Course Description:
Political philosophy is the study of the fundamental questions of public life. It covers topics such as human nature, the proper relationship between the state and individuals, the proper relationship between the state and social groups, and the rights and duties that accrue to citizens. In this course, we will examine some of the key concepts of political theory and the ways in which they have been framed and have developed from Plato’s time to the present. The course is not meant to be comprehensive. Rather, you should leave this class with a basic understanding of some of the key writings of a handful of political thinkers from the Western tradition. There are two primary goals for this course: to introduce you to the historical development of key political ideas in Western thought and to develop your critical thinking skills and foster a spirit of inquiry so that you will be challenged to raise and discuss provocative questions with regards to political theories and realities.

Note Well:
1. You will be doing a lot of writing this term, both formal and informal.
2. You will be doing a lot of reading this term. Many of the reading assignments are dense and/or lengthy. You will need to set aside at least 3 hours of reading time for every hour of class time. You are expected to do the assigned readings before the class in which they will be discussed.
3. You will be engaging in a lot of discussion this term. This is not a lecture course. My job in the class is to provide the necessary guidance for you to read, think and engage the ideas of our authors.
4. If you are not prepared to commit to a significant amount of reading, writing, and classroom discussion for this course, then you should not enroll in the course this term.
5. You do not have to agree or disagree with any of the theorists we will examine. You do have to understand them. I do not care about the content of your opinions - what I care about is the quality of your thinking.

Required Books:
You will be provided an electronic text to use, which you can get in either iBook or pdf form from the Course Documents section of Blackboard. You may buy/rent texts if you prefer, but none have not been ordered through the bookstore. Also, please be aware that translations and pagination will differ and that there will be some additional material beyond what is in the books. We are using material from these books:
Plato - The Republic.
John Locke - Second Treatise of Government.
John Stuart Mill - On Liberty.
Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels - The Marx/Engels Reader.
Michel Foucault - The Foucault Reader.
Judith Butler - Gender Trouble, Undoing Gender.

Course Requirements:
Commonplace Book: 40 points
Final Exam: 40 points
Essay 1: 30 points
Essay 2: 30 points
Quizzes: 30 points
Class Participation: 30 points
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Total 200 points

Schedule of Class Meetings and Readings:

- **Week 1 (8/19-21)**: Introduction
- **Week 2 (8/26-28)**: Plato: Republic, Books 1-4
- **Week 3 (9/2-4)**: Plato: Republic, Books 5-7, 10
- **Week 4 (9/9-11)**: Locke: Second Treatise of Government, Chapters 1-9
- **Week 5 (9/16-18)**: Locke: Second Treatise of Government, Chapters 10-19
- **Week 6 (9/23-25)**: Mill: On Liberty Chapters 1-3
- **Week 7 (9/30-10/2)**: Mill: On Liberty, Chapters 4-5
- **Week 8 (10/7-9)**: [Apology Essay due 10/7]
  - Marx: Preface to a Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy
  - Marx: Introduction to A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel’s Philosophy of Right
- **Week 9 (10/14-16)**: No class Tuesday
  - Marx: Theses On Feuerbach
  - Marx: Ruling Classes and Ruling Ideas
- **Week 10 (10/21-23)**: Marx: Communist Manifesto
- **Week 11 (10/28-30)**: Foucault: Truth & Power
  - Foucault: Nietzsche, Genealogy, History
  - Foucault: Disciplines and Sciences of the Individual
- **Week 12 (11/4-6)**: Foucault: Disciplines and Sciences of the Individual
  - Foucault: We 'Other Victorians'
  - Foucault: The Deployment of Sexuality: Method
- **Week 13 (11/11-13)**: Butler: Acting in Concert
  - Butler: The Question of Social Transformation
- **Week 14 (11/18-20)**: Butler: Beside Oneself: On the Limits of Sexual Autonomy
  - Butler: Indefinite Detention
- **Week 15 (11/25)**: Churchill: Indigenism; Dark Mountain: Uncivilization
- **Week 16**: [Essay 2 due 12/3 by 5 pm]
- **Final Exam**: Tuesday, December 9: 12–3 p.m

Assignments:

- **Commonplace Book**: You will need to purchase a bound, lined, blank journal. You will use this to produce a “commonplace book.” This will be your place to record important quotes, subjects and ideas from the texts, as well as the questions and thoughts they provoke in you. A commonplace book does not consist of your reading notes – it will be more formal than that. You should mark up the texts/take notes/make comments separately and then put the most important in your commonplace book. This will be your permanent personal companion to the texts we will be reading, a record of your initial engagement with political philosophy. I will collect them following each quiz, and you will be using them as your “open book” for the exam. I will give further instructions in class and provide an example for you to peruse.

- **Quizzes**: Brief, short answer quizzes at the end of the discussion of an author.

- **Final Exam**: There will be one comprehensive exam. I will choose the questions from a list provided to you.

