

# Introductory Course on Political Philosophy

XXX:XXX:XXX

John M. DePoe, Course Instructor

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Hours:

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**Required Text:** Steven Cahn, ed. *Classics of Political and Moral Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

<u>Assignments</u>		<u>Grade Scale</u>												
Exam #1:	25%	F	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A	A+
Exam #2:	25%	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Exam #3:	25%													
Quizzes:	15%													
Participation:	10%													

## Course Description

In this course, students will be introduced to some of the basic ideas of political philosophy through primary texts. Students will study a diverse array of ideas among which will include the writings of Plato, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx, and Martin Luther King, Jr. Students will be encouraged to think about issues such as the proper role of government, the extent of personal liberties/rights, the meaning and application of justice, and the morality of civil disobedience.

## Exams

Exams will be administered in class. Exams will test students over information given in the readings and lectures. Students will be given more information in class regarding what to expect from and how to prepare for these exams. Anyone who is unsure about the nature of an exam or the material covered in it is encouraged to meet with the instructor during **office hours** or to schedule an appointment with the instructor **before the exam**. The final exam is not comprehensive.

## Quizzes

Reading is an essential part of learning philosophy. Periodic pop quizzes will be given during classes for the purposes of checking that reading assignments are done on time. Students are encouraged to take notes on the readings, and *students will be allowed to use their own handwritten notes on pop quizzes*. The two lowest quiz grades will automatically be dropped when calculating the final grade.

## Participation/Attendance

Each day of class students will be given a grade for participating in the course. Since being absent entails not participating in class, absences will count as a zero for that day's participation. Those who attend class, stay awake, take notes, show engagement with the material, and participate in discussion (both in class and online) will receive proportionate credit for that day's participation. The participation grade will also consider participation with the online discussion board on this course's website. The three lowest daily participation grades will automatically be dropped when calculating the final grade.

## Minimal Passing Requirement

In order to pass the course students must meet two basic requirements: (1) to take all of the exams; and (2) to attend two-thirds of classes. *Those who do not meet these conditions will fail the course regardless of their overall average.*

## Tentative Schedule of Readings

### Week 1: Introduction/Plato

Plato, "Defense of Socrates"

### Week 2: Plato

Plato, "Defense of Socrates"

Plato, "Crito"

### Week 3: Plato

Plato, "Crito"

Plato, *Republic*, book 1

### Week 4: Aristotle

Aristotle, *Politics*

EXAM #1

### Week 5: Hobbes

Hobbes, *Leviathan*

### Week 6: Hobbes

Hobbes, *Leviathan*

### Week 7: Locke

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*

### Week 8: Locke

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*

### Week 9: Rousseau

Rousseau, *Of the Social Contract*

EXAM #2

### Week 10: Smith

Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*

### Week 11: Marx and Engels

Marx & Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

### Week 12: Mill

J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*

### Week 13: Rawls

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*

### Week 14: Nozick

Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*

### Week 15:

Burke, "Speech to the Electors of Bristol"

M. L. King, Jr., "Letter from a Birmingham City Jail"

EXAM #3 – To be given at the time and place according to the final exam schedule