

Nature *of* POLITICS

Political Science 790:101 | Online

Winter Session 2014

Welcome....

Hello! My name is Sarah Morgan Smith, and I look forward to getting to know you over the next few weeks. Please take the time to read this syllabus carefully before the start of the course and contact me right away if you have any questions. I will respond to email within 24 hours; if you do not receive a response within 24 hours, please assume I did not get your email and resend it.

Nature of Politics is intended to serve as an introduction to the history of political ideas: think of it as a “sampler plate” from the menu of the great political writing of the Western tradition.

Our course will be organized around three major themes. We will begin by discussing the nature, origin, and ends of politics. From there, we will examine the relationship between politics and economics, particularly on the subject of private property. Finally, we will end the course by considering the meaning of self-government, both in an institutional sense and as a quality of character (the ability to “govern oneself”) necessary for genuine citizenship. Cutting across all three themes will be considerations of such crucial and enduring issues in politics as: the connection between the individual and community; questions of

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appointment





About this course continued...

political obligation and civil disobedience; stability, revolution, and change; legitimacy and justice; as well as freedom, equality and power.

By the end of the course, you will be able to discuss ways in which Western political thought reflects the inherent tensions within the idea that men are created both free and equal. You will also be asked to think deeply about what it means to be a citizen, and to evaluate your own interest and participation in politics. Since this is a winter session course, all this must be accomplished in a very short time – so please expect to dedicate **no less than two and a half hours a day to the class** (not including your reading or other homework assignments), and plan accordingly.

Note: while the online learning environment offers a large amount of flexibility in terms of scheduling, it also requires you to exercise a high degree of self-discipline and time management skill. Moreover, **you must be an active participant in your own learning** through regular interactions with me and your fellow classmates in the form of reflective writing assignments, group discussions, regular homework assignments, and exams.

If you are willing to make the effort, online learning can be a tremendous adventure – but it can be challenging for some students. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your fellow students for encouragement and support along the way, and remember that I am here to help you learn, so please stay in touch!

The course fulfills the following Core Curriculum Student Learning Outcomes:

- II. h. Understand the bases and development of human and societal endeavors across time and place.
- II. m. Understand different theories about human culture, social identity, economic entities, political systems, and other forms of social organization.
- II. n. Apply concepts about human and social behavior to particular questions or situations.



Course Materials

- **Required Books:** Note that although I'm asking you to purchase four books, the total amount of reading for the class works out to be only 20-25 pages a day.
 - Aristotle, *Politics* (Chicago: 2013) ISBN: 978-0226921846.
 - John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government and Letter Concerning Toleration* (Yale, 2003) ISBN: 978-0300100181.
 - If you prefer, you may use the FREE Liberty Fund online edition of the *Second Treatise*: <http://tinyurl.com/lxnudve>.
 - Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Chicago: 1998) ISBN: 978-0226500447.
 - Friedrich Hayek, *The Road to Serfdom* (Chicago: 2007) ISBN: 978-0226320557.
 - **All other materials for each week will be posted to the course site as indicated in the reading schedule.**
- **Technical Requirements:**
 - **A reliable high-speed internet connection:** If your internet connection is not reliable, you may miss a significant amount of class content. Have a back-up plan: identify a nearby public location with Wi-Fi where you can work "just in case."
 - **Digital Toolkit (see the course site for details):** make sure that whatever computer you plan on using for the course has all of these (free!) programs installed before the first day of class. (Download links are available on the course site, under the "Resources" tab.)
 - **Speakers or Headphones:** this course includes audio lectures, as well as asynchronous audio activities called "Voice Threads."
 - **Microphone (built in to your computer or cell phone is fine):** your participation in "Voice Thread" discussions will require you to be able to leave an audio comment.

Netiquette Guidelines for this Course

Just as there are standards for acceptable behavior that govern face-to-face interactions in a traditional classroom, there are standards of conduct in a web-based environment. When you interact with me or your fellow students via email, chat, in a discussion forum, etc., please remember that without the visual cues of face-to-face interaction, the intent behind the words you type may not be as clear to the reader as it is to you. Also remember that this is a college course and conduct yourself appropriately: if you would not say something to someone in a classroom, do not say it online. Improper language and etiquette in any course-related communications will not be tolerated. If, at any time, your communications with another student make you uncomfortable, please do not hesitate to bring it to my attention.

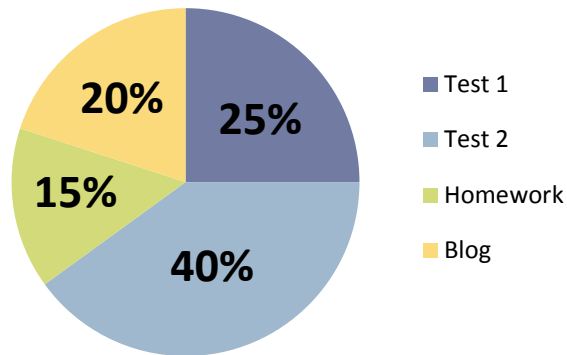
For a detailed explanation of proper Netiquette, go to:
<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>



Grading

There are a total of 500 points possible in this course. The total number of points you earn throughout the term will determine your grade, based on the following point scale:

450-500 Points = A
400-449 Points = B
350-399 Points = C
300-349 Points = D
299 Points or less = F



How to Earn Points

2 Tests: Total of 325 Points

There will be two tests in this class and they will be taken online (there is no test requirement to come to campus). Test 1 is worth 125 points and Test 2 is worth 200 points. The tests will be a combination of fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and long essay questions. Exams must be completed and submitted between the times listed on the test dates.

Test Dates – Put These on Your Calendar TODAY!!

