

## **Power, Identity, Resistance—I (SOSC 11400)**

The University of Chicago

Autumn 2025

Section 13: Tuesdays & Thursdays: 2:00-3:20 PM

Social Sciences Rsch Bldg 107

**Professor:** Rochelle Terman, Assistant Professor of Political Science, [rterman@uchicago.edu](mailto:rterman@uchicago.edu)

**Office hours:** Thursdays 10am-12pm, with exceptions. [Sign up here](#). All office hours are held in Pick 411.

**Writing Advisor:** Natasha Lasky <natashal@uchicago.edu>

**Office (Harper) hours:** Mondays 3pm-6pm (Zoom) and Wednesdays 1:30pm-3pm (in-person, Gates-Blake 315/319). [Sign up here](#).

### **About**

Power, Identity, and Resistance examines multiple and interrelated aspects of power, from the roles of economic markets and political states to the social structures that determine individual, class, and gender inequalities.

The first quarter of this sequence opens with the theoretical basis of the modern, liberal state - social contract theory. We consider how state power was legitimized by common consent and how principles of freedom and equality were anchored in accounts of "the state of nature." We also think about who was party to this original contract and ask whether the prosperity and protection of some was implicitly premised on the exclusion or exploitation of others. As we examine the protections offered by the liberal state against excessive, arbitrary power, we interrogate the limits of state power and ask at what point can we resist it? We trace these dialogues from the seventeenth century through the beginning of the nineteenth century. Texts included: Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, and Burke.

### **Books**

The following books are available for purchase at the Seminar Co-op Book Store:

- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Hackett) 9780872201774
- John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (Hackett) 97801915144860
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality and On the Social Contract* (Chicago) 9780226151311

You must use **these specific versions** of the texts.

### **Assignments**

There will be three seminar **papers** of five pages each. Papers for this course must use the formatting template provided on Canvas and submitted as a Microsoft Word document through Canvas. Throughout the quarter, students will also complete smaller assignments, such as discussion posts on Canvas, which will be announced in class.

### **Participation**

Class participation is an important part of this course. Attendance is mandatory and students should come to each class prepared to discuss the issues and texts of the day. I will excuse

absences due to illnesses and emergencies, in which case you should email me before class. I will not facilitate hybrid sessions but will work with you to arrange alternative forms of participation. I would rather you stay home if you're sick.

### **Writing Advisor**

Our section will be participating in the SOSC Writing Program and will have an assigned Writing Advisor: Natasha Lasky. As a Writing Advisor, Natasha will support you in the writing process, including aiding you in argumentation, structure, and the use of evidence, and offer suggestions for revisions to outlines, drafts, and works in progress. Students will be required to attend 2 workshops this quarter (Weeks 3 and 6) and schedule at least one group office hours with Natasha to discuss your first paper. You are encouraged to meet with her at any point of the quarter. She is not the course intern or TA and will not address matters of class content, serve as a copy editor, or hazard what grade you will earn on an assignment.

You are also encouraged to meet with Writing Advisors through [Harper Hours](#). For more information on the SOSC Writing Program, visit <https://voices.uchicago.edu/soscwriter>.

### **Grades**

Your final grade will be determined by the following weighted average:

- first paper—20%;
- second paper—25%;
- third paper—30%;
- class participation—20%;
- participation at workshops and meeting with Writing Advisor (5%).

All grades are final. I do not reconsider grades except in cases of obvious recording errors.

### **Late Policy**

In class as in life, deadlines are important. Extensions will only be granted for significant illness or emergency. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized one third letter grade (that is, for example, from A to A-) for each day late.

### **Communication**

We will be using Canvas to make announcements, distribute readings, and collect assignments. If you have a question that will require more than one minute to answer, please come to my office hours rather than sending an email. Also be advised that I do not check my email on evenings or weekends. If you have a preferred name or pronoun you think I should know about, please let me know.

### **Recordings**

Audio or visual recording of classroom discussions (or private conversations) is not permitted. Unauthorized recording is a crime in the state of Illinois, punishable by up to three years in prison. Failure to obtain consent may also result in additional civil liability and disciplinary action by the University.

### **Accommodations**

Students who have Letters of Accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact me as early in the semester as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For those without Letters of Accommodation, assistance is available to eligible

students through Student Disability Services. Please contact Student Disability Services at 773-702-6000 or disabilities@uchicago.edu for more information. All discussions will remain confidential.

### **Academic Integrity**

Language and ideas that are not your own must be properly cited. We will strictly follow the University's policy on academic integrity: "It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another's statements or ideas as one's own work." More details on the policy are [here](#).

### **AI Tools**

In this course, we will be developing skills and knowledge that are important to discover and practice on your own. Because use of AI tools inhibits development of these skills and knowledge, students are not allowed to use any AI tools, such as ChatGPT or DallE 2, in this course. Students are expected to present work that is their own without assistance from others, including automated tools. If you are unclear if something is an AI tool, please check with me. Using AI tools for any purposes in this course will violate the University's academic integrity policy.

### **Schedule**

**Sep 30:** Introduction

**Oct 2:** Hobbes, *Leviathan*, introduction, part I "Of Man," chs. 1-7.

**Oct 7:** Hobbes, *Leviathan*, part I "Of Man," chs. 8-16.

**Oct 9:** Hobbes, *Leviathan*, part II, "Of Commonwealth," chs. 17-25.

**Oct 14:** Hobbes, *Leviathan*, part II, "Of Commonwealth," chs. 26-30.

**Oct 16:** Review.

**Oct 21:** Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chs. 1-6.

**Oct 23:** Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chs. 7-10.

**Oct 28:** Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, chs. 11, 14, 15, 16 (exclude paras. 183-184, 193-196), 17, 18, 19 (exclude paras. 218-219, 231-240)

**Oct 30:** Review.

**Nov 1: First paper due at 11:59 PM.**

**Nov 4:** Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Letter to Geneva, Preface, Part I.

**Nov 6:** Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II.

**Nov 11:** Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I.

**Nov 13:** Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book II.

**Nov 18:** Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Books III and IV (omitting chs 5-6).

**Nov 20:** Review.

**Nov 22: Second paper due at 11:59 PM.**

**Nov 25—29:** Thanksgiving Break—No Class.

**Dec 2:** Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* .

**Dec 4:** Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*.

**Dec 11: Final paper due at 11:59 PM.**