Term: Spring 2017
Instructor: Dr. Michelle A. Schwarze
Day/time: T & Th, 1-2:15pm
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PS 502: The Moral Foundations of Democracy
Syllabus

Course Description
This course explores the question, ”What moral norms undergird democracy?” It surveys political theories central to the Enlightenment, including sentimental theories, social contract theories, and some early American political thought, focusing on how four particular norms support democratic government, as well as how they might come into conflict with one another: equal rights, rule of law, skepticism of power, and mutual respect. As we discuss these themes throughout the semester, we will deal with the nature of and justifications for democratic politics, as well as moral and political arguments against democratic government. We will pay particular attention the nature of and justifications for American democracy as they were presented at its outset and as they have changed over time.

Course Materials
Required texts:
Highly recommended:

Course Policies
I expect you to
1) complete the readings assigned for each week prior to our class meeting, 2) to take notes on your readings, 3) to prepare and submit your weekly discussion questions on time (more on this in the ‘Assignments’ section below), and 4) to actively participate in our seminar discussion. Active participation requires you bring the relevant readings to class each day (which may mean printing them beforehand) and that you respectfully engage with both the course content and your peers’ contributions. To ensure that these fruitful discussions are possible, I ask that you are courteous to your peers by turning off cell phones, ending side conversations before class begins, and not using your laptops for anything besides notes.

You will need to complete your assignments on time, as I will accept no late work without an approved accommodation prior to the due date. Accommodations will be made for those students who have documented proof of an emergency or those students who have documented evidence of learning disabilities. I am firmly committed to ensuring equal learning access for all and therefore encourage individuals with disabilities to participate in the McBurney Center’s available programs and activities. If you need an accommodation, you must contact the center at (608) 263-2741 or mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu to obtain documentation for your specific needs. You must do so by the end of Week 2 and you must contact me in advance to make appropriate arrangements.

A successful course requires some things of me as well. Given that you may have questions about the subject, material, assignments, or college generally during the semester, I will be available during weekly office hours, by personal appointment and through email to answer them. If you email me, be sure to 1) address me like someone you may ask for a letter of recommendation someday rather than someone to whom you are sending a text message, 2) expect a 24-hour response time, and 3) restrict your questions to those regarding format or logistics. I believe it is far more valuable for you to ask substantive questions in person—whether in class or during office hours—so I can give you a comprehensive response and ensure you understand what we have discussed.

Finally, I strictly adhere to the UW Academic Misconduct Process and will report all incidents of academic misconduct the Dean of Students Office, as it is a prerequisite for maintaining academic integrity in our course. To avoid plagiarism, be sure to use either text-specific (e.g., citations to part, section, chapter and paragraph number of Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*) or APSA-style citations unless otherwise stated (http://www.apsanet.org/files/APSAStyleManual2006.pdf).
Assignments & Grading

Your grade will be calculated according to your score(s) on assignments in the four following categories:

- Short paper [& optional rewrite] (20%)
- Final paper (25%)
- Final presentation (15%)
- Midterm exam (15%)
+ Participation (25%)

= Final Grade (100%)

Your grade will assigned according to the following grading scale:

A ≥ 93.5
AB = 87.5-93.4
B = 82.5-87.4
BC = 77.5-82.4
C = 69.5-77.4
D = 60-69.4
F ≤ 59.9

Short paper

Your first assignment will be a one-page single-spaced (12 pt. Times New Roman font) response paper designed to allow you to critically engage with our texts and to develop your writing skills. You will be given a paper prompt at the beginning of Week 2. This assignment is designed to help you learn how to read carefully by giving you an opportunity to evaluate some of our texts under a close lens. I will provide you with extensive written feedback when I return your work.

But I also want to give you the opportunity to improve. David Hume, when reflecting on the quality of his own work, emphasized a particularly important part of the learning process: “A man who is free from mistakes can pretend to no praises except from the justness of his understanding. But a man who corrects his mistakes shows at once the justness of his understanding and the candour and ingenuity of his temper” (T App.1). I couldn’t agree more with Hume’s claim and therefore want to reward those of you who are interested in exercising your candor and ingenuity in this class. To do so, I allow all students the option to resubmit one-page papers. I will only include the higher score of the two submitted papers in your grade, so no student will be penalized for resubmission.

Midterm exam

Your midterm exam will be held on Thursday, March 16th. The exam will cover all material assigned from Weeks 1-8. It will consist of identification questions (IDs) and a short essay.

Final paper and presentation
Your final paper (10-12 double-spaced pages, 12 pt. Times New Roman font), due Thursday, April 20\textsuperscript{th}, will give you an opportunity to complete an independent research project. You will be required to submit a thesis and annotated bibliography by the end of Week 10. You will be required to give a 15-minute presentation on your final paper to the class at the end of the semester. By doing so, you will have the opportunity to cultivate your ability to present your research concisely and cogently. I will provide a handout with more information about your final paper and presentation at the end of Week 5.

Participation
Your participation grade will be calculated based on two things: 1) discussion questions submitted online through Learn@UW and discussed at the outset of each class in your daily discussion groups and 2) the quantity and quality of your participation in class.

You will be expected to submit one discussion question on Learn@UW by no later than 12pm on each class day. I will not evaluate the content of these questions, but they should either be a clarification question or a substantive question on the assigned readings that you think would be useful to discuss in class. At the beginning of each class, you will meet in pre-assigned groups to discuss these questions and pick one to pose to the entire class.

Class Schedule

Week 1
1/17: Introduction, syllabus review, and discussion group information
1/19: Acemoglu, “American Democracy is Dying, and this Election is Enough to Fix It” [available on Learn@UW]; Hobbes, selection from Leviathan, Chapter XIX [pgs. 118-124] [available on Learn@UW]

Week 2
1/24: Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Chapters 1-5 [pgs. 267-302] SHORT PAPER PROMPT GIVEN DUE: SYLLABUS AGREEMENT
1/26: Class canceled.

Week 3
1/31: Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Chapters 6 (paragraphs 52-64), 8, 9, 14, 16 (paragraphs 175-181) [pgs. 303-310, 330-353, 374-380, 384-389]
2/2: Locke, Two Treatises of Government, Chapters 18, 19 [pgs. 398-428]

Week 4

*Week 5*
**DUE: SHORT PAPER**

*Week 6*
2/23: Class canceled.

*Week 7*
2/28: Burke, *Revolutionary Writings*, selections from *Reflections on the Revolution in France* [pgs. 3-36 (end of first paragraph), 51-65 (end of second paragraph)]
3/2: Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men and a Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, selections from *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* [pgs. 3-24, 30 (beginning of last paragraph) -34 (end of fourth paragraph)]
**DUE: OPTIONAL REWRITE**

*Week 8*

*Week 9*
3/14: Guest lecture, Katie Robiadek
3/16: **MIDTERM**

No class on 3/21 or 3/23. Enjoy your spring break!

*Week 10*
Constitution of the U.S. [pgs. 495-499, 522-523, 526-551]; An Old Whig, No. 5 (1787) + Brutus Essays I & II (1787-1788) [available on Learn@UW]
DUE: FINAL PAPER

Week 11

Week 12
*Make sure to read Tocqueville’s Notes!
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Week 13
4/20: King, Why We Can’t Wait, “Letter from Birmingham Jail”
DUE: FINAL PAPER
Week 14
4/25: Student Presentations
4/27: Student Presentations

Week 15
5/2: Student Presentations
5/4: Student Presentations