Make-up tests are offered only in cases of legitimate emergencies and when I am notified immediately. By agreeing to the conditions of this class, you indicate that you are aware of and available for exams on the following dates. If you have concerns, contact me today.

**Test 1: January 6, 6am to 11pm
Test 2: January 17, 6 am to 11pm**

The exams in this class are timed. While you are allowed and even encouraged to use your notes in order to make strong connections to the assigned texts in your written responses, you are expected to have *learned* the material prior to taking the exam. As such, if the time limit is exceeded, one point will be deducted from your test score for each minute used beyond the time limit.

Students with disabilities who require time extensions must make appropriate arrangements within the first week of class.

Homework Assignments: 75 Points

You will have a variety of homework assignments throughout the class that will be discussed in your learning unit content (remember, this is given every other day unless specified). When you have a homework assignment, it will be due the following day by 11pm, unless otherwise specified. In general, late work is not accepted. Expectations and due dates are made very clear, and the condensed nature of the winter session makes it very difficult to play catch up.

Blog/Journal: 100 Points

The blog (or journal) is meant to offer you a place to reflect on the reading, refine your understanding, and engage in dialogue with other students. You will need to get into the regular habit of composing and sharing your blog post, as well as reading and commenting on the posts of your fellow students; you can also use the blog to share images and web links related to the course content. Your blog will be graded at mid-term (max of 50 points) and at the end of term (max of 50 points). Each blog entry will be graded for timeliness, quality, and relevancy.

Note: I will continually be spot-checking the blogs, and when I identify a student blog that is not up to date, I will leave a comment with a note.

Each note will result in a five point deduction when I grade the pages at the mid-term and end of term.

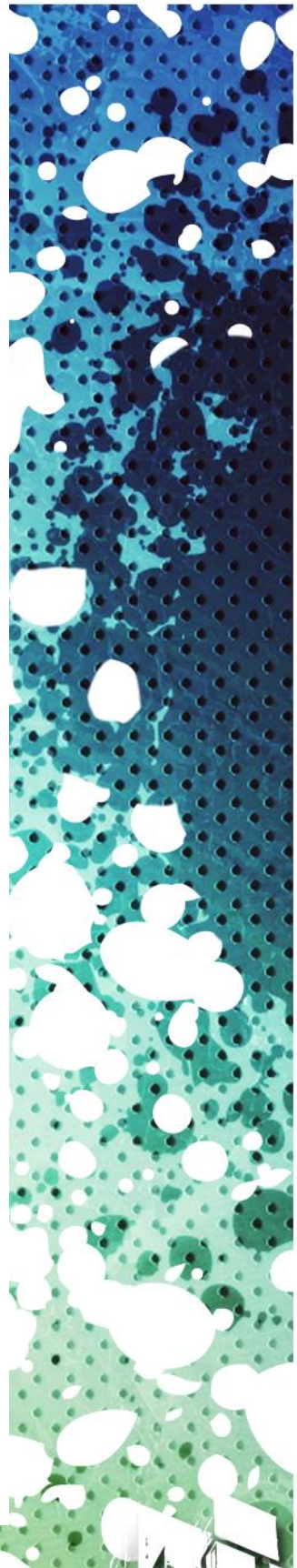
Extra Effort = Extra Credit Opportunity!!

I encourage you to make extra posts and contribute extra multimedia content if you identify something in your daily life that relates to class. For example, post a link to a political news story, share your perspective about how a current political issue relates to the reading, reflect on a connection between the course readings and a movie you have seen or a book you are reading, etc. If I think one of your "extra" posts is worthy of extra credit, I will leave a note indicating the number of points earned in the comments.

Conditions of Participation

Please ensure you are ready to fully accept the responsibilities of this class. By enrolling in this class, you agree:

1. To abide by the university's standards of academic integrity:
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_2013.pdf.
2. To use proper Netiquette in all course interactions.
3. That you have approximately 2-3 hours each day to spend on the course (not including reading and other assignments).
4. To log-in and review your new "Learning Unit" and all related assignments on the first day of each unit (as listed on the syllabus).
5. To be available for the exam dates listed on the syllabus (**Test 1: January 6, 6am to 11pm and Test 2: January 17, 6 am to 11pm**) Unavoidable conflicts must be brought to my attention immediately. There are NO makeup exams unless a legitimate emergency occurs and I am notified immediately.
6. To contact me at any point if you have a question.



Course Schedule

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|----------------|---|
| December 23-24 | Check In; Aristotle |
| December 25 | NO CLASS – Merry Christmas! |
| December 26 | Aristotle Essay Due (15%) |
| December 29-30 | Machiavelli |
| December 31 | NO CLASS – Happy New Year! |
| January 1- 2 | Locke |
| January 5-6 | <i>The Federalist</i> #s1, 9-10, 39 |
| January 7 | Keywords Essay Due (20%) Mid-Term Blog Check |
| January 8-9 | Marx |
| January 12-13 | Hayek, <i>The Road to Serfdom</i> |
| January 14-15 | Thoreau & MLK, Jr. |
| January 16 | Final Exam, 6am – 11pm (40%) End of Term Blog Check |

Sakai Help and Documentation

We will be using a Sakai site to manage all of the content and assignments for this course. You should thoroughly familiarize yourself with Sakai before the start of the course by checking out the [Canvas help documents](#). You may also find it helpful to look over the [frequently asked questions](#) and [quick start guide](#).

If you have problems with Sakai, please contact the Help Desk [directly](#) as soon as possible so that you can resume your participation in class.

For immediate Sakai assistance, call **848.445.8721**, **Monday through Friday, 8:00AM–6:00PM**. You can also email sakai@rutgers.edu.

Only email me **after** you have made an attempt to resolve the issue through the Help Desk.



“The political good is justice, and this
is the common advantage.”

Aristotle, *The Politics*