

P O L I T I C S & P H I L O S O P H Y

O R D E R , J U S T I C E , & R E S I S T A N C E :

F R O M T H E S T A T E O F N A T U R E T O F A S C I S M



P H 1 5 5

T , T H | 3:30 - 4:45 P M

I N S T R U C T O R : M A T T D I L L

H O B B E S L O C K E R O U S S E A U M O N T E S Q U I E U

M A R X N I E T Z S C H E F R E U D A R E N D T

M I L L S S T A N L E Y N U S S B A U M

P I N K F L O Y D

O P P E N H E I M E R

PH155: Philosophy & Politics

Order, Justice, & Resistance: from the State of Nature to Fascism

Instructor: Matt Dill
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Office Hours: by Appointment

Overview

This course focuses on themes of order, justice, and resistance in social and political philosophy. To this end, we engage with works by Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Montesquieu, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Hannah Arendt, Charles Mills, Jason Stanley, Martha Nussbaum, Pink Floyd, Joshua Oppenheimer, and others selected in consultation with students. Students gain an understanding of famous treatments of these themes while improving their skills in critical reasoning, civil discourse, reading comprehension, and writing.

Grading & Course Requirements

(1) Four short critical expositions, 400-500 words each.

*Briefly summarize an argument from one of the assigned readings. Then critically evaluate this argument. (Is the argument convincing? Why or why not?)

*Unless alternative arrangements are made in advance, these are due at the beginning of the class for which the reading is assigned.

*Each paper counts for 10% of course grade.

(2) One engagement with philosophy through an alternative medium.

*Can be on any topic covered in the course.

*Can be a presentation, poem, song, rap, short story, film, dialogue, etc.

*Presentations must be scheduled in advance.

*Further instructions provided in class.

*Due by the beginning of class on December 8th.

*10% of course grade.

(3) One term paper.

- *5-7 double-spaced pages.
- *Must follow either APA, Chicago Style, or MLA formatting.
- *Consult OWL for formatting guidelines:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/purdue_owl.html
- *Further instructions provided in class.
- *Due by Thursday, December 15th at midnight.
- *20% of course grade.

(4) Participation.

- *Comment regularly on Perusall (more details provided in class)
- *Come to class prepared & contribute to discussion
- *30% of course grade

Please contact me ASAP (within the first week of the course) if you feel that for some reason you will not be able to complete one of these requirements.

Grading Scale

- A (4): Excellent
- B (3): Good
- C (2): Satisfactory
- D (1): Passing but Unsatisfactory
- F (0): Failing; No Credit

*EACH WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT SHOULD BE EMAILED AS A WORD DOCUMENT.

Course Policies

Required Texts

You are not required to purchase texts for this course; excerpts of all reading materials will be provided in advance.

Classroom Recordings

This course will **not** be recorded. Accordingly, you will need to attend the course meetings (either in-person or remotely) during the during the prescheduled times. Likewise, students are not permitted to record class meetings without first gaining permission from the course instructor. If this policy changes (if a meeting will be recorded), students will be notified by the instructor ahead of time.

In-Person Attendance Policies

In-person attendance must be arranged ahead of time, so that we remain within the L/A capacity limits for our classroom. In order to facilitate this, you will be placed into one of three groups at the beginning of the semester: (Group A) those who attend in person on Tuesdays but attend remotely on Thursdays, (Group B) those who attend in person on Thursdays but attend remotely on Tuesdays, or (Group C) those who attend every class remotely. If you decide that you would like to switch from one group to another, you must first gain permission from the instructor. If you elect to attend remotely on a day that you would usually attend in person, please notify the instructor of this via email, so that your attendance can be counted accordingly.

Attendance Requirement

Attendance is mandatory. Students are allowed two unexcused absences. Further unexcused absences will affect your final grade as follows. Suppose your average grade for the semester, prior to factoring in attendance, is a B. With two or less unexcused absences, your final grade will remain a B. With three unexcused absences, your final grade will be a B-. With four unexcused absences, your final grade will be a C+, and so on. Exceptions will be made for illness, etc.

