

## POLITICAL SCIENCE 2006B: POLITICAL THEORY Winter 2021

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**Lecture:** Posted weekly on A2L  
**Room:** Virtual

**Office Hours:** By appointment

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## **Course Description**

This continues the introduction to political theory. It is designed to provide a background for the various Level III and Level IV courses in political theory, and is a required course for all honours Political Science students.

Having been introduced to classical Greek thought and the political bases of modern politics and the state in the first semester, in the second semester we will read political thinkers who respond to the distinctive challenges of modernity. We will consider the development of the liberal-democratic model and some of its radical critics and challengers, as well as the social, moral, and political problems that arise in societies in a period of rapid and unprecedented change.

## **Course Objectives**

This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of a wide range of crucial concepts and themes in a number of leading political theories; to enhance students' ability to read carefully and critically complex theoretical texts; and to further develop the capacity to formulate both orally and in writing an understanding of the concepts and themes of these theories in a conceptually rigorous and systematic fashion.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Broadview)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Basic Political Writings* (Broadview)
- Karl Marx, *Selected Writings* (Hackett)
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Penguin)

## **Class Format**

This course will use a combination of asynchronous and synchronous learning. Every week will include:

- my lecture, posted as an audio file to Avenue on Thursday, 2:30 pm;
- an open discussion of any of the week's material on Friday, 2:30-3:20 pm (please note that this will be student-driven: I will be there to respond to your questions/concerns, but will not prepare any substantive content);
- your tutorial.

As in Term 1, the lectures will cover the week's readings and I will post study questions addressing the material. You are expected to prepare for tutorials by listening to the lectures and carefully reading the assigned chapters and study questions. You will engage with the readings using Perusall, which allows you to identify important or difficult passages, to make comments, and to ask, up-vote, and respond to questions with your peers.

Please note that our **first (Jan. 14, 2021) and last (Apr. 8) lectures will be live/synchronous, over Zoom**. The first will serve as a course introduction and the last as a concluding review, ahead of the final examination. The remaining lectures will be posted as audio files weekly.

### **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Social Reading (10%): Annotate readings online via Perusall.
2. Tutorial Participation (20%): Participate in weekly tutorials via Zoom.
3. First Semester Papers (first paper 10%, second paper 15%).
4. Second Semester Paper (outline 5%, third paper 20%).
5. Cumulative Final Exam (20%).

Please note that this includes evaluation from fall and winter terms.

### **Course Evaluation – Details**

#### **Social Reading (10%)**

In this course you will get credit for doing the readings using the online system Perusall. You are asked to engage with the assigned reading in advance of each tutorial, highlighting certain sections and adding comments or questions. Highlights, comments, and questions will be shared within your tutorial section, allowing you to learn from, and respond to, your colleagues. You can also flag statements that interest or confuse you, which can then be taken up in tutorials. You will receive credit for engaging seriously and consistently with the texts, and for the constructiveness of your contributions. You will be credited for Perusall activity only up to the time of your tutorial on the relevant reading, though you will continue to have access to the text and notations thereafter.

#### **Tutorial Participation (20%)**

Scheduled tutorials are required and will be conducted via Zoom, focusing on the texts and study questions. (Alternatives will be available for students facing insurmountable technical or practical obstacles. Consult your TA if this is your case.) Your participation grade will be gauged by attendance as well as active and informed participation. You will be expected to have completed the readings and be ready to discuss them. The main business of the tutorials will be to develop answers to the study questions, to raise questions and/or offer comments on the material, and to work through any points of confusion with your peers and TA.

#### **Papers (second semester: 5% + 20%)**

In the second semester, you will submit

- an essay outline (5%), due Monday, March 1 by 5 pm, and
- an essay (20%), due Monday, March 15 by 5 pm.

Outlines are to be approximately 1 page in length. They should be in point form, indicating your thesis, the points you wish to make in order, and some of the evidence you will use to make them. Essays are to be 6-8 pages in length (approximately 1500-2000 words), typed, double-spaced, with proper margins and citations. Essays will be marked on grammar, clarity of writing, understanding of the material, and organization and rigor of the argument. Essay topics, along with detailed instructions, will be provided at least three weeks ahead of the deadline. The essays must be uploaded to the designated Assignment folder on the course's Avenue website by the times and dates indicated above.

### **Final Exam (20%)**

The final exam will cover the whole year's work and will be held online during the normal examination period in April 2021.

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1 (Jan. 14)**

**Introduction: What do we mean by modernity?**

No reading

### **Week 2 (Jan. 21)**

**Life, liberty and property**

Readings:

Locke, *Second Treatise*, Ch. 1-9.

### **Week 3 (Jan. 28)**

**Consent, constitutions and the limits of government**

Readings:

Locke, *Second Treatise*, Ch. 10-19.

### **Week 4 (Feb. 4)**

**The fraudulent social contract**

Readings:

Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*.

### **Week 5 (Feb. 11)**

**The republican social contract**

Readings:

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Books 1, 2.

**Week 6 (Feb. 18)**

**Reading week**

**Week 7 (Feb. 25)**

**Citizenship, social freedom, and the conditions of government**

Readings:

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Books 3, 4.

**Week 8 (Mar. 4)**

**History and materialism**

Readings:

Marx, *Preface to A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (p. 209-213), *Society and Economy in History (Marx to P. V. Annenkov)* (PDF), *Theses on Feuerbach* (p. 98-101), *The German Ideology: Part I* (p. 102-132).

**Week 9 (Mar. 11)**

**Alienation and false consciousness**

Readings:

Marx, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* (p. 58-68), *Alienation and Social Classes* (PDF), *On the Jewish Question* (p. 1-21).

**Week 10 (Mar. 18)**

**Politics and revolution**

Readings:

Marx, *Speech at the Anniversary of the People's Paper* (PDF), *German Ideology* (continued, p. 142-155), *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (p. 157-186).

**Week 11 (Mar. 25)**

**Custom, conformity and democracy**

Readings:

Mill, *On Liberty*, Chs. 1-3.

## **Week 12 (Apr. 1)**

### **Liberalism and empire**

Readings:

Mill, [\*On Liberty\*](#), Chs. 4-5, “A few words on non-intervention”.

## **Week 13 (Apr. 8)**

### **Conclusion and review**

## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

Essay assignments must be submitted electronically by uploading them to the relevant Dropbox folder on the course’s Avenue website.

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

<b>MARK</b>	<b>GRADE</b>
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### **Late Assignments**

Assignments submitted after the due date without an extension granted by the instructor prior to the due date will be penalized 3% per day (including Saturdays and Sundays).

### **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar “Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work”.

### **Avenue to Learn, Zoom, and Perusall**

This course uses on-line elements. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last

names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

### **Turnitin.com**

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. Students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via Avenue to Learn (A2L) plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty. Students who do not wish to submit their work through A2L and/or Turnitin.com must still submit an electronic and/or hardcopy to the instructor. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to Turnitin.com or A2L. **All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld** (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more information please refer to the [Turnitin.com Policy](#).

### **Copyright and Recording**

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, **including lectures** by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

### **Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)**

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office **normally within 10 working days** of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

### **Academic Integrity Statement**

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and

academic integrity. **It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.**

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#), located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

### **Conduct Expectations**

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, **whether in person or online.**

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms

### **Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities**

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or [sas@mcmaster.ca](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

### **Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy**

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This

policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

### **Course Modification**

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.

### **Extreme Circumstances**

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.