ARTS2384

Political Philosophy

Term Two // 2021

School of Humanities and Languages // UNSW Arts, Design & Architecture

Course Details

Credit Points 6

Summary of the Course

The course provides you with a solid foundation in political philosophy by means of close readings of central texts by thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke and Hannah Arendt. Political philosophy examines the nature and justification for the institutions of government, the aims of government and the desired outcomes such as freedom, equality and justice. Unlike political science it is not purely descriptive but also normative, asking why we should have certain kinds of institutions, how the basic structure of society should be organised, and how all of these might be transformed. Topics covered will include: the limits of state authority, the social contract, the role and meaningfulness of consent, power, rights, secularism, property, democracy and conceptions of the public political sphere.

Course Learning Outcomes

1.

Assessment

Assessment Rubric/Essay Standards

	HD	DN	CR	PS
Exposition of issues	Conveys in a coherent manner a clear and profound comprehension of the issues.	Conveys in a coherent manner a clear comprehension of the issues.	Conveys in a coherent manner a comprehension of the issues.	Conveys a comprehension of the issues.
Analysis	Exhibits skills associated with the philosophical analysis of texts, offering innovative and insightful interpretations.	Exhibits skills associated with the philosophical analysis of texts, showing independence of thought.	Exhibits some skills associated with the philosophical analysis of texts.	Exhibits some reflection on the issues covered.
Disciplinary conventions	Demonstrates detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to the academic essay in philosophy, including organisation, content, presentation, referencing, formatting and stylistic choices.	Demonstrates consistent use of important conventions particular to the academic essay in philosophy, including organisation, content, presentation, referencing, formatting and stylistic choices.	Follows expectations appropriate to philosophy and the academic essay for basic organisation, content, and presentation.	Attempts to use a consistent system for basic organisation and presentation.
Citations and quotations	Demonstrates critically reflective use of relevant sources to advance argument.	Demonstrates reflective use of relevant sources to support position.		

Writing an academic essay means keeping in mind several tasks:
a) accurately conveying the meaning of the primary text (what is the textual evidence for your interpretation?);
b) reflecting on the possible weaknesses and implications of the author's positions (what strikes you as contentious in the reading and/or what follows from it?);
c) situating your interpretation in relation to existing commentaries (does your take on the text differ from what others have made of it and can you provide reasons for your own way of reading the text?).
Without (a) – an accurate exposition of the primary text – you make it harder for your reader to see, for instance, that your critical remarks strike home (and do not just land a "killer blow" on a figment of your imagination).
Without (b) – the expression of your own reflections on the primary text – you make it harder for your reader to see that something is being said that has not been said before.
Without (c) – engagement with secondary literature – you make it harder for your reader to see how your interpretation contributes to contemporary academic understanding of the issues at stake, neither replicating what others have already said nor falling foul of their arguments.
NB. Keeping (a), (b) and (c) in mind is extremely difficult and never becomes straightforward. To try, however, is to set out in the right direction.

As a rule of thumb, referring to commentators when they criticise or elaborate on the primary text is better than referring to them when they simply paraphrase it or repeat widely known facts concerning its composition or influence. It is even better when you can put forward an argument of your own in response to a commentator's criticism or elaboration of the primary text.

Assessment Tasks

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Student Learning Outcomes Assessed
Research essay 1500 words	35%	02/07/2021 04:00 PM	1, 3, 4, 5
Research Essay 2000 words	50%	13/08/2021 04:00 PM	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Moodle Posts	15%	13/08/2021 04:00 PM	1, 2, 3, 4

Assessment Details

Assessment 1: Research essay 1500 words

Start date: Not Applicable

Length: 1500 words

Details:

Students write a research essay - 1500 words.

Feedback will take the form of a rubric and individual comments.

Additional details:

Essay topics will be posted on Moodle at the start of term.

Turnitin setting: This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students can see Turnitin similarity reports.

book while you are still reading it.

Turnitin setting: This is not a Turnitin assignment

Attendance Requirements

		the legitimacy and power of the state?
Week 8: 19 July - 23 July	Lecture	Arendt, *Ml Pctmjsrgml*, pp. 1-105 Topics: Power, violence and the varieties of freedom
	Tutorial	What is power? What does political participation add to being human?
Week 9: 26 July - 30 July	Lecture	Arendt, *Ml Pctmjsrgml*, pp. 106-206 Topics: The foundations of states and the philosophical import of political history
	Tutorial	Why does Arendt call the French Revolution a failure and the American Revolution a success? Do her reasons bear scrutiny?
Week 10: 2 August - 6 August	Lecture	Arendt, *Ml Pctmjsrgml*, pp. 207-73 Topics: The varieties of revolution and the political costs of the reasons for action
	Tutorial	What are the lessons to be drawn from the revolutions of the last two centuries?

Resources

Prescribed Resources

There are three required texts for this course. All are available for purchase from the UNSW Bookshop.

1. Thomas Hobbes, *Jctg_rf_l*, ed. C. B. Macpherson (London: Penguin, 1985).
2. John Locke, *Rfc Qcamlb Rpc_rgqc md Emtcplkclr _lb ? Jcrrcp Amlacplgle Rmjcp_rgml* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2002).
3. Hannah Arendt, *Ml Pctmjsrgml* (London: Penguin, 2006).

Recommended Resources

A list of recommended secondary readings will be available on Moodle and via Leganto.

Course Evaluation and Development

Students have the opportunity to provide feedback on the course both formally - via the end-of-term MyExperience survey - and informally - via e-mail or face-to-face.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au . Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
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Academic Information

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
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