**History of Political Thought POLS201-POLS251**

**Fall, 2022-2023**

*Instructor*: Dr. İhsan Ercan Sadi

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*Office Hours*: TBA.

*Class Meetings*: Thursdays, 13:40 – 16:30.

The main objective of this course is to familiarize students with the political ideas, and the intellectual contributions to our understanding of social and political life, of some of the key thinkers of from the antiquity to the modern age. We will take a historically grounded approach as we examine the questions their major texts raise about the design of the economic, social and political order, by considering how they intellectually engaged with the particular social and political problems of their day, as well as pointing out their relevance today. In accordance with these, we will also be situating their ideas within a broader conversation about human condition, justice, liberty, and the proper relation of the individual to society and the state.

*Readings*: All readings mentioned in the syllabus are mandatory.

*Grading*: Your final grade for this course will be based on: i) your attendance at, and participation in class (15%); ii) your midterm exam (35%); and iii) your final exam (50%). The mid-term and final exams will be in-class, unless some unforeseen circumstances of the Covid 19 might force us to do otherwise. They will include short definitional questions, as well as short essay questions that will allow the students to reflect on the thoughts presented in this course. Before each exam, preparation questions for the exam will be provided.

*Grading Policy:* Exams are consisted of two parts. In the first part, students are asked to give short definitions for the terms in their own words. Grading is done according to these principles: if students provide satisfactory answers, they receive a full grade. If their answer is only partially correct (i.e., if they miss to mention a substantive definitional element, or if they provide wrong information in parts of their definition), they receive half of the grade. If they provide no answer, or if they provide wrong answers, they receive no points for the question.

In the second part, students are asked to write short essays in accordance with the universal academic principles. In order to answer these questions, students are required to engage with the readings assigned in the course, as well as the discussions held in class. These are all open-ended questions, but students are expected to i) understand the readings assigned; ii) critically engage with them; and iii) put forth their own ideas on how to answer the question. Grading is done accordingly, with a comparative evaluation of how each student’s answer fares against every other student’s answer in the class.

\* The instructor reserves the right to assign (pop) quizzes in class, if needed.

*Academic Honesty*: Plagiarism carries severe consequences including, but not limited to, failure from the course.

\*\* Syllabus may be subject to change with advance notice based on the needs of the class.

**Tentative Course Schedule:**

**22 Sept- Introduction**

**29 Sept –** The Greeks, or the Birth of Political Philosophy (I): **Plato**

McClelland, J., *A history of western political thought*, pp. 16-46.

**6 Oct –** The Greeks, or the Birth of Political Philosophy (II): **Aristoteles**

McClelland, J., *A history of western political thought*, pp. 48-64.

**13 Oct –** Romans and “The Christian Revolution”: **Stoics & St. Augustine**

McClelland, J., *A history of western political thought*, pp. 67-103.

**20 Oct –** From the Medieval Age to the Renaissance: **St. Thomas & Niccolò Macchiavelli**

McClelland, J., *A history of western political thought*, pp. 104-120.

Boucher & Kelly, *Political Thinkers, From Socrates to the Present*, pp. 138-159

**27 Oct –** Leviathan**: Thomas Hobbes**

*Readings to be Announced.*

**3 Nov –** Civil Society: **John Locke**

*Readings to be Announced.*

**10 Nov –** The Social Contract: **Jean-Jacques Rousseau**

Plamenatz, J. Man Society (II), Chapter 4

**17 Nov – Midterm Examination**

**24 Nov –** Empirical Skepticism and The Birth of Modern Economic Thinking: **David Hume** & **Adam Smith**

Plamenatz, J. Man Society (II), Chapter 2

Heilbroner, *The* *Worldly Philosophers*, Chapter: 3.

**1 Dec –** The French Revolution and its critics: **Edmund Burke & Alexis de Tocqueville**

Ryan, A. *On Politics*, Chapter: 17; Collins & Makowsky, *The Discovery of Society*, Chapter: 3

**8 Dec –** On Liberty and Utopias: **John Stuart Mill & Utopian Thinkers**

*Excerpts from Mill, On Liberty;* Ryan A. *On Politics,* Chapter 19; Taylor, *Introduction*.

**15 Dec –** The Critical Thinker: **Karl Marx**

Collins & Makowsky, *The Discovery of Society*, Chapter: 3; Excerpts from *The Marx-Engels Reader*.

**22 Dec –** The Disenchantment of the World and the Individual: **Max Weber & Georg Simmel**

Excerpts from Max Weber, *Political Writings*; Excerpts from Simmel, *On Individuality and Social Forms.*