Classroom Civility

We will be discussing controversial topics in this course. One of the assumptions guiding this course is that conversations about these topics can be healthy and constructive when they are approached with civility and care. As such, students are expected to remain civil and respectful toward their colleagues during in-class discussions, in order to keep these discussions on track. Please contact the instructor if you have any questions about this.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarized work will result in an F and further disciplinary actions in accordance with BU's academic conduct code:

<http://www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code/>.

Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact the BU Disability & Access Services Office at 617-353-3658 to coordinate accommodation requests. Further information regarding disability services can be found at

Schedule

Th (Sept. 3rd) – Introduction

Week 2

T (Sept. 8th) – Introduction

- Pink Floyd: *The Wall*

Th (Sept. 10th) – Introduction

- Pink Floyd: *The Wall*
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Week 3

T (Sept. 15th) – Hobbes' State of Nature

- Hobbes: *Leviathan*

Th (Sept. 17th) – Hobbes' State of Nature

- Hobbes: *Leviathan*
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Week 4

T (Sept. 22nd) – Locke on the Law of Nature

- Locke: *The Second Treatise of Government*

Th (Sept. 24th) – Locke on the Law of Nature

- Locke: *The Second Treatise of Government*
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Week 5

T (Sept. 29th) – Rousseau on the Origin of Inequality

- Rousseau: *Discourse on Inequality*

Th (Oct. 1st) – Rousseau on the Origin of Inequality

- Rousseau: *Discourse on Inequality*
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Week 6

T (Oct. 6th) – Montesquieu on Spirit and Law

- Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*

Th (Oct. 8th) – Montesquieu on Spirit and Law

- Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws*
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Week 7

[Oct. 13th (Tues): No Class; Substitute Monday Schedule]

Th (Oct. 15th) – Marx on Capitalism

- Marx: “Alienated Labor”; “Money”
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Week 8

T (Oct. 20th) – Marx on Capitalism

- Marx: “Money”; *The Communist Manifesto*

Th (Oct. 22nd) – Marx and Engels on Communism

- Marx: *The Communist Manifesto*

Week 9

T (Oct. 27th) – Nietzsche on Social Resentment and Power

- Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality*

Th (Oct. 29th) – Nietzsche on Social Resentment and Power

- Nietzsche: *On the Genealogy of Morality*

Week 10

T (Nov. 3rd) – Freud on Civilization and Social Order

- Freud: *Civilization and its Discontents*

Th (Nov. 5th) – Freud on Civilization and Social Order

- Freud: *Civilization and its Discontents*

Week 11

T (Nov. 10th) – Arendt on Totalitarianism

- Arendt: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Th (Nov. 12th) – Arendt on Totalitarianism

- Arendt: *The Origins of Totalitarianism*

Week 12

T (Nov. 17th) – Arendt on the Banality of Evil

- Arendt: *Eichmann in Jerusalem*

Th (Nov. 19th) – Oppenheimer on Conscience and Killing

- Oppenheimer: *The Act of Killing*

Week 13

T (Nov. 24th) – Oppenheimer on Conscience and Killing

- Oppenheimer: *The Act of Killing*

Th (Nov. 26th) – No Class (Thanksgiving Recess)

[Nov. 26th (Thurs): No Class; Thanksgiving Recess]

Week 14

T (Dec. 1st) – Mills on the Racial Contract

- Mills: *The Racial Contract*

Th (Dec. 3rd) – Mills on the Racial Contract

- Mills: *The Racial Contract*

Week 15

T (Dec. 8th) – Stanley on Fascism; Nussbaum on Political

Emotions

- Stanley: *How Fascism Works*
- Nussbaum: *Political Emotions*

Th (Dec. 10th) – Flex Day

- Reading TBA

**FINAL PAPER DUE BY MIDNIGHT (EST)
ON DEC. 15TH**
