

## **Introduction to Political Philosophy, Fall '23, PSCI 104-1**

Alexander Moon  
326 Harkness  
Office hours: M, 9:30-10:30 and 4:30-5:30; W, 1-2:00  
By appointment, in person and zoom

Email: [amoon4@UR.rochester.edu](mailto:amoon4@UR.rochester.edu)

Class times: MWF 11:50-12:40

This course is an introduction to some of the major works of political theory in the Western tradition. Although generally written in response to historically specific concerns, political theories are also answers to a series of connected, fairly universal questions about the proper ordering of the political and social world. At the most general level, political theories pose and seek to answer questions about what political and social life is like and how it ought to be structured. For example, they answer questions about the sorts of challenges we as a community face (is the challenge to protect ourselves against outsiders? To make sure everyone lives a saintly life? To ensure everyone is happy?) or the proper distribution of political power (should priests rule? The aristocracy? Everyone?). Political theories answer these questions on the basis of a handful of doctrines. These doctrines are the basic constituents of a political theory. First, a political theory offers an account of the human good. Thmh

homepage on Blackboard. Once in Perusall, you will see a list of the reading assignments for the course. Most of the work for this course will involve reading the assignments, reflecting upon them, and discussing them with your classmates (on Perusall and in class). I've given more details about how Perusall works below.

Grades are based on:

Two three-page papers, 10% each  
Midterm (take-home), 10%  
Final (in class), 30%  
Perusall, 30% (I'll explain what this is in class)  
Participation, 10%

Some points about your papers:

1. Establish a focus. A good paper has a thesis, a central idea or claim that it is making, and it presents an argument supporting that thesis. You should be able to make an outline of your paper, which will at the same time be the

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to your questions, help others resolve their questions (which also helps you learn), and advise me, the instructor, how to make class time most productive. You can start a new annotation thread in *Perusall* by highlighting text, asking a question, or posting a comment; you can also add a reply or comment to an existing thread. Each thread is like a chat with one or more members of your class, and it happens in real time. Your goals in annotating each reading assignment are 1. to stimulate discussion by posting good questions or comments, 2. to help others by answering their questions, and 3. to identify and evaluate the main claims in the piece.

Rubric: Research shows that by annotating thoughtfully, you'll learn more and get better grades, so here's what "annotating thoughtfully" means: Effective annotations *deeply engage points/arguments in the readings, stimulate discussion, offer informative questions or comments, and help others by addressing their questions or confusions*. To help you connect with classmates, you can "mention" a classmate in a comment or question to have them notified by email (they'll also see a notification immediately if online), and you'll also be notified when your classmates respond to yours. [esha@uic.edu](mailto:esha@uic.edu)

Aug 30 Introduction

Sept 1 Plato, *Republic*, Book I, especially 343b-345e, 351e-354b

Sept 6 Plato, *Republic*, Book II, especially 358-68, 370a-b, 374b-d

Sept 8 Plato, *Republic*, 412b-417, 419a-421c, 427a-445, 449a-457c,

Sept 11 Plato, *Republic*, 471c-480, 484-49 • ,

Sept 13

Sept 15

Sept 18

Sept 20

Sept 22

Sept 25

Sept 27

Sept 29

Oct 2

Oct 4

Oct 5

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Oct 11

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Oct 17

Oct 18

Oct 20

Oct 23

Oct 25

- Oct 27                    Rousseau, *Of the Social Contract*, Bk 3
- Oct 30                    Rousseau, Bk 4, chs. 1-3, 7-9
- Nov 1                     Marx, “Estranged Labor” and “Private Property and Communism,” from *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, pp. 70-93, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.
- Nov 3                     Marx, “The Meaning of Human Requirements” and “The Power of Money in Bourgeois Society,” from *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, pp. 93-105, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.
- Nov 6                     Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” pp. 26-52, in *The Marx-Engels Reader*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition.
- Nov 8                     G. A. Cohen, chs. 1-2, *Why Not Socialism?*
- Nov 10                    G. A. Cohen, chs. 3-5, *Why Not Socialism?*
- Nov 13                    Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party 469-91
- Nov 15                    Marx, “Manifesto of the Communist Party,” pp. 491-500
- Nov 17                    Mill, chs. 1-2, *On Liberty*.
- Nov 20                    Mill, ch. 3, *On Liberty*.
- Nov 22                    **Second paper due!**
- Happy Thanksgiving!**
- Nov 27                    Mill, chs. 4-5, *On Liberty*.
- Nov 29                    Mill, chs. 1-2, *On the Subjection of Women*.
- Dec 1                     Mill, ch. 3 *On the Subjection of Women*.
- Dec 4                     Mill, ch. 4, *On the Subjection of Women*.
- Dec 6                     Nietzsche, Preface and Essays 1, in *On the Genealogy of Morality*. You can skim secs. 3, 5, and 8 of Essay 1.
- Dec 8                     Nietzsche, Essay 2, in *On the Genealogy of Morality*.
- Dec 11                    Nietzsche, Essay 3, esp. secs. 11-15, 28, in *On the Genealogy of Morality*
- Dec 13                    Nietzsche, “The Greek State” and “Homer’s Contest”