

Tentative Syllabus – Details subject to change prior to the first day of class

PHIL 445

19th Century Political Philosophy

Instructor: Prof. Amy Barnes, amy.barnes@mcgill.ca

Course Time and Location: MW 1:05-2:25 pm, Leacock 14

Office Hours and Location: TBD

In this course we will consider how certain fundamental political philosophical questions were treated in the 19th century. While noting areas of historical continuity and rupture—most particularly with social contractarianism—in reading the idealist, liberal, utilitarian, existentialist and materialist contributions of this period we will also highlight themes of ongoing debate and concern. We will attend, in particular, to descriptions of the role and nature of the state and the conditions of its legitimacy. What are our duties and obligations towards the state, and what are its duties and obligations towards us? What is the scope of our “liberty”: in what circumstances can the “state” become an oppressive force and in what circumstances can it be a condition of our freedom? Is it coherent to speak of “right” outside of “law” (e.g. the right of civil disobedience, of armed resistance to the state, the rights of non-citizen or enslaved groups; the existence of specific rights of suffrage, property ownership, freedom of speech, religious practice, etc.)? While the philosophical responses given to these questions will of course be contextualized by existing conditions in Europe at this epoch, we will see that these contributions also serve to illuminate our own era, opening up a sense of the theoretical bases of our present political condition and pointing the way to alternative possibilities.

Course Material

Kant, Immanuel. *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings on Politics, Peace and History*. Ed. Pauline Kleingeld. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006.

Hegel, G.W.F. *The Philosophy of Right*. Trans. Alan White. Focus Philosophical Library, 2002.

Marx, Karl. *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, 2nd edition. Oxford University Press, 2003.

These texts will be available for purchase at the McGill Bookstore and copies will be placed on reserve at the library. Although most of the texts used in this course are in the public domain and hence available for free online, it is important that the same editions are used by all students, due to variations in translation and editing choices.

Other readings will be posted on MyCourses.

Prerequisites

This course requires students to keep pace with a demanding schedule of readings, and it presupposes some facility with political philosophical concepts. For this reason students are asked not to enrol in the course unless they have performed reasonably well in a political philosophy course in the past. Students who are unsure about their level of preparation for this course are asked to consult with the professor before registering.

Evaluation

One-page weekly responses	20%
Short paper or presentation	35%
Long Paper	45%

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Weekly responses

Students will receive a written explanation of this assignment on the first day of class. One response per week may be submitted (e.g. students may not stockpile their responses until the final week). A minimum of 10 responses are required over the course of the semester, and a maximum of 12 are permitted to count toward the final grade.

Short Paper (1200-1500 words)

This paper will respond to an assigned question that addresses the first half of the course material. Topics will be distributed on January 20 and the paper is due at the beginning of class on February 22.

Presentation option*

Students may give a 20 minute presentation on an assigned portion of the weekly material and lead the class discussion in lieu of writing the first (short) paper. They will be evaluated based on their presentation and an elaborated version of their handout. Students who choose this option must commit to it by January 13 and arrange with the professor the date on which they will present. Dates and topics will be assigned on a first-come-first-served basis. After midnight on the 13th, all students who have not begun to make arrangements for their presentation will be considered to have selected the “short paper” option.

*The availability of this option is dependent on the level of student interest. If either too many (more than 20), or too few (fewer than 5), students wish to select this option, it will have to be eliminated for the sake of fairness.

Long Paper (2250-2500 words)

Several possible topics will be provided to the class on March 21; however, as this is a fourth year course, students will also be allowed to write on a topic of their choice if desired. Students with self-assigned topics are encouraged, however, to consult about these with the professor well in advance of the submission deadline to help address potential difficulties (e.g. scope). This paper is in lieu of a final exam and must be submitted in class on April 13. Celebratory cookies will be provided.

Guidelines for Submission of Work

Papers and presentation notes must be submitted in hard copy, in person, at the beginning of class on the date indicated. Pages should be numbered and stapled, 10-12 point font, with line spacing of 1.5-2. Students may use double-sided printing. The student's name and student number, along with the paper title and the word count, must be provided on the cover page. Students are, however, asked **not** to put their name on each page of their paper (just their student number), as numerous studies have indicated that blind-review is important for fairness in evaluation. Short extensions may be granted for legitimate concerns, if arranged at least 3 weeks in advance. Appropriate medical notes will be honoured. Late papers without an extension will be penalized at a rate of 5% per calendar day. Papers submitted after the start of class on the day of submission will be penalized 2.5%.

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures See www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/ for more information.

In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. [Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.]

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Schedule (*Subject to change prior to the first day of class*)

January 7 Introduction, course outline

January 10 Immanuel Kant, Doctrine of Right from the *Metaphysics of Morals* (110-149 in *Toward Perpetual Peace ...*)

January 13 Immanuel Kant, “Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch” (67-109 in *Toward Perpetual Peace ...*)

Jeremy Waldron, “Kant’s Theory of the State” (179-200 in *Toward Perpetual Peace ...*)

January 18 Kant, summary. Intro to Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* (pages...)

January 20 Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*. **Topics will be distributed for Paper #1.**

January 25 **NO CLASS** (N.B. if students wish to submit a response this week, they must do so on January 27).

January 27 Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*

February 1 Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*

February 3 Schopenhauer, *World as Will and Representation* §442-452; “On Government”

February 10 Schopenhauer, cont..

February 15 Jeremy Bentham, “The Nature of Political Argument” (WebCT)

“Summary of Basic Principles” (WebCT)

“A Critical Examination of the Declaration of Rights”

http://homepage.westmont.edu/hoeckley/readings/symposium/PDF/201_300/266.pdf

February 17 Søren Kierkegaard, “Two Ages: The Age of Revolution and the Present Age, A Literary Review (March 30, 1846)” (WebCT)

Alexis de Tocqueville, Volume I of *Democracy in America*, 3bPart II (“Tyranny of the Majority”) (WebCT)

February 22 Mill, J.S. “On Liberty” **Paper #1 due at the beginning of class.**

READING WEEK-NO CLASS

March 7 Mill, J.S. “On Liberty”

March 9 Mill, J.S. “On Liberty”; “The Subjection of Women”

March 14 Mill, J.S. “The Subjection of Women,” cont...

Harriet Taylor Mill, “The Enfranchisement of Women” (WebCT)

March 14 Marx, Karl, “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts” (*Selected Writings* 83-121)

March 16 Marx, “On James Mill” (SW 124-133), “Wage-Labour and Capital” (SW 273-294)

March 21 Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” “Towards a Critique of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right*” (SW 46-82) **Topics will be distributed for Paper #2**

March 23 Mill, J.S. excerpts from *Principles of Political Economy*

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March 28 Mill, J.S. excerpts from *Chapters on Socialism*

Optional: Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*

March 30 T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*

April 4 T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*

April 6 T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*

April 11 T.H. Green, *Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation*

April 13 Review. **Paper #2 due at the beginning of class.**