PHIL 307 – Social and Political Philosophy  
University of Oregon  
Fall, 2014  

Instructor: Dr. Steven Brence  
Email: brences@uoregon.edu  
Office: 250 Susan Campbell Hall  
Hours: 1:00-3:00, Thursdays, or by Appt.  
GTF: Amy Billingsley, amarvin@uoregon.edu  

Course Description:  
This course will introduce students to many of the most influential and important thinkers in the history of Western social and political philosophy. Beginning with Plato, the development of social and political thought will be traced with an attention to the context of the original writing, the interconnections between the texts, and to their current relevance.  

Required Text:  
Additional Texts will be available on the Blackboard page for the course (Course Documents/Readings)  

Course Requirements and Grades:  
- Two maximum 4-page essays - 50% (25% each)  
- One maximum 6-page essay - 30%  
- Attendance and participation -20% - participation, both in lecture and discussion, will include the submission of small written assignments.  

Assignment Guidelines:  
All written work, unless otherwise specified, should be written independently. You are encouraged to discuss all aspects of this course with your fellow students, but the work you turn in must be entirely your own. Any academic dishonesty will result, at minimum, in course failure. University of Oregon Academic Misconduct Code:  
[http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx](http://uodos.uoregon.edu/StudentConductandCommunityStandards/AcademicMisconduct/tabid/248/Default.aspx)  

All work is to be submitted in class, unless otherwise directed. No work may be submitted via email without prior arrangement. Late essays will be marked down according to degree of lateness. Smaller written assignments will not be accepted late.  

Philosophy Department Grading Rubric:  
- **A** = excellent. No mistakes, well-written, and distinctive in some way or other.  
- **B** = good. No significant mistakes, well-written, but not distinctive in any way.  
- **C** = OK. Some errors, but a basic grasp of the material.  
- **D** = poor. Several errors. A tenuous grasp of the material.
Technology Guidelines:

No electronic devices (including laptops, tablets, and mobile phones) are to be used during class time. Email communication with your instructors is encouraged but proper language (spelling, punctuation, etc.) should be used. Your messages should also be addressed, signed, and have a subject heading which makes reference to the course (PHIL 307).

Classroom Guidelines:

Class attendance is required. You are expected to arrive before class begins, be respectful and polite to everyone in the room, and to stay until it ends. If you should need to leave before the end of class, please let me know before class begins.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Delineate the history of Western social and political philosophy and differentiate the main schools of thought, key authors, debates, terms, and methods, that have emerged therein.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking, reading, and writing skills through academic format essays and the use of primary sources in the literature.
3. Compare, contrast, and critique representative authors from various philosophical traditions and historical periods.
4. Engage in philosophical inquiry that examines a broad range of topics such as human nature, the self and the community, political authority, morality, justice, recognition and identity.

Accessibility:

The University of Oregon is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if aspects of the instruction or course design result in barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Office of Accessible Education in 164 Oregon Hall at 346-1155 or uoaec@uoregon.edu

Sexual Harassment and Assault:

The University of Oregon is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic and dating violence and gender-based stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences gender-based violence (intimate partner violence, attempted or completed sexual assault, harassment, coercion, stalking, etc.), know that you are not alone. UO has staff members trained to support survivors in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

F = failing. Problematic on all fronts indicating either no real grasp of the material or a complete lack of effort.
Please be aware that all UO employees are required reporters. This means that if you tell me about a situation, I may have to report the information to my supervisor or the Office of Affirmative Action and Equal Opportunity. Although I have to report the situation, you will still have options about how your case will be handled, including whether or not you wish to pursue a formal complaint. Our goal is to make sure you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources you need.

If you wish to speak to someone confidentially, you can call 541-346-SAFE, UO’s 24-hour hotline, to be connected to a confidential counselor to discuss your options. You can also visit the SAFE website at safe.uoregon.edu.

Schedule:

Week 1 (Sep. 30 - Oct. 3):

- Plato - "Apology" (Defense of Socrates)
  "Republic", Bk. I

Week 2 (Oct. 7 - 10):

- Plato - "Republic", Bk II
  "Republic", Bk VII

Week 3 (Oct. 14 - 17):

- Aristotle - "Politics", Books I-III
- Niccolo Machiavelli, "The Prince"

  Thursday, Oct. 16 - Essay #1 Assigned

Week 4 (Oct. 21 - 24):

- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

  Friday, Oct. 24 - Essay #1 Due

Week 5 (Oct. 28 - 31):

- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*

Week 6 (Nov. 4 - 7):

- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*
  *Of the Social Contract*
Thursday, Nov. 6 - Essay #2 Assigned

Week 7 (Nov. 11 - 14):

Rousseau, Of the Social Contract (continued).
Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations

Friday, Nov. 14 - Essay #2 Due

Week 8 (Nov. 18 - 21):

Mary Wollstonecraft, from A Vindication of the Rights of Women, "The Pernicious Effects of the Unnatural Distinctions Established in Society"
Karl Marx, Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844.

Week 9 (Nov. 25):

Marx and Engels, The Manifesto of the Communist Party

Thanksgiving

Week 10 (Dec. 2 - 5):

John Stuart Mill, On Liberty

Finals Week (Dec. 9):

Tuesday, Dec. 9th at 3:15 Essay #3 Due

*I reserve the right to alter this schedule as may prove either necessary or beneficial. Any such changes will be announced in class and via email. Students are responsible for keeping track of such changes.