

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Integrated Liberal Studies 206: Western Culture: Political, Economic, and Social Thought Spring 2022

Instructor: Richard Avramenko
Office: Meiklejohn House 203 (228 North Charter Street)
Office Hours: M 1:00–3:00

Time: MW 11:00–11:50
Location: Psychology 121
Credit Hours: 3

TA: Phillip Pinell (pinell@wisc.edu)

Objective:

The objective of this course is two-fold. First, this course introduces students to the roots of modern Western political, economic, and social thought. Through a careful reading of canonical texts, the foundational symbols and concepts of modern Western thought will be analyzed and critically assessed.

Our second objective is to learn how these symbols and concepts can be brought to bear on contemporary problems and how they inform questions about our own political and personal order. How, for instance, is the modern world different from the ancient? What is the role of rationality in modern social, political, and economic life? What is the place of technology? What are the ramifications of these developments on our public lives? On our interior lives? Students are encouraged to keep these objectives in mind for both discussion sections and their written work.

Required Texts:

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan* (Penguin Books, 1968) ISBN 0140431950
Locke, John. *Two Treatises of Government* (Focus, 2016) ISBN 1585107972
Kant, Immanuel. *Political Writings* (Cambridge University Press, 1991) ISBN 0521398371
Machiavelli, Niccolò. *The Portable Machiavelli* (Penguin, 1979) ISBN 0140150927
Marx, Karl *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 1978) ISBN 039309040X.
Nietzsche, Friedrich. *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Vintage, 1987) ISBN 0679724621
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *First and Second Discourses* (St. Martins Press, 1964) ISBN 0312694407
Smith, Adam, *The Wealth of Nations* (University of Chicago, 1976) ISBN 9780226763743

Students are **required** to purchase these translations/editions. This is a text-based course and full participation requires that we navigate and explore the text together—that we be on the same page, so to speak. Students must bring the text under consideration both to class and sections.

Requirements:

Section Participation:	10%	Second Midterm:	20%
First Midterm:	20%	Final Exam:	30%
Paper:	20%		

Itinerary:

I. The End of the Ancient World

January 26: Introduction

January 31: Machiavelli, *The Prince* (all)

February 2: Machiavelli, *The Prince* (all)

February 7: Machiavelli, *The Discourses* (pp. 168-228)

February 9: Machiavelli, *The Discourses* (pp. 240-249, 287-301, 351-356, 381-391, 400-402)

Movie Recommendation: Dangerous Liaisons

February 14: Luther, “On the Freedom of a Christian” and “95 Theses” (on Canvas)

February 16: Luther, “On Temporal Authority” (on Canvas)

February 21: Swift, “The Battle of the Books” (pp. 1-47) (on Canvas)

February 23: First Midterm Exam

II. The Modern Way of Thinking

February 28: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (pp. 81-83, 85-118, 150-182)

March 2: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (pp. 183-222)

March 7: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (pp. 223-274)

March 9: Hobbes, *Leviathan* (pp. 275-408)

March 14: SCUBA Break

March 16: SCUBA Break

March 21: Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (all) (Guest lecture: Phillip Pinell)

March: 23: Locke *Second Treatise on Government* (all) (Guest lecture: Phillip Pinell)

March 28: Kant, “Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose” (pp. 41-53); and
“What is Enlightenment?” (pp. 54-60)

March 30: Kant, “Perpetual Peace” (pp. 93-115); and “Introduction to the Theory of Right” (pp. 132-136)

Saturday, April 2, 12pm (noon): **(Midterm Paper due, 5pp)**

April 4: Smith, *Wealth of Nations* (Introduction (pp. 1-4), Bk. I, Chs. I-IX (pp. 7-110))

April 6: Smith, *Wealth of Nations* (Bk. I, Ch. XI (Conclusion), pp. 275-78; Bk. IV, Introduction, Chs. I, II (pp. 449-95), Bk. V, Ch. I, Article II, III (pp. 282-338)

April 11: **Second Midterm Exam**

III. Problems of Modernity

Movie Recommendation: Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan

April 13: Rousseau, "Discourse on the Arts and Sciences" (pp. 30-64)

April 18: Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin of Inequality" (pp. 101-181)

April 20: Marx, "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844," including "Estranged Labour" (pp. 66-81)

April 25: Marx: "Private Property and Communism" (pp. 81-93); "Communist Manifesto" (pp. 469-500).

April 27: Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Essay 1 (pp. 15-56)

May 2: Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*, Essay 2 (pp. 57-96)

May 4: Hannah Arendt, "Thinking and Moral Considerations" (pdf on Canvas)

Movie recommendation: Fight Club

Course Rules:

Exams (in-class, blue book). The exam days are set. Clear your schedule now. There will be no second sittings and no make up exams. If you are seriously sick or critically injured and miss an exam, you need to provide evidence (cast, severed limb, sputum, etc.) to your TA. If an exam is missed for a valid reason (catching a flight to the family cabin in Aspen, didn't feel ready, too hung over, need to leave early for vacation, & etc., are not valid reasons for missing an exam, except for me) your TA will give you a substitute assignment. **This will be an essay of 10 pages based on the material covered in the exam and will be due two days after the date of the missed exam.** If the exam is missed for an invalid reason, you will receive a failing grade.

McBurney Students: Please introduce yourself to your TA in the first week of the class. It is your responsibility to know about, and follow, the reasonable accommodations made for you.

Paper. The paper is due as specified above. They are to be submitted via Canvas at the specified time. Papers not received on time are **LATE**. Late papers will be penalized one half letter grade per 24 hour period. Thus, if you are 1 minute late, or 24h, it costs you one half letter grade (A/B becomes B, for example). 24 hours and 1 minute late costs you a full letter (A/B becomes B/C) and so on. Essay prompts will be provided about 10 before the due date.

Grades. Upon return of exams and papers, TA's will not discuss your grade for at least 48 hours. If, after two days, you would like to discuss your grade, you must schedule an appointment with your TA. You must provide a written memo detailing how and why you think your grade ought

to be different than assigned. Your TA will evaluate your memo, reread the paper/exam and determine whether the grade was accurate. There are no further appeals.

Honor Code. This course demands adherence to a certain code of honor. As such, I will construe all cheating in this class as a personal insult. Since it is no longer acceptable to get satisfaction in a duel, I will recur to a less-than-honorable alternative: I'll tell on you and fail you. In short, plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize or cheat, you will receive an F for the course and the case will be referred to the Dean's Office.