

ILS 205
Prof. Charles Anderson

Sem. I, 1988-89

SYLLABUS

WESTERN CULTURE: POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL THOUGHT

The course begins in the ancient civilization of the Near East and ends, next May, in the controversies and issues of our time. In between, we explore the intellectual heritage of Greece, Rome, Christianity, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and Reformation and, in the second semester, the origins of Liberal Democracy and Capitalist political economy, the Enlightenment, Marxism, and finally American Pragmatism, Keynesianism, and contemporary "Free Market" and "Progressive" Liberalism.

The central figures include Plato and Aristotle, Jesus and St. Paul, St. Augustine and St. Thomas, Machiavelli, Luther and Calvin, and, in the second semester, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, Adam Smith, Thomas Jefferson, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, V.I. Lenin, Mao Zedong, John Dewey and John Maynard Keynes.

ILS 205-206 is designed as a year course. However, it is possible to take either semester (or, if you are really perverse, to take the semesters in reverse order.)

In the spirit of the ILS program, this course is interdisciplinary in nature. Thus, we will discuss the relationship of political and economic ideas to the philosophic, scientific and religious thought of an age. We will also be concerned with the relationship between political and economic theory, though this will be more apparent in the second semester.

The main objective is to understand the intellectual heritage of the West: to learn why we think about politics and economics as we do. To a remarkable extent, we are part of a conversation that began over two thousand years ago. As we shall see, thinkers of our era are still trying to answer questions raised in the age of Plato and Aristotle.

However, the course also has a practical purpose. As citizens and leaders in a democracy, we make judgments about the conduct of government and about the performance of our economic and social order. How should we make such evaluations? What are the tests of good government and wise economic management? For centuries, students have learned the arts of governance by studying the classics of political and economic thought. Now it's your turn.

Lectures and Discussions: The course will meet for two lectures and a discussion section weekly. Lectures are intended to give you an overall picture of the development of Western thought. They are the passive part of learning. You listen, learn and reflect. In discussions, you are expected to play an active role, asking questions, formulating your own reasoned arguments, applying theory to practice.

Readings: Normally, you should do all reading assignments before the lectures on a given topic. Assignments are listed in the right hand column of the outline.

1) The following books are available for purchase at the University Book Store and Browns'.

F.M. Cornford, THE REPUBLIC OF PLATO

H. Veatch, ARISTOTLE: A CONTEMPORARY APPRECIATION

N. Machiavelli, THE PRINCE AND THE DISCOURSES

2) The following book is available for purchase at Bob's Copy Shop, University Square.

SELECTED READINGS FOR ILS 205:

(Readings from this book are indicated in the outline as (SR) followed by a Roman numeral which indicates the number of the reading in the book.)

Examinations: There will be three examinations, a six week, a twelve week and a final, all based on essay questions distributed and prepared in advance but written in class. The six and twelve week exams will last 50 minutes and the final 100 minutes.

Work Load: The work load is designed so that you should spend two hours on this course outside for every hour in class. Though some have heavier reading assignments than others, you should be able to read 1,000 total pages of material in an average of three hours a week. Three additional hours, on the average, should be spent reviewing and preparing for exams. If all your courses are of the same difficulty, you would have a 45 hour work week if you carried 15 credits.

Grades: The final grade will be determined as follows: 25% six week exam; 25% twelve week exam; 40% final exam; 10% discussion section performance. If your grade on the six week exam is more than two full grades below the average of the remaining grades, and there is evidence of conscientious effort, the first exam will not be counted in the computation of the final grade.

Incompletes will only be granted for reasons specified in college regulations: unusual circumstances developing late in the semester beyond the student's control.

We will be happy to see you during office hours or at other mutually convenient times.

(Historical dates in parentheses)

DatesTopicReadingsSept. 7IntroductionSept. 12-16The Beginnings of Western Thought

(2600-700 BC)

Before philosophy: the "mythopetic" thought of ancient civilizations... Egypt, Mesopotamia, Israel

Frankfort, "Myth and Reality" & "The Emancipation Thought from Myth" (SR) I.

(650-550BC)

Presocratic thought: What is real and what is illusion?

(480 BC)

The Polis and the Greek mind

Sept. 19-26Plato

(427-322 BC)

What is justice? Is politics a craft? Is Plato a totalitarian? Is the philosopher king possible?

THE REPUBLIC:
1-234Sept. 28-Oct. 7Aristotle

(384-322 BC)

Science and politics...Is government natural? Aristotle and common sense.

Veatch: ARISTOTLE
Aristotle,
"Politics" and
"Economics" (SR) IIOct. 10

SIX WEEK EXAM

Oct. 12-17The Political Theory of Rome

(350-250 BC)

From City to Empire. Hellenistic thought and the Roman mind. The Roman Idea of Good Government. Stoicism and Roman Thought.

Wollin: "The Age of Empire" (SR) III

(264 BC-190 AD)

Cicero and Marcus Aurelius. Roman Law.

Cicero and Marcus Aurelius Justinian. (SR) IV

Oct. 19-28Christianity and Political Thought

(33 BC - 67 AD)

Jesus and the politics of Israel. The political teachings of Jesus and Paul

Sibley: "New Testament and Early Christianity" (SR) V
Matthew, Acts, Romans, (SR), VI.

(354-430 AD)

St. Augustine, Politics and the problem of evil.

H. Dean, "Political and Social Ideas of Augustine" (SR) VII.

Oct. 31-Nov. 11 The Foundations and Framework of Medieval Political and Economic Thought

(400-1000 AD) The Dark Ages and the Rediscovery of Knowledge

E.M. Burns, "The Civilization of the Feudal Age" (SR) X

(800) Charlemagne's Empire

(1200-1450) The Medieval Synthesis. Theory and society. The Feudal system and the Lord-Vassal Relationship. The Cities and the Guilds.

(1225-1274) St. Thomas Aquinas. Scholasticism and the Reconciliation of Faith and Reason.

Sibley: "Scholasticism and the Mind of Thomas Aquinas" SEL. RDG. VII, VIII. St. Thomas, "Summa Contra Gentiles" (SR) IX

Nov. 14 TWELVE WEEK EXAM

Nov. 16-23 The Renaissance and Machiavelli

(1513) The cities, the humanistic tradition and the question of liberty Machiavelli and political realism

THE PRINCE

Nov. 30-Dec. 7 The Reformation: Luther and Calvin

(1517) Individualism and authority in Luther, the Augustinian heritage. Calvin and the Puritan legacy, and capitalism.

Wolin: "Luther" (SR) XII
Luther and Calvin, (SR) XII

Dec. 12-14 The Scientific Revolution and the Breakdown of the Medieval Synthesis

(1530-1642) Nationalism, rationalism, individualism and the Copernican Revolution: Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo

Segan: "The Harmony Worlds: (SR) XIII