PHILOSOPHY 1312

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Course Description and Prerequisites: ***Note that at the bottom of each page is a link for a video/youtube walkthrough of the syllabus.*** This class focuses on justice and the role of human nature in political philosophy. It is vital for every citizen in a democracy to have a solid understanding of politics. This class is meant to be an introduction for people who want to improve their grasp of the topic; students need not have any prior knowledge of philosophy or politics to take this course.

Two of the central questions of this course will be: What is justice? How do different accounts of human nature change what we think of as just?

Click for a video walkthrough of the syllabus:
PART 1 & PART 2
Some of the political philosophies and figures we will cover include:

- Aristotle & Plato (aristocracy)
- Locke (liberalism)
- Marx (socialism)
- Pettit (republicanism)

**Student Learning Outcomes:**
When you are finished with this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify and explain the basic tenets of: aristocracy, liberalism, socialism, and republicanism.
2. Explain how the ideas of justice and human nature differ in each of the four political philosophies.
3. Identify the political philosophies guiding different popular politicians and individuals in the mass media.
4. State the reasons why you prefer a particular political philosophy over others.
5. Explain the virtues of different political philosophies in their ability to deal with the problems of racism, sexism, and classism.
6. Be able to translate a political philosophy into concrete action.

"The philosophers have only interpreted the world in various ways; the point is to change it."
—KARL MARX

**Grading Policies**
Grades will be assigned as follows: A 100-90, B 89.99-80, C 79.99-70, D 69.99-60, F 59.99-0.
The following items will make up the final grade:
- Weekly Reading Quizzes: 10%
- Reading Notes: 17.5%
- Weekly Lecture Quizzes: 15%
- Controversy Essay: 17.5%
- Service Learning Project Presentation: 22.5%
- Final Essay: 17.5%

**Textbook and/or Resource Material:**
All readings and assignments will be available online.

Click for a video walkthrough of the syllabus:
[PART 1 & PART 2]
**Office Hours**
Office hours will be held in person and online. Normal in person office hours will be held Thursdays 12:15–2:15pm in ELABS 363. Tuesdays, I will be available ONLINE from 12:00-1:00pm. You can click on the link on your Blackboard course page, ‘Blackboard Collaborate Ultra’ for text/voice chat/video chat based help during this time. Further instruction will be given in class.

**Attendance**
Students are allowed three absences. Each absence beyond three will result in the loss of 10% of the final grade. Tardiness, at the instructor's judgement, can be counted as absences. Normally, the only absences that will be excused are these: officially sponsored university activities, such as athletics; for observance of religious holy days; or for military service. Students should contact the instructor in advance of the excused absence for approval. Students should contact the professor if they believe their case merits special consideration (e.g. long-term hospitalization). Otherwise, students should plan wisely with the three absences they are granted for sickness, family emergencies, and car problems.

**Electronic Devices**
No electronic devices will be permitted in this class. This includes not only the use of electronic devices but also the visible, audible, or implied existence of them. Any evidence (including audible or visible) of electronic devices will result in a marked absence from the course. Remember that each absence over 3 will result in the loss of 10% of the final grade.

**Scholastic Integrity**
As members of a community dedicated to Honesty, Integrity and Respect, students are reminded that those who engage in scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and expulsion from the University. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarism (including self-plagiarism), and collusion; submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person; taking an examination for another person; any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student; or the attempt to commit such acts. Since scholastic dishonesty harms the individual, all students and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced (Board of Regents Rules and Regulations and UTRGV Academic Integrity Guidelines). All scholastic dishonesty incidents will be reported to the Dean of Students. Note that all written assignments will be checked for plagiarism by an automated service.
Calendar of Activities
The UTRGV academic calendar can be found at https://my.utrgv.edu/home at the bottom of the screen, prior to login.

