

Suffolk County Community College, Selden, New York 11784

PHL 214 - 100: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Instructor: Dr. Gertrude POSTL
Fall 2010, Section 96203
Time: T/R 2:00-3:15 p.m.
Location: Annex 101

Office: Southampton Building 120
Tel. 451-4513 (Main Office: 451-4093)
postlg@sunysuffolk.edu
Office Hours: M 11:00 - 12:00 am
W 12:30 - 1:30 pm
T/R 12:30 - 1:30pm

OBJECTIVES:

This course will enable students to:

- Identify the most influential models for governing, such as oligarchy, aristocracy, absolutism, social contract theory, democracy, liberalism, and communism, and explain them within their respective historical context;
- Identify and accurately use basic concepts of social and political theory, such as justice, liberty, equality, rights, the common good, power, and oppression;
- Apply the conceptual insights of this course to contemporary political issues and problems, such as cultural diversity, nationalism, globalization, race and gender relations, and politically motivated violence.
- Develop skills of critical analysis in speaking and writing.

Procedures for accomplishing these objectives: Lectures, class discussion, in-class group projects, written assignments;

REQUIRED READINGS:

— Steven M. Cahn, ed., *Political Philosophy. The Essential Texts*, Second Ed., NY: Oxford University Press 2011.
— Texts available online;

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) FOUR QUIZZES: quiz 1 - 9/30 quiz 3 - 11/18
 quiz 2 - 10/28 quiz 4 - 12/21

Quizzes will consist of brief essay questions relating to the readings and the course material in general. The lowest quiz-grade will be dropped. **No make-up quizzes!**

- 2) TWO PAPERS (due 10/26 and 12/9)

Each paper should be **at least three pages long, typed, double-spaced, and in the appropriate academic format** (name, title, correct quotation, etc.). **Papers received after the deadline will not be accepted!** Topics for both papers will be provided on a separate handout. For problems with writing papers, please consult the Writing Center (Islip Arts Building 101).

3) CLASS PARTICIPATION, READING ASSIGNMENTS AND BEHAVIOR

This means **participating** in the common effort of discussion in order to complement the reading material and to accomplish the aims stated in the course objectives. Absolute unwillingness to participate will result in a lower final grade. "Talking a lot" is not necessarily participation. **Reading assignments** have to be completed **before** class meetings. It is not enough to read a text; one should also be able to talk about it. **The introduction to each author and text is part of the reading.**

Disruptive or inconsiderate **behavior** (including walking in and out of the classroom during class time) will affect the grade. Cell phones and beepers have to be switched off during class time.

4) ATTENDANCE POLICY

The college defines excessive absence or lateness as more than the equivalent of one week of class meetings during the semester. In this course, students are allowed **no more than three absences!** Any additional absence will affect the grade. Excessive absence or lateness may lead to failure in the course or removal from the class roster. If a

student is late, the time will be added up and will thereby also contribute to the amount of absences. It is **the student's obligation to sign the sign-up sheet**. If a student misses a class due to sickness or other justifiable reasons the absence will be excused but evidence needs to be shown as soon as possible! If a student drops the class **after** the official withdrawal-date (10/28) without justifiable reason, he/she will receive an "F" for the course. No "W" will be given after the official withdrawal date.

GRADING:

3 Quizzes: 45% of the final grade
Two Papers: 40% of the final grade
Class Participation: 15% of the final grade
 Excessive absence will lower the final grade!

PLAGIARISM:

"In writing, students must fully credit the source of any quoted, paraphrased, or summarized passages and any ideas which they have borrowed. Failure to conform to these academic standards is plagiarism and may result in a failing grade for the course and/or serious disciplinary sanctions as outlines in the Code of Conduct" (SCCC Catalog, p.69). Plagiarism of any kind will result in a "0" for the assignment in question and in repeated cases in an "F" for the course.

SCHEDULE:

Tu 8/31: Introduction;

TRADITIONAL SOURCES

Th 9/2: Plato, *Republic*, book IV (pp.70-85);

Tu 9/7: Plato continued;

Th 9/9: No Class (Rosh Hashanah)

Tu 9/14: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I and II (pp.175-188);

Th 9/16: Aristotle continued;

Tu 9/21: No Class (All College Day)

Th 9/23: Niccolo Machiavelli, from *The Prince* (pp.256-265);

Tu 9/28: Machiavelli continued;

Th 9/30: **QUIZ 1**

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chapters 13, 14, 15 (pp. 292-299);

Tu 10/5: Hobbes continued;

Th 10/7: Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, First Part, (pp.355-362);

Tu 10/12: Rousseau continued;

- Th 10/14: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, from *The Communist Manifesto* (pp.583-594);
- Tu 10/19: Marx/Engels continued;
- Th 10/21: John Stuart Mill, *The Subjection of Women*, Chapter I (pp.675-689);
- Tu 10/26: Mill continued;
FIRST PAPER DUE!

CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

- Th 10/28: **QUIZ 2**
Justice and Rights
John Rawls, from *A Theory of Justice* (pp.694-702);
LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW FROM CLASSES WITH GUARANTEED “W”!
- Tu 11/2: Rawls continued;
- Th 11/4: Robert Nozick, from *Anarchy, State, and Utopia* (pp.713-720);
- Tu 11/9: Charles Taylor, Atomism (pp. 729-743);
- Th 11/11: Justice and Rights continued;
- Tu 11/16: *Multiculturalism and Immigration*
Will Kymlicka, from *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (online);
- Th 11/18: **QUIZ 3**
Susan Moller Okin, Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women? (online);
- Tu 11/23: Anne Phillips, from *Multiculturalism Without Culture* (online);
- Th 11/25: No Class (Thanksgiving Recess);
- Tu 11/30: Multiculturalism continued;
- Th 12/2: *Political Violence and Terrorism*
Frantz Fanon, from *The Wretched of the Earth* (online)
- Tu 12/7: Michael Walzer, Terrorism: A Critique of Excuses (online)
- Th 12/9: Robert K. Fullinwider, Understanding Terrorism (online)
SECOND PAPER DUE!
- Tu 12/14: Jürgen Habermas, Jacques Derrida, from *Philosophy in a Time of Terror*, Interviews:
<http://www.press.uchicago.edu/Misc/Chicago/066649.html>
- Th 12/16: Political Violence and Terrorism continued;
- Tu 12/21: **QUIZ 4**