

# FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF POLITICS

Political Science 1001/1002  
Section 1

C. L. Eubanks  
Fall – 2018

## Part I: The Origins of Political Consciousness

- Topics: The Principle of Subjectivity & the Homeless Spirit  
Political Consciousness and Evolution: The Transition from Tribal to Individuated Politics  
Two Species of Political Being  
Authority: Traditional/Customary and Rational/Legal  
Society & State  
The Nation-State  
State: as -- Natural; Violent; Order; Familial; Divine; Contract
- Readings: Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*  
\*\*“Jihad vs. McWorld,” by Benjamin Barber  
(<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199203/barber>)

## Part II: Aristotle: The State and Human Flourishing

- Topics: The State as Natural  
The State in Pursuit of the Good  
Aristotle and the Study of Ethics  
Ethical Sensitivity, Ethical Reasoning, & Moral Imagination  
Potentiality & Happiness  
Justice
- Readings: \*\*Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I-VI  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>)  
\*\*Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.html> )

\*\*\*\*EXAMINATION #1 – TENTATIVE DATE: SEPTEMBER 28\*\*\*\*

### Part III: The State as Divine Covenant

Topics: The Hebrew Covenant and Theocratic Governance  
 Divine Right of Kings  
 Aquinas and the Forms of Law  
 Modern Iteration of Theocracy: Pope Leo XIII  
 Another Modern Iteration of Theocracy: Pope Francis

Readings: Deuteronomy 4 -- <http://www.breslov.com/bible/Deuteronomy4.htm#4>  
 Deuteronomy 5 -- <http://www.breslov.com/bible/Deuteronomy5.htm>  
 Deuteronomy 17:14-20 -- <http://www.breslov.com/bible/Deuteronomy17.htm>  
 Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica, Treatise on Law, 90-95  
[http://www.sophia-project.org/uploads/1/3/9/5/13955288/aquinas\\_law.pdf](http://www.sophia-project.org/uploads/1/3/9/5/13955288/aquinas_law.pdf)  
 See Also: <https://www3.nd.edu/~afreddos/courses/406/law.htm>  
*Rerum Novarum* -- [http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15051891\\_rerum-novarum.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/leo-xiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum.html)  
 Pope Francis on the Death Penalty, *Catechism* 2267 –  
[http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20180801\\_lettera-vescovi-penadimorte\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20180801_lettera-vescovi-penadimorte_en.html)

### Part IV: Hobbes: The State as a Contract of Order and Sovereignty

Topics: The Peace of Westphalia  
 Monopoly of Violence  
 Keeper of Life  
 Purveyor of Death  
 What is Sovereignty?  
 The Absence of Ethics?

Readings: Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (Chapters XIII, XIV, XV, & XVIII)  
<http://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/hobbes/Leviathan.pdf>  
 \*Mancur Olson, “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development”, APSR, 1993.  
 \*David Brooks, “The Bursting Point”

### Part V: Locke – The State as a Contract of Rights

John Locke, Excerpts from the Second Treatise --  
[http://www.lacademy.edu/uploaded/academics/2012\\_Summer\\_reading\\_docs/Locke.pdf](http://www.lacademy.edu/uploaded/academics/2012_Summer_reading_docs/Locke.pdf)  
 Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence –  
[https://www.constitutionfacts.com/content/declaration/files/Declaration\\_ReadTheDeclaration.pdf](https://www.constitutionfacts.com/content/declaration/files/Declaration_ReadTheDeclaration.pdf)

## Part VI: The Tendency of Power (the State) Toward Totalization

Bureaucracy & the State  
 The Case of National Socialism  
 The Stateless Individual  
 War, Death, and the State  
 Leaders Choosing their Voters; Not Voters Choosing their Leaders  
     Voter Suppression  
     Gerrymandering  
     Single-Member Districts  
 Homo Economicus: Neoliberalism

Readings: Hannah Arendt, "Ideology and Terror"  
 What Exactly is Neoliberalism?" Interview of Wendy Brown  
 (<https://www.dissentmagazine.org/blog/booked-3-what-exactly-is-neoliberalism-wendy-brown-undoing-the-demos>)  
 \*\*"Politics and the English Language," by George Orwell  
 (<http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/patee.html>)