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<th>Unit</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 1: Introduction &amp; Aristocracy</strong></td>
<td>Jan 17</td>
<td>Form Groups, Aristotle, <em>Nicomachean Ethics</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 2: Aristocracy</strong></td>
<td>Jan 24</td>
<td>Aristotle, <em>Nicomachean Ethics &amp; Politics</em></td>
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<td><strong>Unit 3: Aristocracy</strong></td>
<td>Jan 31</td>
<td>Plato, <em>Republic</em></td>
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<td><strong>Unit 4: Classical Liberalism</strong></td>
<td>Feb 7</td>
<td>Locke, <em>Second Treatise on Government</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Unit 5: Classical Liberalism</strong></td>
<td>Feb 14</td>
<td>Locke, <em>Second Treatise on Government</em></td>
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<td><strong>Midterm</strong></td>
<td>Feb 21</td>
<td>In-Class Controversy</td>
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<td><strong>Unit 6: Socialism</strong></td>
<td>Feb 28</td>
<td>Friedrich Engels, <em>The Principles of Communism</em>; Karl Marx, <em>Communist Manifesto</em>; <em>World Inequality Report</em></td>
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<td><strong>Unit 7: Socialism</strong></td>
<td>Mar 7</td>
<td>David Schweickart, <em>Economic Democracy</em></td>
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<td><strong>SPRING BREAK</strong></td>
<td>Mar 11-15</td>
<td>No Classes University Wide</td>
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<td><strong>Unit 8: Socialism</strong></td>
<td>Mar 21</td>
<td>Robin Hahnel, <em>Participatory Economics and the Next System</em>; <em>International Comparisons of Economic Mobility</em></td>
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<td><strong>Unit 9: Republicanism</strong></td>
<td>Mar 28</td>
<td>Philip Pettit, <em>On The People’s Terms</em>, Ch. 1 (part 1); <em>Income and Wealth in the United States</em></td>
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<td><strong>CLASS CANCELLED</strong></td>
<td>Apr 4</td>
<td>No Class; Professor at American Philosophies Forum Conference</td>
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<td><strong>Unit 10: Republicanism</strong></td>
<td>Apr 11</td>
<td>Philip Pettit, <em>On The People’s Terms</em>, Ch. 1 (part 2); <em>America’s Women and the Wage Gap</em>; <em>Statistics About Sexual Violence</em></td>
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<td><strong>Unit 11: Justice in the RGV</strong></td>
<td>Apr 18</td>
<td>Timothy Bowman, <em>Blood Oranges</em>, Ch. 4; <em>Regional Needs Assessment</em></td>
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<td>Final Presentations</td>
<td>Apr 25</td>
<td>Service Learning Presentations</td>
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<td>Final Presentations</td>
<td>Apr 30</td>
<td>ONLY TUESDAY CLASS! Presentations</td>
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<td>UNIVERSITY STUDY DAY</td>
<td>May 2</td>
<td>No Classes University Wide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Essay Due</td>
<td>May 7</td>
<td>By 10:00pm online</td>
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Click for a video walkthrough of the syllabus:
PART 1 & PART 2
SEXUAL HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION, and VIOLENCE:

In accordance with UT System regulations, your instructor is a “Responsible Employee” for reporting purposes under Title IX regulations and so must report any instance, occurring during a student’s time in college, of sexual assault, stalking, dating violence, domestic violence, or sexual harassment about which she/he becomes aware during this course through writing, discussion, or personal disclosure. More information can be found at www.utrgv.edu/equity, including confidential resources available on campus. The faculty and staff of UTRGV actively strive to provide a learning, working, and living environment that promotes personal integrity, civility, and mutual respect that is free from sexual misconduct and discrimination. If students, faculty, or staff would like confidential assistance, or have questions, they can contact OVAVP (Office for Victim Advocacy & Violence Prevention) at 665-8287, 882-8282, or OVAVP@utrgv.edu.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Students with a documented disability (physical, psychological, learning, or other disability which affects academic performance) who would like to receive academic accommodations should contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) as soon as possible to schedule an appointment to initiate services. Accommodations can be arranged through SAS at any time, but are not retroactive. Students who suffer a broken bone, severe injury or undergo surgery during the semester are eligible for temporary services.

MANDATORY COURSE EVALUATION PERIOD:

Students are required to complete an ONLINE evaluation of this course, accessed through your UTRGV account (http://my.utrgv.edu); you will be contacted through email with further instructions. Students who complete their evaluations will have priority access to their grades. Online evaluations will be available on or about:

Module 1  February 13 – 19
Module 2  April 10 – 16
Full Spring Semester  April 10 – May 1