

FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF POLITICS

Political Science 1001/1002
Section 1

C. L. Eubanks
Fall – 2020

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
 Society & State
 The Nation & State
 Politics: as Natural; Just; Divine; Protector of Order; Protector of Liberty; Autocratic & Totalitarian
- Readings: Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*
 *[Jihad vs. McWorld](#)

Part II: Aristotle: The Polis 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
 *[Aristotle, Politics](#), Book III

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

Part III: The State as a Divine Covenant

- Topics: The Hebrew Covenant and Theocratic Governance
 Divine Right of Kings
 The Prophetic Voice
 Modern Iteration of Theocracy: Pope Leo XIII
- Readings: *[Deuteronomy](#), 4, 5, 17:14-20
 *[Thomas Aquinas](#), *Summa Theologica*, Treatise on Law, 90-95
 *[Rerum Novarum](#), Papal Encyclical, Pope Leo XIII

Part IV: Hobbes: The State as a Contract of Order

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
 **Mancur Olson, "Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development", APSR, 1993. (E-Reserve)
 **David Brooks, "The Bursting Point", (E-Reserve)

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

Topics: Society & State in Locke
 State of Nature . . . Compared to Hobbes
 Purpose of the Contract
 Life, Liberty, and Estate . . . or Happiness?
 Property
 Right of Revolution

Readings: *[John Locke, Excerpts](#), Second Treatise
 *[Thomas Jefferson, Declaration of Independence](#)

Part VI: The Tendency of Power 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" (E-Reserve)
 *[Wendy Brown, What is Neoliberalism?](#)
 *[George Orwell, Politics and the English Language](#)

****EXAMINATION TWO – TENTATIVE DATE: NOVEMBER 9****

Part VII: Resistance to the State – Structure

- Topics: Characteristics of Democratic Republics
The Discourse of Democratic Politics
John Rawls on Justice and Politics
Achieving Equality of Access to the Political
- Readings: *[Defining Democracy](#)
*[Federalist #10](#)
**"Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," by Robert D. Putnam, E-Reserve
*[J. Rawls, Justice as Fairness \(Excerpts\)](#)

Part VIII: Resistance to the State – Process

- Topics: Civil Disobedience
Freedom & Identity
Freedom & Ambiguity
Moral Literacy
Leadership and Authority
- Readings: *[Henry David Thoreau, Essay on Civil Disobedience](#)
*[Martin Luther King, Jr., Letter from Birmingham City Jail](#)
*[Max Weber's Theory of Authority](#)

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
Friendship
Civic Virtue, Judgment, Skepticism & Ambiguity
Thoughtfulness
- Readings: *[Pericles' Funeral Oration](#)
*[Plato, Apology](#)
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book X
**Rebecca Newberger Goldstein, "Making Athens Great Again", *The Atlantic*, April 2017 (E-Reserve)

FINAL EXAMINATION: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9, FROM 3:00 TO 5:00 PM**Zoom On-Line**

COURSE OBJECTIVES: This is an integrative learning course in which student understanding and disposition build “across the curriculum and co-curriculum, from making simple connections among ideas and experiences to synthesizing and transferring learning to new, complex situations within and beyond the campus.” This course fulfills the Board of Regents area of **social science/behavioral sciences** and provides students experience with the ILC primary proficiency of **inquiry and analysis** and secondary proficiencies of **ethical reasoning** and **civic engagement**. Inquiry is a systematic process of exploring issues, objects or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding of them.

Thus, the course 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 [Meriam-Webster Dictionary](#) at no cost. As a social science/behavioral science ILC 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 differences.

As the title of the course indicates, we are going to inquire into 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 an analytical and critical understanding of theoretical perspectives on politics and it is designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that facilitate the ethical and 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 E-Reserve on Moodle. The books may be purchased at any of the area bookstores or on-line. They are: **Aeschylus II: Oresteia** and **Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics**. The Internet readings are identified with an asterisk, designating a hot link. Place your cursor over the reading, follow the Ctl + Click directions to access the link. **If at any time the linked or reserve items do not appear, please let me know.** The E-Reserve items are designated by two asterisks. They can be accessed in the section of Moodle entitled: E-Reserve. Finally, you should get in the habit of reading a good newspaper on a regular basis. The University offers free student access to the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*. Visit the following sites to gain access: [New York Times](#) and/or [Wall Street Journal](#).

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 Wednesday, December 9, from 3:00 to 5:00 PM**, 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 – [Final Exam Schedule.](#))

All regular examinations are multiple choice 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 to the exams, you will be asked to write a short, one-page, **distributive justice essay**. This written assignment will count for 20 points. Instructions will be posted on Moodle and discussed in class. Honors Students must write 4 pages. This assignment will be **due October 19**.

During 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 counted. The total maximum point value is 10 points. See separate **Attendance Policy** on Moodle for an 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
Six Reading Quizzes	30 Points
Final Examination	70 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 (In percentile format.)

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

ADDITIONAL NOTES: [Class Attendance](#): the 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 impossible to do well in this course, or any course, without attending class on a regular basis. So, treat our ZOOM meetings as a regular class, meeting in a virtual classroom, rather than one on campus. In our ZOOM “classroom” I will lecture, and I will engage you in a series of exercises throughout the semester, designed to present material in a way that can be thoughtfully understood. I do not permit any note-taking service to publish my lectures; nor do I post lecture notes on the internet. I do post lecture note 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.**

LSU Disability Services offers assistance to students with special needs, such as extra time for examinations or note taking services. It is important to register with that office in order to secure the assistance you need. Because this is an on-line class, I can make special arrangements also, since I have control of exam time and will be using Moodle for it. Further, if at any time you are not able to access readings posted on Moodle, please let me know and I will see that they are accessible for you.

Finally, in the Zoom “classroom” your microphones will be muted. You will be able to ask questions through the chat function. We will use the Zoom polling function to elicit participation in various exercises. I will explain “chat” and “polling” as we proceed with the Zoom meetings. As I mentioned to you in a separate email, it is important for you to create a regular space for your “attendance” in the class. This will enhance your learning experience in the course.

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 this course syllabus, with reading hot links, access to assigned readings, lecture outlines, examination reviews, examinations, assignments and, of course, your examination and assignment grades. It will also be used to administer all exams, the reading quizzes, and the written essay on distributive justice. Attendance will be monitored on Zoom.

OFFICE HOURS: My office hours this semester will be Tuesday and Thursday from 3:00 to 5:00 PM. I will set up a Zoom meeting room, with face to face audio/video. Links will be posted in Moodle so that you can easily access them. If you find these hours inconvenient, please let me know and I will arrange another time for us to meet. I encourage you to communicate by e-mail as well, particularly with questions about course material. My e-mail address is poeubk@lsu.edu.