**\*\*\*EXAMINATION TWO – TENTATIVE DATE: NOVEMBER 5\*\*\***

## Part VII: Resistance to the State – Structure

Topics: Characteristics of Democratic Republics  
 Majority Rule and Minority Rights  
 Conflict Resolution in a Democracy  
 The Discourse of Democratic Politics  
 John Rawls on Justice and Politics  
 Achieving Equality of Access to the Political  
 International Law

Readings: \*\*"Defining Democracy"  
<http://www.ait.org.tw/infousa/zhtw/docs/whatsdem/whatdm2.htm>  
 \*J. Madison, Federalist #10  
 \*\*"Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," by Robert D. Putnam  
 J. Rawls, "Justice as Fairness: Political, Not Metaphysical" (Excerpts)  
<http://www.nlnrac.org/critics/rawls/primary-source-documents/justice-as-fairness>

### Part VIII: Resistance to the State – Process

- Topics: Revolution  
Civil Disobedience  
Freedom & Identity  
Freedom & Ambiguity  
Moral Literacy
- Readings: Declaration of Independence (Esp. second paragraph)  
(<http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/index.htm>)  
Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*  
Sophocles, *Antigone*  
\*W. Berry, *Fidelity*  
\*\*Henry David Thoreau, Essay on Civil Disobedience  
(<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/WALDEN/Essays/civil.html>)  
\*\*Martin Luther King, Jr.  
([http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html))  
\*Dostoevsky, *The Grand Inquisitor*

### Part IX: Living in the State: The Philosopher, the Citizen, & the City

- Topics: Pericles' Model of Citizenship  
Socratic Model of Citizenship  
Moral Literacy -- Revisited  
Caring for the Soul  
Constant Self-Examination  
Relentless Moral Energy  
Moral Imagination  
Civic Virtue, Judgment, Skepticism & Ambiguity  
Thoughtfulness
- Readings: \*\*"Pericles' Funeral Oration," Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*  
(<https://online.hilldale.edu/document.doc?id=355>)  
\*\*Plato, *Apology* (<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/apology.html>)  
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book X  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>)  
\*Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, "Making Athens Great Again", *The Atlantic*, April 2017

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**FINAL EXAMINATION: FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7, FROM 10:00 AM TO NOON  
DODSON AUDITORIUM**

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**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** As the title of the course indicates, we are going to examine the **FUNDAMENTAL** issues of politics. We will begin with the origins of political consciousness and of the state. Thereafter, we will inquire into justifications for the state and the totalization of power, as well as the moral/ethical obligations we have to one another. As we do this, our task will be to learn how to construct and defend normative arguments about politics and how to engage in the empirical study of politics. By its very nature, then, this course is an exploration of ideas; essentially it emphasizes a critical understanding of theoretical perspectives on politics.

**ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:** This course is a general education elective. Thus, it is designed to contribute to your understanding of self and of culture and to encourage critical and analytical thinking, as well as a precise and graceful use of language. Toward the latter end you should purchase and use a good dictionary, or at the very least consistently access the Merriam Webster Dictionary internet site at no cost. See: <http://www.m-w.com/>. As a social science general education elective this course is designed to acquaint you with how human beings organize themselves into political societies, real and imagined. You will be expected to achieve an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference. All general education courses are designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that facilitate the ethical civic life of communities.

**READINGS:** The reading materials required for the course consist of two books and a series of readings that are available on the Internet or Moodle. The books may be purchased at any of the area bookstores or on-line. They are: **Aeschylus II: Oresteia** and **Sophocles, Sophocles: The Oedipus Cycle**. The Internet readings are identified with their Web Site addresses, given in the syllabus and on Moodle. They are indicated by a double asterisk. **If at any time these addresses do not work as hot links, please let me know.** You are also required to read essays from a variety of newspapers and magazines. I will assign these throughout the semester. Some are listed on the syllabus, designated with one asterisk; others may be added throughout the semester. These will be posted on Moodle. Finally, you should get in the habit of reading a good newspaper on a regular basis. Many are available on the internet at no cost: the *Christian Science Monitor* (<http://www.csmonitor.com/>). A hard copy of the *New York Times* is also available, free, at various campus locations. *The Wall Street Journal* is another excellent choice; they offer student subscriptions.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMINATIONS:** There will be **three major examinations** in this course. The **first two of these examinations will be given during the semester**, as designated on the syllabus, and will count 35 points each. Tentative dates have been given for these exams. The **final examination, which is scheduled for Friday, December 7, from 10:00 AM to Noon**, will count 70 points and will be cumulative in nature, although it will emphasize the last three sections of the course quite heavily. Rescheduling the Final Examination for a different time is possible only under certain special circumstance and must be approved by the Deans of your respective Colleges. (See Special Instructions for Final Exams on the LSU Web Site – Office of the Registrar – Final Exams.)

