

Mark Lutz
PSC200-03 Survey of Political Theory
Wright C237
Tuesday and Thursday 7- 8:15

Office: Wright A208
Hours: 2:30 to 3:30 on Tuesday and 1:30 to 3:30 on Thursday
email: mark.lutz@unlv.edu

Course Description

The tasks of political theory are to raise and search for answers to the fundamental questions of political life, such as how should we live, as individuals and as a society? What is justice, and what does it require of us? What is good and what is evil? What is the best form of government? In this class we will survey some of the most important thinkers who have sought to answer such questions, including Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke and Plato.

Learning Objectives.

The goal of the course is to improve the student's ability to read rich and challenging works about politics and morality and to help the student think, write, and talk about the books' themes. In particular, the course aims to develop the student's understanding of important differences between ancient and modern accounts of justice and the best way of life.

Readings:

The following books should be purchased:

1. Niccolò Machiavelli. *The Prince*. 2nd ed. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield. Univ. of Chicago Press, 1998.
2. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*.
3. John Locke. *Two Treatises of Government*. "Book Two"
4. Plato. *The Republic*. 2nd ed. Translated by Allan Bloom. Basic Books, 1991.

Format:

Each session will combine lecture and discussion. It is very important that you come to class having done the assigned reading for that day. Read the material at least twice. Take notes and raise any questions you may have in class.

Assignments

Assignments include:

1. Mid-term worth 25%.
2. One 2 page paper (due Feb. 12) worth 10% and one 4 page paper (due April 17) worth 25%.
3. Final examination worth 30%.
4. Class participation 10%

You must complete all written assignments in order to pass the course. Your contribution in class may increase your final grade by one increment. Your grade will be reduced if you have more than two un-excused absences.

Each examination will consist partially or wholly of one or more essay questions. One week

before each examination you will receive details about it to guide your study. Make-up examinations and extensions for submitting papers will be granted only in cases of emergency (e.g., personal illness, preferably with a note from a doctor; serious illness in one's family). The grade on a paper will be reduced by one increment on the scale for each day the paper is late without an approved extension.

Reading Schedule

Jan 22	Introduction	
Jan 24	Machiavelli	<i>Prince</i> Letter and chapters 1-4
Jan 29		Chapters 5-8
Jan 31		Chapters 9-13
Feb 5		Chapters 14-17
Feb 7		Chapters 18-20
Feb 12		Chapters 21-26 (paper due)
Feb 14	Hobbes	<i>Leviathan</i> Letter, introduction, and chapters 1-6.
Feb 19		Chapters 10, 11, and 13
Feb 21		Chapters 14 and 15
Feb 26		Chapters 16-21
Feb 28		Chapters 22, 26, 29, and 30
Mar 4	Locke	<i>2nd Treatise</i> Chapter 1-4
Mar 6		Chapter 5 and <i>Bible</i> "1st Timothy" Chapter 6.
Mar 11		Mid term exam
Mar 13		Chapters 6-8
Mar 25		Chapters 9-13
Mar 27		Chapter 14 and 19
Apr 1	Plato	<i>Republic</i> Book I
Apr 3		Book I
Apr 8		Book I
Apr 10		Book II
Apr 15		Book II
Apr 17		Book III (paper due)
Apr 22		Book IV
Apr 24		Book V
Apr 29		Book V-VI
May 1		Book VI
May 6		Book VII and IX (end)
May 8		Conclusion

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UNLV Writing Center

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>

E-Mail

Students are expected to monitor their Rebelmail for messages during the semester. Non-admitted students should contact the Student Help Desk at 702-895-0761 in the Student Union room 231 or by email at studenthelp@unlv.edu. See <http://rebelmail.unlv.edu> for information.