

University of Toronto
POL 320Y Modern Political Thought
Summer 2018

Instructor: Dr. David Carvounas
Office: SS 3058
Office Hours: MW 5:00–6:00 (by appointment)
Email: david.carvounas@utoronto.ca

Teaching Assistant: Dr. Igor Shoikhedbrod
Email: igor.shoikhedbrod@utoronto.ca

This course offers an introduction to the history of modern Western political thought. We closely examine a series of representative texts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to uncover and apprehend the ideas and ideals that form and inform the modern Western world. Although diverse and often at odds, these ideas and ideals are united by a common, *modern* worldview. Through a textual analysis we find new or newly reinterpreted concepts of human nature, progress, liberty, equality, justice, and power that befit a *modern* understanding of history, philosophy, culture, and politics — a modern understanding that continues to set the boundary of our current political discussions, debates, and affiliations. While lectures offer analysis and interpretation, a conscientious reading of the assigned texts is indispensable.

Required Texts

Rousseau, *The Basic Political Writings*, Hackett
Kant, *Idea for a Universal History; What is Enlightenment?; Contest of Faculties* (Packet)
Condorcet, *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (Packet)
Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, Oxford University Press
Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, Knox (trans.) Oxford University Press
Marx, *Karl Marx Selected Writings* (Packet)
Mill, *On Liberty*, Hackett
Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Kaufmann (trans.) Vintage Books
Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Kaufmann (trans.) Vintage Books

Evaluation

First Term Test (June 4)	30%
Second Term Test (June 13)	20%
Third Term Test (July 23)	30%
Term Paper – 7 pages (August 14)	20%

Regarding Missed Term Tests

Make-up tests will be offered only for those students who provide an extraordinary reason for missing the test. Students who miss a test for extraordinary reasons must submit a **written request (no emails!)** for special consideration within **one week** of the

missed test explaining the reason for missing the test and providing appropriate documentation, e.g. Verification of Illness or Injury Form (<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>).

IMPORTANT: Makeup tests will be held on **August 14, 2018** from 6:10–8:00. Students who miss the makeup test (regardless of the reason) will receive a zero for the missed test.

Regarding Term Paper

Term paper topics will be distributed in advance and the paper is due **at the beginning of class** (6:10) on **August 14, 2018**.

Students should keep hard copies of their term paper; the instructor and TA assume no responsibility in the event of loss or misplacement of submitted work.

The instructor and TA reserve the right to question students on the content of their written assignments. "Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto's policy on Plagiarism at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>."

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

Students will be also required to submit a hard copy of their paper to their TA.

IMPORTANT: Late papers will be penalized 5% per day, **no exceptions**.

Regarding Appeals

Appeals must be accompanied by a half-page explanation of the merit for appeal (that you thought the assignment would get a better grade is not a sufficient reason for appeal). Appeals are to be submitted to your teaching assistant for consideration **within 7 days after the tests/papers are returned**. I will consider the appeal only if a resolution cannot be found; however, I will adjust the grade only for egregious errors (5% or more).

Blackboard

Important course related announcements, reading guides for the theorists, and specific reading schedules will be posted on Blackboard. Please consult weekly.

Email

Substantive questions on course subject matter will not be addressed via email as all such questions are best considered during my office hours. Email correspondence should only be used for bureaucratic or course related problems.

IMPORTANT: The syllabus answers most questions so please read the syllabus **BEFORE** emailing.

*****The use of digital recorders during lecture sessions **is not allowed*******

Reading and Lecture Schedule

May 7 **Organizational Meeting and Introduction**

Inequality, Alienation, New Beginnings

May 9, 14, and 16 **Reading:** Rousseau's *Discourse on Inequality* and *Social Contract*

History as Progress

May 23, 28, and 30 **Reading:** Kant's *Idea for a Universal History* and *What is Enlightenment?*; Condorcet's *Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind* (Reading Packet)

June 4 **FIRST TERM TEST**

An Early Warning against the Modern Journey

June 6 and 11 **Reading:** Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (pp. 1–170)

June 13 **SECOND TERM TEST**

The Transition to a New Era

June 18, July 4 and 9

Reading: Hegel's *Philosophy of Right* (pp. 1–161)

The Poetic Potential of the Future

July 11, 16, and 18

Reading: Marx's "Speech on the Anniversary of the *Peoples Paper*," pp. 368–369; "Theses on Feuerbach," pp. 171–173; "Preface to *A Critique of Political Economy*," pp. 424–427; "Letter to Mikhailovsky," 617–619; "Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts," pp. 83–95 and 95–104; "German Ideology," pp. 175–198; "Letter to Annenkov," pp. 209–211; "Letter from the *Deutsch-Französische Jahrbücher*," pp. 43–45; "Communist Manifesto," pp. 245–271; "Capital," 472–480 (Reading Packet)

July 23

THIRD TERM TEST

The Assault on Liberty

July 25 and 30

Reading: Mill's *On Liberty* (Chapters 1–3)

The Assault on Greatness

August 1, 8, and 13

Reading: Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals* (Preface and First Essay); *Beyond Good and Evil* (Parts 1–5 and 9)

*August 14

TERM PAPER DUE/MAKEUP TERM TESTS

*Please note: Because of the summer schedule, August 14 is a **TUESDAY**.