

# Political and Social Philosophy (Phil 245)

University of Maryland - Spring 2015

Lectures: Mondays & Wednesdays, 1-1:50pm in Tydings Hall 0117 and Friday discussions

Instructor: Michael Zenz  
Email: [zenz@umd.edu](mailto:zenz@umd.edu)

Office: Skinner 1120B  
Office hours: M 2-4pm (& by appointment)

## Course Description

This is an introduction to Western social and political thought. The questions we will attempt to answer this semester include: Do we have obligations to obey political authorities, and if so which ones? How should our political and economic systems be organized? How should we distribute resources? In addressing these questions we will also examine democratic (the rule of the many) and elitist (the rule of the few) forms of political organization, as well as capitalist and communist forms of economic organization. Although we will primarily study historical (rather than contemporary) political thinkers, we will see that their ideas are still relevant to many contemporary debates.

Students are expected to complete all reading assignments by the beginning of the class for which they are assigned, and to come to lectures and discussion sections. Other course requirements, and their relative weights in the final grade, are listed below:

## Requirements

**10% - Attendance & Participation** Attendance and participation in both lecture and discussion sections.

**20% - Biweekly Discussion Writing** Approximately 200 word **typed** responses to biweekly discussion questions posted on ELMS. Responses must be handed in during discussion sections (no exceptions). The lowest 2 scores will be dropped.

**20% - Midterm Exam** Taken in class on *March 11<sup>th</sup>*.

**25% - Term Paper** Topics and detailed instructions will be distributed mid-semester, though students may also select their own topics with permission of the instructor. *Due in Lecture on May 4<sup>th</sup>*.

**25% - Final Exam** Cumulative exam. Format will be similar to the midterm. Time and date TBA.

## Required Text

Those readings marked "(ELMS)" on the reading schedule can be found on the course ELMS (Canvas) website. All other readings can be found in the following text, available at The University Book Store:

Steven M. Cahn, ed., *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Oxford University Press, 2015. ISBN: 978-019020108-1.

## Late Work

All late work will be marked down a  $\frac{1}{3}$  letter grade for each day late.

## Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities should inform the instructor of their needs as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

## Academic Integrity

I take incidents of academic dishonesty very seriously. I will forward to The Office of Student Misconduct any possible cases of it that come to my attention. Please consult the Student Honor Council Website at [www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu). If you would like any further clarification, e.g., on what constitutes plagiarism, please speak with me.

## Absences

Students are expected to inform the instructor in advance of medically necessary absences, and present a self-signed note documenting the date of the missed class(es) and testifying to the need for the absence. **Prolonged absence or illness** preventing attendance from class requires written documentation from the Health Center and/or health care provider verifying dates of treatment when student was unable to meet academic responsibilities. **Absence due to religious observance** will not be penalized, however, it is the students responsibility to notify the instructor within the first 3 weeks of class regarding any religious observance absence(s) for the entire semester. University policies on medical and other absences can be found at: <http://www.umd.edu/catalog/index.cfm/show/content.section/c/27/ss/1584/s/1540>

## Tentative Reading Schedule

Class Date	Topic	Reading (#s in parentheses refer to pg.#s in Cahn)
1/26	Introduction	
1/28	Life in the Ancient World	<i>History of Private Life Vol. I</i> (ELMS)
2/2	Plato	<i>Republic</i> , Book I (31-51)
2/4	Plato	<i>Republic</i> , Book II, Book III, & secs. 419-421 in Book IV (51-71)
2/9	Plato	<i>Republic</i> , secs. 427d-434d in Book IV & Books VIII and IX (71-76 & 110-136)
2/11	Medieval Europe	Wikipedia articles: <a href="#">Feudalism</a> and <a href="#">Serfdom</a>
2/16	Hobbes: human nature	<i>Leviathan</i> , Chaps. 1-15 (312-330)
2/18	Hobbes: a way out	<i>Leviathan</i> , Chaps. 17-19 (331-338)
2/23	Hobbes: the state	<i>Leviathan</i> , Chaps. 21-29 (338-343)
2/25	Locke: human nature and property	<i>Second Treatise</i> , Chaps. I - V (365-374)
3/2	Locke: political society	<i>Second Treatise</i> , Chaps. VII-XI (374-383)
3/4	Locke: limited government	<i>Second Treatise</i> , Chaps. XII-XIX (383-393)
3/9	The social contract	
<b>3/11</b>	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	
3/16 - 18	<b>Spring Break</b>	
3/23	Rousseau: human nature	<i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> , Part 1 (422-428)
3/25	Rousseau: inequality	<i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> , Part 2 (428-437)
3/30	Rousseau: popular sovereignty	<i>Of the Social Contract</i> , Books 1, 2, & 4 (437-449, 458-463)
4/1	America	<a href="#">Jefferson's rough draft of the Declaration</a> <i>The Declaration of Independence</i> (1091-1093) <i>The Articles of Confederation</i> (ELMS)
4/6	Constitutional Democracy	<i>The Constitution of the United States</i> (1094-1106) <i>The Federalist Papers</i> 1, 10, 15, 39, 51, 70 - 78 (551-599)
4/8	Tocqueville	<i>Democracy in America</i> (649-666)
4/13	Revolution and Conservatism	<i>The Declaration of Rights of Man</i> , 1789, (1106 & 1107) <i>Univ. Declaration of Human Rights</i> , 1948, (1113-1117) Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> (607-618)
4/15	Smith: natural liberty	<i>The Wealth of Nations</i> , Book I (492-501)
4/20	Smith: duties of government	<i>The Wealth of Nations</i> , Books IV & V (501-506)
4/22	Marx: introduction	<i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts</i> (701-708)
4/27	Marx: economics	<i>The German Ideology</i> (708-713) "Value, Price and Profit." (728-737)
4/29	Class Struggle	<i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> (714-726) Young, "Five faces of oppression." (1058-1072)
<b>5/4</b>	<b>Term Paper</b>	Due in Lecture
5/4	Central Planning	Hayek, <i>The Road to Serfdom</i> (861-870)
5/6	Fascism and Totalitarianism	Pareto, "The Circulation of Elites" (ELMS) Mussolini, Hitler, Goebbels, & others (ELMS)
5/11	Conclusions	
<b>TBA</b>	<b>Final Exam – Time and Date TBA</b>	