

## CLASSICS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL THOUGHT, II

Social Sciences (SOSC) 15200 – Sections 1 & 4

University of Chicago

Winter Quarter 2011

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*Course Meetings:*

Tuesdays & Thursdays,

Section 1: 09:00a–10:20a - Harper 141

Section 4: 10:30a–11:50a - Harper 148

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** While *Classics of Social and Political Thought* might look very much like an introduction to political theory, or a “great books” course, it is more properly understood as an integral part of a broad liberal arts education animated by the manner of questions we will ask. These texts, not all of which you will probably find “great,” will be our objects of interpretive analysis, and will serve as tools to help us ask a wide range of questions about ourselves and the world we share with others. We will ask questions about justice, truth, value, happiness and the good life, individual and common good, the foundations of political societies, the origins and work of inequality, the value of freedom, subjection, subjectivity and citizenship, violence and morality, and many others. Perhaps above all, we will ask what it means to even think about a “canon” of political thought, and what makes anything “classic” at all?

The Winter Quarter of *CSPT* focuses on the early modern period of European thought, and in particular on the emergence of the “social contract” tradition. We will read texts by Elizabeth I, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and Immanuel Kant. Central to our analysis of these canonical accounts of liberal and civic republican theories of political community will be questions of the implicit and explicit boundaries of such communities, and the terms of difference that both construct and challenge those boundaries. Questions of race, gender, sexuality, disability, and nation will therefore be at the heart of our reading.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** This class is focused around reading, writing, and discussion, and this is reflected in the course requirements:

- (1) You will submit **two papers**. Papers **MUST** be formatted and submitted properly in order to receive full credit, as documented in the course paper requirements, available on Chalk. Specific requirements for each paper will be given during throughout the quarter.
- (2) You will complete either an in-class **exam or submit a final paper**. The exam will be a comprehensive, closed-book/notes “blue-book” style exam, held during the standard exam period. You must communicate your choice of an exam or final paper to the instructor by the 8th week of the quarter.
- (3) You will give an **in-class presentation** once during the quarter. Presentations will be no longer than 15 minutes in length and will follow the presentation requirements, available on Chalk.

- (4) You must **attend class** and be an **active participant** in discussion. You are required to post a prepared question about the day's reading on the Chalk discussion board by midnight before each class session (detailed below). Be prepared to present your question at the beginning of class. This is a text-driven course, and as such, you must bring your copy of the day's reading to class.

**ABSENCES:** Absences will only be excused in the case of illness or emergency. If there is a conflict between course participation and religious observance, please contact me in advance. The rule of thumb is simple: stay in touch with me. If you have more than two absences, you should come and see me. If you have more than four, you can expect me to contact your advisor.

**LATE PAPERS:** Except in documented cases of illness or emergency, late papers will be penalized by 5 percentage points per day. However, each student may, at his or her discretion, take a 24-hour extension for *one* of the papers, no questions asked (If you are using your extension please indicate this on the first page of your paper). Should you find yourself in the position that you have to turn in work late, stay in touch with me! I don't really care *why* your work is late, but you are always better off keeping me posted on what is going on.

**DAILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:** A good reading question is one that directly and explicitly engages the text. Your question should cite a specific passage, term, or concept that you are puzzled about, and it should offer your interpretation of the passage at hand. It should be focused on something that genuinely puzzles you in the reading, and which you can probably assume that others find puzzling or confusing as well. If you are giving the in-class presentation for the day, you do not have to submit a discussion question.

**GRADES:** First paper: 20%; second paper 20%; exam/final paper: 20%; presentation: 15%; discussion questions are worth 10%; class participation is 10%; daily attendance is 5%. *Any student who receives a failing grade for attendance and participation will receive a failing grade for the class. Any student who has not turned in all papers and/or taken the exam will receive a failing grade for the class.*

**PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:** Proven plagiarism of any kind may result in automatic failure of the course, and will be referred to the University for further disciplinary action. I reserve the right to submit your electronic document to plagiarism detection websites if necessary.

