

**Political Science 409:
20th Century Political Thought
FALL SEMESTER 2001**

MW, 4:00–5:30 p.m.
110 Dennison

Instructor:

Professor Mika LaVaque-Manty
611 Church St., rm. 358
615-9142
mmanty@umich.edu
www.umich.edu/~mmanty

Office Hours:

Mondays, 1:30–2:30
Thursdays, 10:30–11:30
and by appointment

Read this syllabus carefully. You are responsible for the information it contains. If you have any questions, direct them to Professor LaVaque-Manty either in class, via phone or e-mail, or during office hours. If you lose this syllabus, ask for a replacement copy or visit the course website. Any changes made to this syllabus will be

OVERVIEW

This course offers a chronological survey of some central contributions to contemporary political thought. Its premise is that 20th-century political thinkers have offered us different (a) vocabularies to understand modern political world and (b) arguments for why and how we should try to change that world. Beginning with the German sociologist Max Weber and ending with the South African novelist J. M. Coetzee, the course draws from contributions outside political theory proper.

Although this is a course in political theory, it is worthwhile — even necessary — to keep the historical context in mind. The 20th century saw the rise of mass democracy and mass politics as well as unprecedented political experiments, in both good and bad. Some of the texts we read contributed to those events, others reflect and try to make sense of them. Having some knowledge of the history of the 20th century will therefore be useful for this course; appreciating the fact that the people we read didn't write in a historical vacuum is absolutely necessary. Furthermore, since much of the 20th-century political thought also consists of developments of and reactions to the 19th-century legacies of liberalism and Marxism, familiarity with the key theories in modern political thought is strongly recommended.

The course is writing-intensive.

IMPORTANT DATES

October 1: First paper due
November 19: Term paper draft due
November 21: Thanksgiving recess; no class
December 12: Last class; term paper due
December 21: Final exam due at 10 a.m.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Knowledge objectives. At the end of the semester, you need to be familiar with the central ideas and arguments of the authors we read and the theories which get introduced outside of the readings. Familiarity here means both knowledge and understanding.

Skills objectives. In addition, you should know how to read a theoretical text in an analytic way, to be able to find its key ideas and their strengths and weaknesses, and to express your analysis and critique both orally and particularly in writing.

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

Disabled student accommodations. If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hours. If you haven't done so already, you are also encouraged to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), Rm. G-625 Haven Hall 1045, tel. 763-3000 (Voice/T*TY/TDD).

Office hours. You are strongly encouraged to take advantage of Professor LaVaque-Manty's office hours for any course-related issues whatever. You can also e-mail questions.

Course website. This syllabus, paper topics, announcements and other course material will be available at the course website on um.coursetools (accessible through your personal U-M space). Furthermore, required online assignments are posted on the website, so you should make sure you use the site regularly. Every student has reasonably convenient access to the web, so this should not pose insurmountable difficulties. If it does, please contact Professor LaVaque-Manty with an explanation for why it is insurmountable.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

I. Readings

Complete the assigned reading before the lecture and bring the text with you. Everything listed below is required.

The following books are available at Ulrichs, Michigan Book & Supply, and the Union Bookstore:

- Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition* (U Chicago P)
- J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace* (Penguin USA)
- Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks* (Grove Press)
- Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish* (Vintage)
- Antonio Gramsci, *Modern Prince* (International Publishers)
- Jürgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society* (Beacon Press)
- Catherine MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State* (Harvard UP)

- George Orwell, *A Collection of Essays* (Harvest/Harcourt)
- John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* (Harvard UP)
- Carl Schmitt, *Concept of the Political* (U Chicago P)

The following text is in a coursepack, available at Dollar Bill Copying (611 Church Street).

