

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY PLPT 1010

Professor Kevin Duong
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Spring 2022
Mon/Wed 9:00am-9:50am
Maury Hall 209

Teaching Assistants:
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What makes a people unfree? What should a just society look like? And how do we bring about social change? This class surveys how canonical political theorists, from Plato to Mao, have answered these questions in moments of revolutionary upheaval. Students will read major figures from the “Age of Revolutions” in the United States, France, and Haiti. Students will also study the industrial revolution, its nineteenth century critics, and challenges to liberalism by twentieth century revolutionaries. Surveying debates over “revolution” will allow us to trace how perennial themes of political theory, like freedom and equality, have been debated and deployed in modern life.

Required Materials

The following textbooks will be made available at the bookstore:

- Mitchell Cohen, ed. *Princeton Readings in Political Thought: Essential Texts from Plato to Populism--Second Edition*
- Aimé Césaire, *The Tragedy of King Christophe*

Other readings will be posted online at Collab:

<https://collab.its.virginia.edu/portal/site/5be672dc-4d2e-4d46-bb08-517468c0483f>

Course Objectives and Expectations

Course Evaluation:

Section Participation	20%
Midterm Exam	40%
Final Exam	40%

Assignments: Students will be expected to do the readings for each week before their assigned discussion section. There will also be a midterm exam and a final exam, each of which will be cumulative.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend every lecture and discussion section. Attendance will be taken in sections, and it will contribute to a student’s overall participation grade. If a student has than 4 unexcused absences, they will be in jeopardy of failing the class altogether.

Section Participation: Please note that participation is a substantial component of the course’s overall evaluation. Students can ensure that they maximally receive participation points by attending lecture, participating in discussions in their sections, and by showing general attentiveness towards, including thoughtful responses to, their fellow classmates and teaching assistant. If for any reason a student is concerned about their ability to do the above listed, please feel free to discuss the matter with their TA early in the semester.

Laptop and No Recording Policy: Students are strongly discouraged from using laptops during the lecture unless there is a documented accessibility concern; notes can be taken with pen and notebook.

Students *do not have permission to record* any part of class lectures for any purpose. This includes both audio and visual recording. Doing so is expressly prohibited and in violation of university policy, which can be found here: <https://uvapolicy.virginia.edu/policy/PROV-005>. If a student is caught recording or sharing them, the course instructor will automatically give them a failing grade. This policy will be strictly enforced.

Other Matters:

Plagiarism: Each student is expected to abide by the code of academic integrity. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with college policies regarding plagiarism and other violations of academic integrity, which will be strictly observed in this class. If work is found to be plagiarized, the student will receive an automatic failing grade in the class, and depending on the situation additional sanctions may be imposed by the college.

Reasonable Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodations, or if you have any questions related to any accommodation for testing, note taking, reading, etc., please speak with me as soon as possible. You may also contact the Student Disability Access Center at <https://studenthealth.virginia.edu/sdac-contactus>

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Readings and assignments are to be completed by the corresponding discussion section. Readings marked with an asterisk (*) will be made available on Collab.

Lectures, Week 1-2

Jan 19: Introduction
Jan 24: Just City, Just Souls
Jan 26: Plato's Critique of Democracy

Lectures, Week 3

Jan 31: Christian Justice
Feb 2: Christian Government

Lectures, Week 4

Feb 7: Enlightenment as Modernity
Feb 9: The Concept of Tyranny

Lectures, Week 5

Feb 14: The Right to Revolution
Feb 16: The American Thermidor

Lectures, Week 6

Feb 21: Alienation and Dependence
Feb 23: Autonomy and "the Will of the People"

Lectures, Week 7

Feb 28: French Revolutionary Democracy
Mar 2: Conservatism and Tradition

Lectures, Week 8

Mar 14: Haiti and the Idea of Freedom
Mar 16: Enlightenment as Tragedy

Readings for Week 1-2

- Plato, "The Republic"

Readings for Week 3

- New Testament, "Excerpts"*
- St. Augustine, "City of God"
- St. Thomas Aquinas, "Politics and Law"

Readings for Week 4

- John Locke, "Second Treatise of Government"

