

POL320Y1Y Modern Political Thought Summer 2023

Instructors: Victor Bruzzone and Stefan Macleod

Course Description:

This course will consist of close readings of sections of some of the most important political thinkers of the 18th, 19th, and early-20th centuries. This course will address fundamental questions in the history of political philosophy including whether modernity and rationality has helped move humanity closer to freedom and emancipation and to what extent the movement of history has led to forms of domination and exclusion. This period of political thought is important because it marks a shift from confidence and optimism in human reason, to an increasing suspicion that the structures of (western) civilization have been concealing nascent forces of domination and oppression. This led to what some call the “hermeneutics of suspicion”, a method of critical inquiry that is suspicious of ideas like freedom and emancipation, which has grown out of three thinkers on the syllabus - Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud. This turn in political theory fueled critical inquiries into capitalism and colonialism. Along with the broader themes of freedom and domination, this course will explore questions of human nature, liberty, legitimate political authority, progress, rationality, and utopianism.

Readings:

All of the texts below will be available at the UofT Bookstore or will be provided through a UToronto library link. Because many of the texts have several translations, we *recommend* you use the edition listed below to ensure consistency with quotations and page references.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*. Hackett 2012 edition translated by Cress (ISBN-10: 1603846735 / ISBN-13: 978-1603846738) (Available online through UofT Libraries: <https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/lib/utoronto/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=1014682>).

Immanuel Kant, *Kant: Political Writings*. Edited by Hans Reiss. Translated by H.B. Nisbet. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991 (ISBN-10: 0521398371, ISBN-13: 978-0521398374).

Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Gregor, ed. (Cambridge); or Ellington, ed. (Hackett)

Nakae Chōmin, *A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government*. Translated and edited by Noboku Tsukui; edited by Jeffrey Hammond. Boston: Weatherhill, 1984 (ISBN-10: 0834801922, ISBN-13: 978-0834801929).

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women* and *A Vindication of the Rights of Man*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 (ISBN-10: 019955546X, ISBN-13: 978-

0199555468). (Available online through UofT Libraries: <https://oxfordworldsclassics-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/owc/9780199555468.001.0001/isbn-9780199555468>).

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Edited by L.G. Mitchell. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009 (ISBN-10: 9780199539024, ISBN-13: 9780199539024)(Available online through UofT Libraries: <https://oxfordworldsclassics-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/owc/9780199539024.001.0001/isbn-9780199539024>).

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty, Utilitarianism, and Other Essays*. Edited by Mark Philp and Frederick Rosen. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015 (ISBN-10: 0199670803, ISBN-13: 978-0199670802) (Available online through UofT Libraries: <https://oxfordworldsclassics-com.myaccess.library.utoronto.ca/view/10.1093/owc/9780199670802.001.0001/isbn-9780199670802>).

Tutorials

Regular tutorial attendance is essential for students to get the most out of the readings and to best develop student comprehension skills. These are dense texts and your essays will require you to accurately reconstruct the authors' arguments. Tutorials will be led by doctoral students with extensive expertise in political theory who can help with your success in this effort. A portion of your grade will be determined by regular tutorial attendance (see below).

Essays

First Term Essay (Due date: TBD): You will write an essay of 1200-1500 words on an assigned topic on Charles Mill and Rousseau. You must submit an Academic Integrity Checklist with the essay.

Second Term Essay (Due date: TBD): You will write an essay of 2000-2500 words on an assigned topic. You must submit an Academic Integrity Checklist with your final essay.

Essay Submission and Corrupted Files: Corrupted files submitted to Quercus or over email will not be accepted and will be considered late/not submitted. If you are worried that your files might get corrupted, you should copy and paste (**not attach**) the entire text of your essay into the textbox of an email and send this to your TA at the same time as you submit on quercus to demonstrate the essay was completed on time.

Penalties:

- Essays will be penalized for exceeding the maximum word. **TAs will be instructed to stop reading the essay at the word limit point** (plus 150 words) and will assign a grade based on the material within the word limit.
- Your essay will not be graded until you have submitted the Academic Integrity Statement.
- Late essays will be penalized at the rate of 2 percent per day of lateness, including weekends. Extensions will be granted only with a valid medical excuse, and only if your TA has given express written permission for late submission before the final essay deadline.

Exams and tests

- Mid-term Test: A take-home test to be completed within a 2-hour period, covering material from the first term, date TBA, @ 5PM via Quercus
- Final Exam: A 3-hour examination covering material from the entire course, during the August exam period.
- Make-up exams: Only students with documented medical problems or family emergencies may be permitted to take a make-up exam. Students who miss an exam for a valid reason should contact your TA as soon as possible and must express your request to take a make-up exam within *one week* of the missed exam. Further details on Arts and Science regulations concerning exams (and many other matters) are available at: http://calendar.artsci.utoronto.ca/Rules_&_Regulations.html.