- Jean-Paul Sartre, “Dirty Hands,” in *No Exit and Other Plays* (Vintage)

The following three texts are in electronic reserves, accessible through the U-M library reserves website as well as the course website, and also as hard copies at the University Reserves (in the Shapiro Undergraduate Library):

- Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation,” in Max Weber: Selections in Translation, W.G. Runciman, ed. (Cambridge UP)
- Max Weber, “Science as a Vocation,” in From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology, Gerth and Mills, eds., (Oxford UP)
- Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition,” in *Multiculturalism and “The Politics of Recognition”* (Princeton UP)

II. Lectures and Participation

The lectures will be taught interactively. This means you should come to the lecture ready to ask and answer questions about the readings and, in general, ready to discuss the material. In addition, there will be short, in-class writing assignments which we will use both as the basis for discussion and you’ll use as springboards for papers. For all these reasons **participation counts 15% toward your course grade, either up or down**. Mere non-dormant regular presence — you show up but don’t participate — earns you a B for participation. Note also that several absences will hurt your participation grade significantly even if you are active when you do come to class. Active participation online (see below) can help you if you are otherwise quiet in class, but it cannot make up for repeated absences.

III. Writing

Political theory and, as a result, this course are writing-intensive. The purpose here is to emphasize writing as a *process*: you will focus on the various stages from having an initial idea to developing it into a finished paper.

There are three kinds of assignments related to this: short, unannounced in-class writing assignments which may or may not get collected; online responses and discussions; and papers. When the in-class writings are collected, they will count toward your participation grade: missing them or turning in something that shows you haven’t read the text can lower your grade. The other types are treated as separate components, as follows.

Online writing

Each week, except when a paper or a draft is due, there will be one online writing assignment, accessible through the course website. The assignments will be self-explanatory and, if you do the reading, quite light. Furthermore, they will help you with your papers.

The online assignments will count **20% toward your course grade**. They will be evaluated *as a totality*, where the key criteria are the regularity of your contribution (=how often you completed the assignment), your effort (did you just write the 100 words required, or did you think about the assignment, read others' contributions, etc.), and the quality of your contribution. Don't expect to get an A for this component if you don't complete pretty much every assignment. Around mid-semester, you'll receive a diagnostic midterm grade for your online responses and participation.

Papers

You will write two papers in this course: a short paper (5–7 pages; 1,250–1,750 words), which is due on Monday, October 1, and a longer term paper (10–12 pages; 2,500–3,000 words), due in the last class. The term paper will also have a *required* draft; it is due on Monday, November 19. **The short paper will count 15% and the term paper 30% toward your course grade.** Details on the assignments as well as additional information on paper writing will be provided in class and also be available through the course site.

The following offers the rough principles on the basis of which your papers will be graded:

A/A–	Paper offers a clearly stated, interesting thesis which is supported with valid and sound arguments. The paper shows that the writer has thought about the assignment and developed his or her <i>own</i> ideas about it, instead of just offering minimal responses to the different components of the assignment. Interpretations of theories are sophisticated and supported with textual evidence; more than one source is considered. Writing is between good and brilliant: the organization of the paper is clear, prose is good and grammar flawless.
B/B+	Paper offers a clearly stated thesis which is supported with for the most part valid and sound arguments. The paper stays on topic, considering all the relevant aspects of the assignment. Interpretations of theories are plausible and supported with textual evidence; more than one source is considered. Writing, including outline and grammar, is solid.
B–	Paper offers a thesis and attempts to support it with arguments. However, the thesis is simplistic and/or the arguments weak or unconnected to the thesis. Interpretations are weak or problematic, textual evidence minimal or weak. Paper only uses one textual source. Writing and organization have problems that affect readability.
C/C+	Paper offers a minimal thesis and minimal or no arguments in its support. Interpretations thoroughly misguided and/or unsupported with any evidence. Writing — both at the level of paper organization and grammar — seriously problematic.
D+/C–	No thesis, no arguments or no textual evidence. Organization incoherent, writing very awkward and unintelligible.
D	No thesis, no arguments, no evidence. Writer has no conception of most rudimentary aspects of writing (paragraphs, outline).
E	The paper displays a fundamental lack of understanding of the principles that guide scholarly endeavors. Examples include but aren't limited to gross mistakes in citing source materials as well as

significant errors in framing the paper (e.g., writing a short story instead of an essay).

IV. Final Exam

There will be a *take-home final* in the course, due at 10 a.m. on Friday, December 21 (the end of the officially scheduled exam-block for this course). You may bring your final to the political science department office or submit it electronically. Failure to submit the final by the due time will result in a grade of X. The questions for the exam will be handed out in class on the last day (and also posted on the website). You may of course turn your final in early, but regardless of your holiday plans, you cannot get the questions early. Other details on the structure and length of the final will be posted on the course website and also discussed in class.