Readings for Week 5

- Jonathan Boucher, "On Civil Liberty"*
- Thomas Jefferson, "Declaration of Independence"
- Thomas Jefferson, "A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom"*
- Thomas Jefferson, "Letter to James Madison"*
- Abigail Adams, "Letter to John Adams"*
- James Madison, "Federalist Paper #10"

Readings for Week 6

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and Foundations of Inequality among Men"
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "On the Social Contract"

Readings for Week 7

- "Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen"
- "Loi Le Chapelier"*
- Marie-Olympe de Gouges, "Declaration of the Rights of Woman and Citizens"
- Edmund Burke, "Reflections on the Revolution in France"

Readings and Plays for Week 8

- Toussaint L'Ouverture, "Letter to the General Assembly from Biassou, Jean François and Toussaint L'Ouverture"*
- Toussaint L'Ouverture, "Toussaint L'Ouverture to His Brothers and Sisters in Varettes"
- Haitian Constitution of 1801*
- Aimé Césaire, *The Tragedy of King Christophe*

Lectures, Week 9

Mar 21: No Class

Mar 23: **Midterm Exam**

Lectures, Week 10

Mar 28: The Concept of Progress

Mar 30: Modern Machines and Romantic Revolt

Lectures, Week 11

Apr 4: Feminism at a Crossroads

Apr 6: Anarchists at an Impasse

Lectures, Week 12

Apr 11: The Russian Revolution as
Conceptual Laboratory

Apr 13: Modernism and World Revolution

Lectures, Week 13

April 18: Maoism in and Beyond China

Apr 20: Vietnamese Decolonization

Lectures, Week 14:

No Readings for Week 9

Readings, Paintings, Poems for Week 10

- Adam Smith, "The Wealth of Nations"
- Auguste Comte, "Course on Positive Philosophy"*
- Eugène Delacroix, "Liberty Leading the People"*
- Friedrich Hölderlin, "Voice of the People"*
- William Wordsworth, "The Prelude, Book XI"*
- Gustave Courbet, "The Stone Breakers"*
- Gustave Courbet, "A Burial at Ornans"*
- Karl Marx, "Estranged Labour"

Readings for Week 11

- "The Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls, 1848"*
- Emma Goldman, "Anarchism: What It Really Stands For" *
- Emma Goldman, "Woman Suffrage"*
- Leo Tolstoy, "The Inevitable Revolution"*

Readings, Paintings, and Poems for Week 12

- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, "The Communist Manifesto"
- V. I. Lenin, "Bolshevism"
- V. I. Lenin, "Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism"*
- Rosa Luxemburg, "Reform or Revolution"
- Leon Trotsky, "What is the Permanent Revolution?*"
- Langston Hughes, "Lenin"*
- Vasily Kandinsky, "Orange"*
- El Lissitzky, "Proun 19D"*
- Elena Semanova, "Workers' Club Lounge"*
- Gustav Klutssis, "Anti-Imperialist Exhibition"*
- Aleksandr Deineka, "Conquerors of Space"*

Readings for Week 13

- Mao Zedong, "On New Democracy"*
- Mao Zedong, "Statement Supporting the American Negroes"*
- Huey Newton, "In Defense of Self-Defense"*
- Ho Chi Minh, "The Path Which Led Me to Leninism"*
- Ho Chi Minh, "Report on the National and Colonial Questions"*
- Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam*
- Ho Chi Minh, "On Revolutionary Morality"*

Readings, Poems, and Songs for Week 14

Apr 25: Alienation and Dependence, Again
Apr 27: The Wretched of the Earth

- W. E. B. Du Bois, “Of Our Spiritual Strivings”*
- Langston Hughes, “A New Song”*
- Suzanne Césaire, “The Malaise of a Civilization”*
- Aimé Césaire, “Notebook of a Return to the Native Land”*
- Ma Rainey, “See See Rider Blues”*
- Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*

Lectures, Week 15

May 2: The Last Utopia

Readings for Week 15

- Universal Declaration of Human Rights*
- Martin Luther King, Jr. “Letter from Birmingham Jail”
- Malcolm X, “The Ballot or the Bullet”

Final Exam: Thursday, May 12, 2-3:30pm