Regrade Policy

Should you wish to challenge a grade you were given for an assignment or test, please observe the following steps. **Note that an assignment regrade can result either in a grade decrease, increase, or in no grade change at all.**

- 1) Wait a minimum of **twenty-four (24) hours** before contacting the TA who graded your assignment. **Do not contact the course instructors until you have first consulted with your TA.**
- 2) After digesting the feedback for 24 hours you may compose a one-page regrade request in which you address the comments and feedback the assignment received, indicating the **specific** ways in which these comments do not capture the quality of your assignment. **Write the TA who graded your assignment with this request attached.** The TA will then decide whether a different grade is warranted (please note it is possible for the grade to move in either direction)

- 3) If you are unsatisfied with the outcome of step 2, you can direct your request to the course instructors.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the University of Toronto degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves. Familiarize yourself with the University's [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#). It is the rulebook for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules.

For further guidance, see [“How Not to Plagiarize”](#).

To remind you of these expectations, and help you avoid accidental offences, *we will ask you to include a signed Academic Integrity Checklist with every assignment (downloadable from Quercus). If you do not include the statement, your work will not be graded.*

Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments to the University's plagiarism detection tool website for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their material to be included as source documents in the University's plagiarism detection tool reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the University's plagiarism detection tool service are described on the company web site.

We treat cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact your TA. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from your TA, or from other available campus resources like the University of Toronto's [Writing website](#). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to your TA or seek the advice of your college registrar.

Schedules of lectures and reading

Module 1: (Early May TBA): **Introduction**

Module 2: (TBA): **Rousseau I**

Discourse on the Origins of Inequality, Preface, Part I, and Part II

Module 3: (TBA): Rousseau II

The Social Contract, selections: pp. 41-68, 78-80, 82-89, 106-116, 121-125, 142-151

Victoria Day, TBA – **NO CLASS**

Module 4: (TBA) Kant I

Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, Part II and III (selections TBA)

Module 5: (TBA) Kant II

“What is Enlightenment?”

“On the Common Saying: “This May be True in Theory, but it does not Apply in Practice”

“Perpetual Peace”

Module 6: (TBA) Hume

A Treatise of Human Nature

An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding (selections TBD)

First Term Essay Due @ 11:59pm via Quercus

Module 7: (TBA): Burke

Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789)

Reflections on the Revolution in France, pp. 3-63, 75-97, 245-50

Module 8: (TBA): Wollstonecraft

A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, Prefatory Letter, Introduction, chs. 1-4, 6, 9 & 12

Module 9: (TBA): Mill I

On Liberty, selections in chs. 1-4 (pp 5-44, 55-68, 73-82)

Module 10: (TBA): Mill II

On the Subjection of Women, chs.1, 2 ,& 4 (pp. 409-454, 484-505)

Module 11: (TBA) Chomin

A Discourse by Three Drunkards on Government (entire) (pp. 47-137)

Module 12:

Review Class

Final Assessment period - TBA

Other Important Information

Quercus, Emails, and Communications

All students should ensure that they are registered on the course on Quercus, as reading materials and course announcements will be posted electronically. If you would like to change your Quercus profile (e.g., to make sure that your preferred name appears correctly), follow the instructions [here](#). You should regularly check your utoronto email account to make sure that you receive important email notices.

Please use the Quercus Inbox tool for all course-related email communication. We will endeavour to respond to emails within 72 hours, but please be patient if we are slow to respond, and please do not expect responses on evenings or weekends. Email is for short clarification questions only. If you have concerns or questions that cannot be answered in a short response, please see us during office hours.

Course Accessibility and Supports for Students

You are not alone: To be human is to need the support of others. Please get help if you're experiencing difficulties and are in distress about personal or academic matters.

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach your Instructor or your TA and/or the Accessibility Service Office (<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>) as soon as possible.

Accessibility Services staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals, and arrange appropriate accommodations. Information on these services can be found on their website (<http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as>). Accessibility Services can also be reached by phone (416-978-8060) or email (accessibility.services@utoronto.ca). The sooner you

let them know your needs, the more quickly they can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

If you have preferences regarding your gender pronouns, please inform the Instructors or your TA.

Other Supports for Students

Students also have access to mental health and safety, and research and writing resources:

Mental Health & Safety

- Navi: Your mental health wayfinder (<https://www.vicereprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/navi/>)
- Guide to available resources (<https://safety.utoronto.ca/>).
- Health & Wellness Centre (<https://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/hwc>).
- Crisis Support: Students in distress can access a range of free crisis lines available from the University of Toronto and the City of Toronto, as listed below:
 - University of Toronto: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/support-when-you-feel-distressed/>
 - City of Toronto: <https://www.toronto.ca/311/knowledgebase/kb/docs/articles/311-toronto/information-and-business-development/crisis-lines-suicide-depression-telephone-support-lines-non-crisis-mental-health-services.html>.

Most of these crisis lines are available 24 hours a day and some address specific problems that students may be experiencing. Immediate assistance is available as follows:

- My SSP for University of Toronto Students: 1-844-451-9700.
- Good 2 Talk Student Helpline: 1-866-925-5454
- Gerstein Crisis Centre: 416-929-5200
- Distress Centres of Greater Toronto: 416-408-HELP (4357)
- The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): 250 College Street (walk-in)

Research & Writing

- Research and writing guide (<https://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/>).
- Chicago Manual of Style citation guide (https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html).
- Writing Centres (<http://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/>).