay due: May 5

COURSE GUIDELINES

Participation: If you show up every week and participate at least once most classes, you've secured yourself at least a B- for participation. Miss some classes, or don't speak, and you'll go lower; speak well, ask questions, fight the text with all that ferocity you're famous for down here in Texas, and you'll go higher.

But if speaking in class isn't your style, you can still ace participation: I count coming to office hours or emailing me questions as participation. So do that weekly, and thoughtfully, and you'll be on your way to easy points.

Papers: This is a writing-intensive class.

1. For each paper, I will send out a prompt, and you will write an answer to that prompt. I will grade you based on how well you answer the prompt—both the substance of your argument and how you say it, though the latter matters more for those in the *A* range than for those in the *C* range.
2. Papers must be submitted with the word count at the top of the first page.
3. All papers must use Chicago citation style. Use this link (<https://guides.lib.utexas.edu/c.php?g=539686&p=3694907>), then click “Chicago Manual of Style Online,” then “The Chicago Manual of Style Contents,” then section III, part 14, “Notes and Bibliography.” Your footnotes do not count toward the word count on your papers.
4. Late papers will be penalized three points for each day they are late. A paper that is two days late will be penalized six points; a paper that is three days late will be penalized nine points, etc. The maximum late penalty is 15 %. Papers will no longer be accepted 10 days after the due date. This applies to all handed-in assignments.
5. No extensions will be offered without a physician's certificate or proof of extenuating circumstances except in cases of religious observances.
6. *Plagiarism is anathema. Read the University of Texas at Austin's policy on plagiarism, summarized by the history department here:*

<https://liberalarts.utexas.edu/history/about/academic-integrity.php>. When you submit your work, you agree that you are submitting work that belongs only to you. Submit another's work, in any form, in part or in whole, and you risk failure, suspension, and expulsion. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please ask me by email or in person at any time.

7. Be sure to keep both an extra hard copy and a spare electronic copy of your work in case your submission is lost.
8. Do not consult outside sources when writing your papers. For now you should meet these texts as their authors intended them to be met: alone, with only your wits to defend you.

Writing Resources on Campus: What's more fun than learning about editing from a book? Learning about editing in person (OK, over Zoom). I encourage you to find information about the university's writing center at <https://uwc.utexas.edu/>. Yes, some of the tutors there may disappoint, but it's worth the risk: if you get a good one, it might change your life.

The University of Texas Accommodations: Students with disabilities may request academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, and I'm happy to work with them.

Recordings: Recording lectures is forbidden and doing so will result in a 10% penalty on the final grade; if you have a learning disability (hearing difficulties, vision deficiencies, injuries that prevent you from taking notes, mental health crisis, etc.), please see the above statement on accommodations.

Mode: Teaching this class as a hybrid will be difficult. It will be awkward. Especially at first. We may well need to move the whole thing online.

COURSE OUTLINE

Note: I will adjust the readings as we go; I'll let you know by email when I do.

Part I: History

- 1.) January 20—Course introduction
- 2.) January 25—Aristotle, *Politics* I, selections; Sallust, *On the Conspiracy of Catiline*, selections (scans)

Part II: Moral and Political Foundations

- 3.) January 27—John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, p.1-5
- 4.) February 1—John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, p.6-11

- 5.) February 3—John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, p.12-19
- 6.) February 8—Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p.9-26, 50-78
- 7.) February 10—Adam Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, p.78-91, 109-119, 126-131, 134-139.
- 8.) February 15—Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, p.10-30, 47-51, 276-278 (scan)
- 9.) February 17—Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, p.452-459, 463-472 (scan)

Part III: Rousseau

- 10.) February 22—Rousseau, *Second Discourse* Epigram, Epistle Dedicatory, Preface, Exordium
- 11.) February 23—Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, Part I—First Essay Assigned
- 12.) March 1—Rousseau, *Second Discourse*, Part II

Part IV: Three Angry Germans

- 13.) March 3—Friedrich List, *The National System of Political Economy*, Ch.1-4, 23.
- 14.) March 8—Friedrich List, *The National System of Political Economy*, Ch. 6, 34-5
- 15.) March 10—Karl Marx, *1844 Manuscripts*, “Estranged Labor”—First Essay Due
- 16.) March 15—Spring Break
- 17.) March 17—Spring Break
- 18.) March 22— Karl Marx, *Wage Labor and Capital*
- 19.) March 24— Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*
- 20.) March 29— Karl Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program*
- 21.) March 31— Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, Ch. 1-2.
- 22.) April 5—Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic*, Ch. 5

Part V: Postwar

- 23.) April 7—Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*, Preface (37-8), Ch.1-3
- 24.) April 12—Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom*. Ch. 4, 7, 14, 16.

- 25.) April 14—Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Ch. 1, Ch.7
- 26.) April 19—Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, p.1-7, 31-2, 38-40, 42-9 2
- 27.) April 21—April 26—Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, p.56-7, 59-60, 71-9, 88-9, 136, 141 **Second Essay Assigned**
- 28.) April 26—Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, p.146-8, 150-1, 160, 163-7, 210, 242-3, 257-9, 268

Part VI: A New Century

- 29.) April 29—Thomas Piketty, *Capital*, selections (scan)
- 30.) May 3—Raghuram Rajan, *The Third Pillar*, selections (scan)
- 31.) May 5—Conclusion—**Second Essay Due**