V. Summary of Grading

Participation:	15%
Online assignments:	20%
Short paper:	15%
Term paper:	30%
Final exam:	20%

GENERAL POLICIES

I. Class sessions

The class will start at *exactly* 4:10 and end at 5:30; you must be in lecture on time.

Cell phones and pagers must be turned off for class (unless you have a vibrate option on yours) and may not be used. In general, disruptive behavior — conversations, reading a newspaper or texts for other classes — won't be acceptable.

The very nature of the material makes it controversial: there will very likely be disagreements in class. You are welcome, even encouraged, to explore one another's disagreements, and there is no dogma or correct position that the professor would endorse. However, in keeping with the LS&A policy, discussions in class must still be conducted in the atmosphere of mutual respect: no personal attacks (and no flames online), no hissing or booing. Every student has a right to articulate a position, no matter how unpopular, but every student also has to be ready to defend his or her position with *reasons*.

II. Religious Observances and Other Scheduling Conflicts

In keeping with the University of Michigan policy of respecting students' religious commitments, all attempts will be made to accommodate conflicts arising out of religious observances. Furthermore, the professor is aware of and, in principle, sympathetic to the many pressures students have in their lives and are willing to accommodate reasonable requests for extensions and other issues that involve scheduling conflicts. (Note, however, that requests involving words like "Puerto Vallarta" or "a kegger" are unlikely to be

considered reasonable.) It is, however, *your* responsibility to bring conflicts to the professor's attention, and to do so *in advance*. Student athletes will, in most cases, need a letter from the Athletic Department about the scheduling conflicts. As a rule, **no** late assignments will be accepted without prior permission except in cases of a documented emergency.

III. Incompletes

The university policy on the grade of "incomplete" will be followed in this course. It is generally not in a student's interest to have an incomplete, so try to avoid getting one.

IV. Academic integrity

Plagiarism and cheating are violations of academic integrity and thus violations of the LS&A Academic Conduct Code. As the LS&A Academic Judiciary Manual of Procedures specifies, a student may be expelled from the university for academic misconduct. For the purposes of this class, plagiarism will be defined as *submitting a piece of work which in part or in whole is not entirely the student's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source*. Additional information on what does and does not count as plagiarism can be accessed through the course website. **You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with those cases.** Note that the paper-grading principles above specify a grade of E for a paper that does not cite material correctly.

COURSE CALENDAR

This is the calendar of readings and main assignments. Additional assignments, page numbers, and/or changes will be posted in the calendar on the course website.

- 5-Sep Wed Introduction — no reading
- 10-Sep Mon George Orwell, “Politics and the English Language,” in *A Collection of Essays*
Max Weber, “Politics as a Vocation” (online)
- 12-Sep Wed Weber, “Science as a Vocation” (online)
- 17-Sep Mon Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*
- 19-Sep Wed Schmitt continued
- 24-Sep Mon Antonio Gramsci, *The Modern Prince*
- 26-Sep Wed Gramsci continued
- 1-Oct Mon **First paper due**
Jean-Paul Sartre, “Dirty Hands” (coursepack)
- 3-Oct Wed Sartre continue
- 8-Oct Mon George Orwell, *A Collection of Essays*
- 10-Oct Wed Orwell continued
- 15-Oct Mon Franz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*
- 17-Oct Wed Fanon continued
- 22-Oct Mon Hannah Arendt, *The Human Condition*
- 24-Oct Wed Arendt continued
- 29-Oct Mon Jurgen Habermas, *Toward a Rational Society*
- 31-Oct Wed Habermas continued
- 5-Nov Mon Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
- 7-Nov Wed Foucault continued
- 12-Nov Mon John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness*
- 14-Nov Wed Rawls continued
- 19-Nov Mon **Term paper draft due — no reading**
- 21-Nov Wed Thanksgiving recess — no class
- 26-Nov Mon Catherine MacKinnon, *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*
- 28-Nov Wed MacKinnon continued
- 3-Dec Mon Charles Taylor, “Politics of Recognition” (online)
- 5-Dec Wed Taylor continued
- 10-Dec Mon J.M. Coetzee, *Disgrace*
- 12-Dec Wed Coetzee continued

Term paper due