Political Science 209: Introduction to Political Theory
University of Wisconsin—Madison
Fall 2015

Instructor:
Professor John Zumbrunnen
zumbrunnen@wisc.edu
Office: 101E Chadbourne Residence Hall

Office Hours:
Tuesday 1:00-2:00
Wednesday 10:00-11:00
& by appointment

Teaching Assistants:
Rebecca Anderson
Rebecca Fine
Elizabeth Sawyer

Course Description
This course introduces students to the study of political theory by considering a series of big political ideas: truth, happiness, justice, power, freedom, and democracy. We will study the arguments made about these ideas by important thinkers in the history of political thought (Plato, Machiavelli, Marx, Nietzsche, etc); and we will consider the place of these ideas in ongoing political debates.

Course Learning Objectives
Students who complete PS 209 will be able to:
- Explain in their own words arguments made by important thinkers in the history of political thought about important political concepts
- Analyze contemporary political arguments in the context of arguments made by important thinkers about important political concepts
- Assess arguments of particular thinkers about important political concepts
- Formulate their own position on important political concepts
- Integrate understandings of multiple political concepts in complex political arguments.

Course Materials for Purchase
Students should purchase the following book, from which most readings for the course will be drawn:


All other course materials will be available on the course Learn@UW site.
Course Assessments and Grading
The most important requirement for the course is to do the reading and come to lecture and discussion ready to learn. Attending lecture is crucial to success in the course. Attendance and participation in discussion sections will form part of your course grade.

Following a brief introductory unit, our course is divided into six modules: one module for each of six concepts. At the end of each concept module, you will take an online quiz, consisting entirely of multiple choice questions. Each quiz will be available online for a strictly limited period of time. You will also make an entry for each concept module in a course journal, offering you the opportunity to reflect upon the material for the module. You will download the course journal (complete with prompts for each entry) as a Word document from the course Learn@UW site. At the end of each module, course journals will be submitted to an online dropbox on the course Learn@UW site. Finally, two essays will require you to construct an argument about a contemporary political issue drawing on the concepts we study.

Course grades will be calculated as follows (though the instructor reserves the right to alter assignments and weightings as needed and with appropriate and timely notice to students):

- Quizzes (6 quizzes @ 3 points each) 18%
- Course Journal entries (6 entries @ 3 points each) 18%
- Essay #1 20%
- Essay #2 24%
- Discussion Attendance and Participation 20%

Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following scale:

- A ≥ 93 points
- AB 88-92 points
- B 83-87 points
- BC 78-82 points
- C 70-77 points
- D 60-69 points
- F ≤ 59 points
Important Course Policies

- Students needing special accommodations to enable full participation in this course should contact the instructor as early as possible. All information will remain confidential. It is recommended that if you need to request disability-related accommodations or have specific accessibility requirements for participating in this course that you become a McBurney Disability Resource Center client.

  Web: How to Become a McBurney Client
  Phone: (608) 263-2741
  Email: mcburney@studentlife.wisc.edu
  Text: (608) 225-7956
  Fax: (608) 265-2998

- Students must complete all assignments to pass the course.

- Quizzes will open at 12:00 noon on Tuesday and will close automatically at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday. Quizzes must be completed during this open time.

- Late journal submissions will be penalized one point (e.g. from 3 to 2 points) per day.

- Late essays will be penalized one letter grade per day.

- Neither the instructor nor the teaching assistant will discuss grades on any assignment until 24 hours after those grades have been posted to the course gradebook.

- Any instances of plagiarism or academic dishonesty will be dealt with in full accordance with University policy and will result in a grade of “F” for the course.
# Course Schedule

## What is Political Theory?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R Sep 3</td>
<td>Introduction to Course</td>
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<tr>
<td>T Sep 8</td>
<td>Plato, <em>Apology</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>R Sep 10</td>
<td>Plato, <em>Crito</em></td>
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## Big Idea #1: Truth

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T Sep 15</td>
<td>Plato, <em>Republic</em>, pp. 87-93</td>
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<tr>
<td>T Sep 22</td>
<td>Nietzsche, <em>Genealogy of Morals</em>, pp. 749-756</td>
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<tr>
<td>R Sep 24</td>
<td>Nietzsche, <em>Twilight of the Idols</em> (Learn@UW)</td>
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| R Sep 24 | W.E.B. DuBois, two excerpts from *The Souls of Black Folk*  
| | “Of Our Spiritual Strivings,” pp. 778-781  
| | “Of the Training of Black Men” (Learn@UW) |
| T Sep 29 | Truth Quiz opens (12:00 noon) |
| W Sep 30 | Truth Course Journal Due (11:59 p.m.) |
| R Oct 1 | Truth Quiz closes (11:00 a.m.) |

## Big Idea #2: Happiness

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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| T Sep 29 | Plato, *Republic*, pp. 108-112  
| | Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, pp. 119-122 |
| R Oct 1 | Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, pp.422-432 & 455-459 |
| T Oct 6 | Charles Mills, *The Racial Contract* (Learn@UW) |
| T Oct 13 | Happiness quiz Opens (12:00 noon) |
| W Oct 14 | Happiness Course Journal Due (11:59 p.m.) |
| R Oct 15 | Happiness Quiz Closes (11:00 a.m.) |

## Big Idea #3: Justice

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<tr>
<td>T Oct 27</td>
<td>Justice Quiz opens (12:00 noon)</td>
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<tr>
<td>W Oct 28</td>
<td>Justice Course Journal Due (11:59 p.m.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R Oct 29</td>
<td>Justice Quiz closes (11:00 a.m.)</td>
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Big Idea #4: Power

T Nov 3  *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 926-933
R Nov 5  *The Human Condition*, selections (Learn@UW)
T Nov 10  *History of the Peloponnesian War*, pp. 1-4
W Nov 11  Power Course Journal Due (11:59 p.m.)
W Nov 12  Power Quiz closes (11:00 a.m.)

Big Idea #5: Freedom

T Nov 10  Berlin, *Two Concepts of Liberty*, pp. 797-805 & 821-823
R Nov 12  McCallum, *Negative and Positive Freedom* (Learn@UW)
T Nov 17  *On the Social Contract*, pp. 466-472 & 475-476
R Nov 19  *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*, pp. 692-697
T Nov 24  *Freedom Quiz opens (12:00 noon)*
W Nov 25  *Freedom Course Journal Due (11:59 p.m.)*
R Nov 26  *Freedom Quiz closes (11:00 a.m.)*

Big Idea #6: Democracy

T Nov 24  No Lecture -- Online materials
R Nov 26  Thanksgiving Break -- No Class
T Dec 1  *Republic*, pp. 93-107
R Dec 3  *Federalist 10 & 51*, pp. 552-558
T Dec 8  “What is Deliberative Democracy” (Learn@UW)
R Dec 10  “Against Deliberation” (Learn@UW)
T Dec 15  *Freedom Quiz opens (12:00 noon)*
W Dec 16  *Freedom Course Journal Due (11:59 p.m.)*
R Dec 17  *Freedom Quiz closes (11:00 a.m.)*

Conclusion

T Dec 15  Political Theory Today
M Dec 21  *Essay #2 due*