- **Papers**: You will write two essays for this class. The first will be an apologetical essay focusing on either Plato, Locke or Mill. "Apologetics" comes from the Greek word apologia, meaning "speaking in defense." Plato's defense of Socrates is a classic example of apologetics. You will be playing the role of apologist, or defender, for two of the theorists we examine this semester. You will choose one of the scholarly critiques provided by me and available on
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Blackboard. You will defend the theorist in a well-written and well-argued 5 page essay which is true to the theorist's perspective. That is, you are not writing from your point of view, but from that of the theorist. This will require you to be well-versed in the theorist, which will mean reading more than just the one required text. You may find it useful to read (and cite if necessary) exegetical essays on the theorists (exegetical essays explain the ideas of someone else). I recommend that you choose a theorist towards which you do not already have strong partisanship. The first part of the paper will be an accurate summation of the critiques to which you will be responding. Be sure to cover them in sufficient detail as to render them intelligible and convincing – do not caricature or mis-represent the critiques. This should be no more than two pages. The next part will be your defense of the theorist. Remember you are taking the theorist's point of view, not yours – with regards to this section, your opinions are not relevant. This should be at around five pages. I will return this with comments for improvement. The due date will be announced later. No late papers will be accepted–turn in whatever you have.

The second paper will be a critical essay in which you will use either Ward Churchill’s “Indigenism” or Dark Mountain’s “Uncivilization Manifesto” to engage and critique either Marx, Foucault or Butler. More information about this paper will be forthcoming.

Other Instructions:

1. YOU MUST CITE YOUR SOURCES:
If you have a direct quote, use quotation marks, and provide the page number and author and date of the work. If you are paraphrasing something someone else has said, you must provide the page number(s) where those statements are made. Use the APSA citation format. You must supply a works cited page.

2. DO NOT PLAGIARIZE. Plagiarism will piss me off badly and result in zero points for the assignment and, if egregious, a report will be filed with the Dean of Students.

3. I am happy to talk with you about your ideas and your revisions. I have regular office hours. If those hours are not convenient for you, we can set up an appointment.

4. Do NOT email your drafts or final papers. Emailed papers will be ignored.

5. Do not get all cheesy with font size and margins.

Some General Notes and Guidelines

Bring the book (or notes you’ve taken), as well as your Commonplace Book. If you habitually do not bring these to class, I will assume you are not reading and will judge you accordingly.

No texting during class. Anyone texting, or otherwise fiddling with an electronic device will get a zero for participation. If you text again, you will fail the class. Do not think that you will be the exception to this policy. Seriously, just put your phone away. Penalties for using a laptop for any other purpose (Facebook, email, etc.) are the same as texting.

Tests: Except in the cases of a bona fide medical emergency or the sudden death or grave illness of an immediate relative with confirming documentation, I do not approve make-up tests. If you have a commitment scheduled for the day of a test or assignment, you should contact me well before the date so that we can consider the possibility of taking the test or submitting the assignment early.

Class Participation: When you don’t read in advance, don’t engage with the ideas expressed by the writers, the instructor, and the other students, or when you attend class only sporadically, both your learning and your classmates’ learning is greatly inhibited. Additionally, class becomes really boring. So you are expected to show up, to pay attention, and to prepare the readings in advance of the class period for which they are assigned. I encourage you to take notes as you read and bring them to class for reference during discussions. Obviously, if you aren’t here, you can’t participate. That said, just showing up and staying awake isn’t participation.
Participation includes paying attention, asking questions, contributing to class discussion in a way that demonstrates that you have completed the reading, responding politely to your classmates’ questions, etc. Uninformed discussion will hurt, not help, your grade. I will be looking for you to ask questions or make comments when you are confused, angered, excited, or whatever. I encourage those students who have personal experience or knowledge of some of the issues we will be covering to bring them up in class. Much of this will focus on discussions—you MUST come to class with an understanding of the readings assigned for that day.

Note: If you come to every class but do not talk, you will get a poor grade for participation.

**Honor Code:** I expect all students in this course to abide by both the letter and spirit of the university’s academic integrity policy. Violations of the university honor code will be prosecuted. The full text of the Academic Integrity Policy can be viewed at: [http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Policy/HonorPolicy.html](http://www.uncg.edu/reg/Policy/HonorPolicy.html). Specifically pertinent to this course is the act of plagiarism, which the student handbook defines as “the use of another person’s ideas or thoughts, which are not common knowledge, without acknowledging the source.” Do NOT engage in plagiarism. If you are in doubt, cite. If caught, you will receive at least a zero for the assignment—more likely, you will fail the class or face expulsion. If you have any questions regarding what constitutes plagiarism, please see me. While it is very easy to plagiarize off of the internet and other sources, it is just as easy to find where you plagiarized from. Typically, if I suspect plagiarism, it takes me less than a minute to find the source.

Plagiarism from *Sparknotes* in any form will result in an F for the class.

**Addenda:** Please keep all returned work, so that any discrepancy in the recording of grades can be easily resolved. Once final grades are turned in, they are final. If you are concerned about what your grade might be, see me before the end of the semester. I am happy to meet with you for any length of time to help you through this course. However, do not come to me the day before an assignment is due and ask for help on the assignment. If you need to earn above a particular grade in this class in order to graduate, maintain athletic eligibility, receive financial aid, prevent the apocalypse, etc., the time to speak with me about this is as soon as you feel you may be below that grade—NOT at the end of the semester or after I have turned in final grades.

The reason you get a syllabus at the beginning of the semester is to avoid this conversation.