



**Political Science 513.01: ProSeminar
in Political Theory**
Spring 2018

Instructor: Dr. Jeffrey Herndon

Office Location: 162 Ferguson Social Science
Office Hours:

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COURSE INFORMATION

Textbook(s) Required

Arendt, Hannah. 1998. *The Human Condition*, 2nd ed. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

Camus, Albert. 1992. *The Rebel: An Essay on Man in Revolt*, Reissue ed. New York. Vintage Books.

MacIntyre, Alisdair. 2007. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*, 3rd ed. South Bend. University of Notre Dame Press.

Sandoz, Ellis. 1999. *The Politics of Truth and Other Untimely Essays*. Columbia. University of Missouri Press.

Strauss, Leo. 1999. *Natural Right and History*, Reissue ed. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

----- . 1978. *The City and Man*, Reprint ed. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

Taylor, Charles. 1989. *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity*. Cambridge. Harvard University Press.

Voegelin, Eric. 1990. *Anamnesis*, edited and translated by Gerhart Niemeyer. University of Missouri Press.

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

-----, 1987. *The New Science of Politics: An Introduction*. Chicago. University of Chicago Press.

Course Description

The pro-seminar in political theory studies and contributes to the ever-evolving dialogue about the ultimate realities that shape political life and the ultimate principles that should guide it. Animated by the Socratic spirit, this dialogue has been carried on by secular and religious thinkers, non-Western as well as Western. Central to political theory is a sustained inquiry into the nature of justice, and into the fundamental needs, both spiritual and material, of humanity in general and of particular groups. Political theory seeks to evaluate the contrasting conceptions of justice and of the good life that have been advanced by different thinkers and societies, critically examining the most important rival regimes or constitutional structures that have been promoted as best fulfilling humanity's truest political needs and goals. At the same time, political theory wrestles with urgent issues confronting contemporary society. Political theory draws on, contributes to, interrogates, and sometimes criticizes the research agendas of social scientists employing contemporary empirical research methods.

This seminar will begin with the crisis of modernity—using that as a touchstone by which to examine conceptions of right order and the causes of disorder.

Student Learning Outcomes (Should be measurable; observable)

1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in writing a literature review.
2. Student Communication will be clear, purposeful, and make appropriate use of evidence, data and technology as applicable
3. Students will be able to engage in critical thinking by differentiating between fact and opinion.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods

This course is a graduate seminar. What this means is that you will be teaching and learning from each other through class discussions and presentations based on the readings and supplemental materials.

GRADING

The syllabus/schedule are subject to change.

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 137-150

D= 90-104

B = 122-136

F= 89 or below

C = 105-122

Literature Review 40 pts.

Discussion Papers 90 pts. (9 papers each worth 10 points)

Class Participation 10 pts.

Assessments

Each week you will be responsible for writing, presenting, and defending a brief (6-8 pages) discussion paper centered upon the reading(s) assigned for a given week. This assignment should demonstrate critical thinking skills and your ability to communicate.

In addition, each week you are also responsible for critically analyzing and discussing the work of your classmates. Again, this is an exercise in critical thinking and mastery of the material from which you work. You will be expected to demonstrate that mastery through your discussion points and questions you pose to your colleagues.

Throughout the semester you should be working on a literature review assignment related to the materials in the course. There will be an assignment sheet that will lay out the particulars of the assignment. At the end of the semester you will deliver your literature review to the class. You would be well advised to settle on a theme or author as early as possible so that you will not be attempting to cram a semester's worth of reading into the final week of class. Presentation days will be determined by lot, but all literature reviews will be due at the same time.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures/Policies

As noted previously, this is a graduate course. More importantly it is a seminar. What this means is that in order for you and your classmates to succeed, you must be here. Only the most extreme circumstances (with appropriate documentation) will be accepted for missing class. Please try to get here on time and prepared for class.

Being properly prepared for class means:

1. you have read the material
2. completed and distributed your discussion papers on time
3. you have read and are prepared to critique/discuss the discussion papers submitted by your classmates.

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Discussion papers are to be emailed to your classmates no later than 10:00 p.m. on the Friday before the next Monday class meeting so as to give your colleagues time to read and review your work.

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

University Specific Procedures

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

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ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Gee Library- Room 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

- January 26: Introduction to the course
- January 29: Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*
- February 5: Camus, *The Rebel*
- February 12: Voegelin, *Anamnesis*
- February 19: Arendt, *The Human Condition*
- February 26: Strauss, *The City and Man*
- March 12: Spring Break
- March 19: Strauss, *Natural Right and History*
- March 26: MacIntyre, *After Virtue*
- April 2: Taylor, *Sources of the Self*
- April 9: Sandoz, *The Politics of Truth*
- April 23: Due date for completed literature reviews
- April 30: Presentations
- May 7: Presentations

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