Modern Political Philosophy 4332

John Glassford, Professor of Philosophy

Office: Rass Rm 217
Office Hours: (by appointment on Blackboard Collaborate)
email: john.glassford@angelo.edu
Blackboard Collaborate (see below)


The Course
Modern political thought in the European tradition since Machiavelli has been characterized by an unsentimental secular account of political power, by a concern with political legitimacy, and by the idea of the social contract. Students will read some of the key principle texts and the theorists of this tradition, including Hobbes (1588-1679), Locke (1632-1704), Rousseau (1712-1778), Mill (1806-1873), and Marx (1818-1883). What lay behind some of the classic sound bites of the Western political tradition: from Hobbes’ famous claim that “life is nasty, brutish and short,” and Locke’s “every man has a property in his own person,” through Rousseau’s ringing declaration that “man is born free but is everywhere in chains,” to Marx’s astonishing “a spectre is haunting Europe, the spectre of communism.”

The Class
Because of continuing problems with covid-19 the course is taught entirely online for the Fall of 2021. In an online class your ASU email account is my ONLY way of getting messages and course updates to you. Please check your ASU email account every day.

Blackboard Collaborate
For those of you who may not be aware of it, Blackboard has an embedded video conferencing client called collaborate. If you look at the list of tabs on the left hand of your Blackboard course screen you will see a collaborate tab near the top of the list. Students who want to meet me to discuss ideas in the course, or anything else, can email me to arrange to meet for one-on-one time. Just click on the collaborate tab at the appointed time and enter the “course room.” (Students must switch on their video and audio for these meetings). I will occasionally record short video presentations to help guide your reading during the course of the semester.

Reading Assignments
The reading assignments contain about 30 pages per week on average. This may not seem a lot but political philosophy can be dense and difficult so set aside plenty of time for the readings. Most students find the Hobbes’ more difficult because the English is older, but the readings do get progressively easier, Mill is very clear and the translations of Rousseau and Marx are also quite clear.

Assessment
Five short papers (worth 20% each). One paper on each theorist covered in the course.
**Papers**
You will be expected to write a paper of about 800-1000 words. There will be 2 questions to choose from and these will be made available on Blackboard around one week in advance of the deadline. All papers should be submitted to Blackboard. The main reason why students under-perform with regard to papers is that they do not engage with course material. Papers often tend towards 'stream of consciousness' with few references to what has been studied. You are not being asked to write research papers, it is not expected that there would be extensive reading of secondary sources, for example. The focus is on the primary sources, the texts of the theorists themselves. You are being asked to do a scholarly exegesis of texts, explaining and discussing the texts with references and citations accordingly. Feedback will be provided in the form of notes and annotations using Blackboard (sometimes you may need to resize your screen to see these). Feedback will be provided on five of the six papers. The final paper will simply be graded with no feedback since final overall course grades have to be turned in very quickly. Anyone who requires feedback on the final paper should email a request to me once the semester is concluded.

**Grading Scale**
A-90% and over. Outstanding.
B-80% very good.
C-70% satisfactory.
D-60% minimum required.
F-less than 60%.

**Aims and Objectives of the Course**
To promote an understanding of the salient features of the arguments advanced by some of the leading political thinkers of the past.
To develop the students’ own ability to make their own assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of these arguments.
To encourage students to arrive at an informed view about the continuing relevance of these theories.
To develop students’ skills in disseminating and defending their ideas on these questions in both written and oral forms.

**Religious Observances**
Every effort will be made to accommodate all forms of religious observance in compliance with ASU OP 10.19. Students who require additional arrangements to be made should make these known in good time in order that arrangements can be made.

**ASU Mission Statement**
Angelo State University, a member of the Texas Tech University System, delivers undergraduate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, sciences, and professional disciplines in a learning-centered environment distinguished by its integration of teaching, research, creative endeavor, service, and co-curricular experiences, ASU prepares students to be responsible citizens and to have productive careers.
**Academic Honesty**

Angelo State University expects its students to maintain complete honesty and integrity in their academic pursuits. Students are responsible for understanding and complying with the University Academic Honor Code, which is contained in both print and web versions of the ASU Student Handbook. See the Current Student page on the ASU homepage (URL address http://www.angelo.edu/student/) and click on the Academic Honor Code. Acts of academic dishonesty and misconduct as referenced in Angelo State University’s Student Handbook will be referred to the Dean of Students.

**Title IX at Angelo State University**

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. The University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination including: sexual assault, sex-based discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence and/or dating violence), and stalking. As a faculty member, I am a Responsible Employee meaning that I am obligated by law and ASU policy to report any allegations I am notified of to the Office of Title IX Compliance. This is done in order to connect students with resources and options in addressing the allegations reported. As a student, you are encouraged to report any incidents of sexual misconduct directly to ASU’s Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator. You may do so by contacting:

Michelle Miller, J.D.
Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator
Mayer Administration Building, Room 210
325-942-2022
michelle.miller@angelo.edu

**Course requirements**

All course requirements must be met in full for the successful completion of the course. All assigned work must be completed, both reading and written assignments. Reading assignments are not "optional," these are the heart of the course and all reading assignments must be completed in full.

**The Course Reading Assignments**

(I reserve the right to make changes when these seem necessary)

**Week 1**
Reading assignment: pp. 116-148, chp 1-11
**Week 2**
*Leviathan* cont’d  
Reading assignment: pp. 149-179, chp 12-18

**Week 3**
*Leviathan* cont’d  
Reading assignment: pp. 180-217, chp 19-26

**Week 4**
*Leviathan* cont’d  
Reading assignment: pp. 217-247, chp 27-32

**FIRST PAPER: Friday, September 17**

**Week 5**
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*.  
Reading Assignment: pp. 285-312

**Week 6**
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*.  
Reading Assignment: pp. 312-353

**SECOND PAPER: Friday, October 1**

**Week 7**
Reading assignment: pp. 427-456

**Week 8**
Reading assignment: pp. 457-485

**THIRD PAPER: Friday, October 15**

**Week 9**
Reading assignments: pp. 592-620
Week 10
Reading assignment: pp. 621-651

**FOURTH PAPER:** Friday, October 29

Week 11
Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*.
Reading assignment: *Alienated Labor* and *Theses on Feuerbach*, pp. 766-774

Week 12
Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*.
Reading assignment: *The German Ideology*, pp. 775-797

Week 13
Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*.
Reading assignment: *The Communist Manifesto*, pp. 798-815

Week 14
Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*.
Reading assignment: Capital Vol 1, Section 4, pp. 832-839

Week 15
Karl Marx, *Selected Writings*.
Reading assignment: Critique of the Gotha Program, pp. 848-857

**FINAL PAPER:** Monday, December 6