**COMPUTER USE DURING CLASS:** You are welcome to bring a computer to class provided that it enables you to engage more in the class discussion. You may also use a computer to help you take notes. That is, email, twitter, facebook, or anything at all that is not directly related to the *conversation* we are having will not be tolerated. Using a computer in this way during a seminar is quite simply RUDE and deeply disrespectful to your classmates. If you want to use a computer in class, you will be expected to post copies of your class notes on the Chalk site immediately following the class session to share with others. If you are not willing to do this, do not bring a computer with you.

There is simply no reason whatsoever for you to be using your phone/PDA/kindle/iPad/whatever during class time.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Students in need of accommodation for an impairment and/or disability should contact me as soon as possible. You should also contact the Coordinator for Disability Services (773-834-4469), as outlined in the Student Handbook, to document your needs and determine a reasonable accommodation.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:** These texts will all be available for purchase from the Seminary Co-Op Bookstore. I **strongly** encourage you to purchase your texts at the Seminary Co-Op, as it is currently facing economic constraints, and is an amazing and world-famous institution that is worthy of your support. *Please use these editions of the texts*, so that we are all literally on the same page during class. You will be expected to come to class with the text in hand. Some readings will be made available via Chalk in PDF format. You should **print** hard copies of these readings, i.e. do not bring your computer in order to refer to the texts.

- Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*. Edited by Edwin Curley. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1994 [1688]. (ISBN-13: 9780872201774)
- Locke, John. *Two Treatises on Government*. Edited by Peter Laslett. Student Ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988 [1690]. (ISBN-13: 9780521357302)
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Discourses' and Other Early Political Writings*. Translated and Edited by Victor Gourevitch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997 [1755]. (ISBN-13: 9780521424455)
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Social Contract' and Other Later Political Writings*. Translated and Edited by Victor Gourevitch. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997 [1762]. (ISBN-13: 9780521424462)

**READING SCHEDULE (SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT INSTRUCTOR'S DISCRETION):**

1.1: The farewell speech of Elizabeth I (e-reserve).

Thomas Hobbes

- 1.2: *Leviathan*, Frontispiece, Dedicatory Letter, Introduction, Chapters 1-6; pp. 1-35.  
2.1: *Leviathan*, Chapters 7-12; pp. 35-74.  
2.2: *Leviathan*, Chapters 13-16; pp. 74-105.  
3.1: *Leviathan*, Chapters 17-25; pp. 106-172 (NB: *this is a long reading*).  
3.2: *Leviathan*, Chapters 26-30; pp. 172-233.  
4.1: *Leviathan*, Chapters 12 (reread), 31-32, 35-37, 38 (§§1-15), 42 (§§1-14, §§36-48, & 67-80), 43, 44 (§§1-3), 46, Review and Conclusion; pp. 233-250, 271-310, 333-341, 351-357, 366-373, 397-412, 453-468, 489-497.

John Locke

- 4.2: *Second Treatise*, Chapters 1-4; pp. 265-282.  
5.1: *Second Treatise*, Chapter 5; pp. 285-302.  
5.2: *Second Treatise*, Chapters 6-10; pp. 303-355.  
6.1: *Second Treatise*, Chapters 11-15; pp. 355-384.  
6.2: *Second Treatise*, Chapters 16-19; pp. 384-428.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau

- 7.1: *Discourse on Inequality*, Letter, Preface, & Part 1; pp. 111-160, 189-217.  
7.2: *Discourse on Inequality*, Part 2; pp. 164-188, 218-222.  
8.1: *The Social Contract*, Book I; pp. 39-56.  
8.2: *The Social Contract*, Book II; pp. 57-81.  
9.1: *The Social Contract*, Book III; pp. 82-120.  
9.2: *The Social Contract*, Book IV; pp. 121-152.

Immanuel Kant

- 10.1: Kant, "An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?" (e-reserve).