All regular examinations are objective in nature and will cover both lecture and reading materials. Absences from examinations are excused only for valid medical reasons or for legitimate extracurricular activities. **Make-up examinations are essay and will be given only for excused absences.** In addition, you will be asked to write a short distributive justice essay. This written assignment will count for 20 points. Instructions will be posted on Moodle and discussed in class. This assignment will be **due October 15**.

During the course of the semester six reading quizzes will be given. They will be administered on Moodle and will be open for at least one week. Reading quizzes are intended to facilitate your ability to read and understand difficult texts. Each of these reading quizzes will be worth 5 points. Finally, attendance will be taken and the maximum point value is 10 points. See separate Attendance Policy on Moodle for explanation of how attendance points are counted.

## Course Examinations and Graded Assignments Summary

Examination #1	=	35 points
Examination #2	=	35 points
Distributive Justice Project	=	20 points
Final Exam	=	70 points
Six Reading Quizzes	=	30 points
Attendance	=	10 points
Total	=	200 points

**GRADES:** Examinations may be curved, but in no instance will an examination curve or the course curve be higher than the distribution below:

### Plus & Minus Grade Distribution

90% & Above = A	97 - 100% = A+	77 - 79 = C+
80-89 = B	93 - 96 = A	73 - 76 = C
70-79 = C	90 - 92 = A-	70 - 72 = C-
60-69 = D	87 - 89 = B+	67 - 69 = D+
Below 60 = F	83 - 86 = B	63 - 66 = D
	80 - 82 = B-	60 - 62 = D-

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:** LSU Policy on class attendance is clear: **“Class attendance is the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to attend all classes. A student who finds it necessary to miss class assumes responsibility for making up examinations, obtaining lectures notes, and otherwise compensating for what may have been missed.”** Indeed, it is virtually impossible to do well in this course, or any course, without attending class on a regular basis. I do not permit any note-taking service to publish my lectures; nor do I post lecture notes on the internet. However, I do post lecture outlines. Recording devices are allowed, so long as it is understood that the recordings and notes are for your own personal use and **not for public dispensation or sale. Indeed, the latter is a violation of copyright protection of intellectual property. This class is an electronic free zone. Thus, the use of computers, phones, tablets, and other electronic devices is not permitted without special permission.**

Finally, classroom etiquette requires that students be attentive and respectful to one another (that means listening when others are making comments or asking questions). If you must arrive late, please do so unobtrusively. Turn your cell phones off when attending class. **Leaving class early, except for emergencies, is unacceptable.** Similarly, talking during lectures and discussions, reading newspapers, taking catnaps, reading email and/or browsing the web are not acceptable classroom behavior. Excessive absenteeism and/or discourteous behavior will result in dismissal from class.

**MOODLE:** You may access Moodle through your MyLSU Account. **Indeed, you should check to see if you are properly registered in the course by accessing your Account.** In addition, Moodle will contain the course syllabus, with reading hot links, copies of assigned readings, lecture outlines, examination reviews, and, of course, your examination and assignment grades. It will also be used to administer the reading quizzes.

**OFFICE HOURS:** My office hours this semester are **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 to 10:30 AM and 11:30 to 12:30PM.** If you find these hours inconvenient, please let me know and I will arrange another time for us to meet. Please do not hesitate to come to my office to discuss the course, your progress in it, or, for that matter, anything you like! My office is located in **Stubbs Hall, Room 237.** I encourage you to communicate by e-mail as well, particularly with questions about course material. My e-mail address is **poeubk@lsu.edu.** Office Phone: **578-1944.**