



**COURSE OUTLINE**

**POLI 201**

**INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THOUGHT**

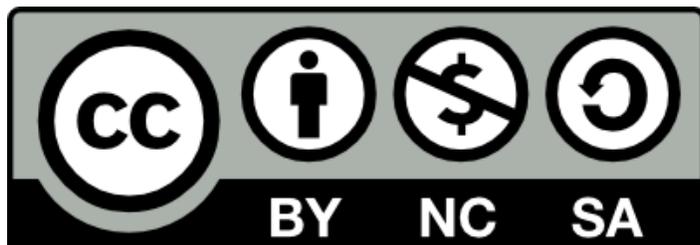
**45 HOURS  
3 CREDITS**

PREPARED BY: Eric Scarffe, Instructor      DATE: July 15, 2016

APPROVED BY:      DATE:

APPROVED BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL:      (DATE)

RENEWED BY ACADEMIC COUNCIL:      (DATE)



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APPLIED ARTS DIVISION  
Poli 201  
3 Credit Course  
Fall Semester, 2016

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### INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THOUGHT

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**INSTRUCTOR:** Eric Scarffe, MA, PHD (in progress)

**OFFICE HOURS:**TBA

**OFFICE LOCATION:** Online

**CLASSROOM:** Online  
Delivery

**E-MAIL:** [escarffe@yukoncollege.yk.ca](mailto:escarffe@yukoncollege.yk.ca)

**TIME:** Online

**TELEPHONE:** (867) 668-8770 (Admin Ast.)

**Dates:** Sept 7 - Dec 20, 2016

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### COURSE CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the political ideas that are basic to modern democratic theory and manifested in the processes and institutions of the Canadian system of government. Students will study classical political theory and contemporary developments in Political Science. Students practice critical thinking through exercises such as direct political debate with their peers.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to introduce students to the ideas that are basic to modern political thought and manifested in the processes and institutions of the Canadian system of democratic governance. It will cover a wide range of ideas that will expose participants to classical political theory as well as contemporary developments in Political Science. The relevance of these concepts to current political issues is established through lectures and in student debates.

The course endeavors to develop students' critical thinking abilities. Guest speakers, a simulation exercise, a required debate and class discussion will offer opportunities for all to participate in the process of deepening their awareness and understanding of key concepts and thinkers that have influenced contemporary political thought.

Most universities offer courses that examine particular political philosophers and their works in greater depth. This course is a preparation for more advanced work in the field.

### PREREQUISITES

None.

## RELATED COURSE REQUIREMENTS - COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

1. Computer, laptop or tablet that can run Fuze (<https://support.fuze.com/hc/en-us/articles/203435036-Hardware-and-Software-Requirements-for-Fuze>)
2. Recommended WIRED, highspeed internet (See bandwidth requirements: <https://support.fuze.com/hc/en-us/articles/203438356-Getting-Started-Frequently-Asked-Questions%20/>). Students can run a free speed test on their connection to check this, Northwestel offers one, and there are many free speed tests available online to measure bandwidth: (<http://www.nwtel.ca/shop/internet/usage-tools>)
3. USB headset (available at Staples, Walmart and The Source locally) <https://www.softchalkcloud.com/lesson/serve/00yiSDVHguwYAo/html> (the library also has four headsets they can rent out, but not available to students without a staff person signing it out on their behalf)
4. Webcam (built in, or separate)

## EQUIVALENCY OR TRANSFERABILITY

|                          |                     |                      |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| CAMO PSC 210 (3)         | CAPU POL 111 (3)    | KPU POLI 1110 (3)    |
| SFU POL 100 (3) - B- Soc | TRU POLI 1210 (3)   | TRU-OL POLI 2XX1 (3) |
| TWU POLS 101 (3)         | UBC POLI 240 (3)    | UFV POSC 100 (3)     |
| UNBC POLS 2XX (3)        | UVIC POLI 202 (1.5) |                      |

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

- Demonstrate an awareness of the historical development of political rights and responsibilities and their evolutionary direction
- Recognize key political thinkers from Plato to Dworkin, and underlying philosophical concepts influencing contemporary political issues
- Understand the importance of the cultural context in which political change occurs
- Enhance their potential and desire for political engagement
- Be prepared to pursue more advanced work in Political Science
- Develop their critical thinking capacity, written communication and debating abilities

## **DELIVERY METHODS**

This course will be delivered online and will consist of weekly readings (both from the text books and resources provided online), lectures, discussion forms, and activities. In addition, the course may include videos and links to supplemental materials.

## **ASSESSMENTS**

### **Attendance**

As this is an online course, your attendance will be measured by whether you are completing the course activities and class discussion forums both in a timely manner (ie in time for your classmates to engage you in discussion, not simply the moment before the comment is due). Many of the discussion forums rely on your participation, and therefore your punctuality in completing these assignments, in addition the quality of your contributions to the discussion, matter greatly.

### **Quizzes**

There are quizzes included for select modules. These quizzes represent 5% of the student's final grade. Keep in mind that students can attempt each of these quizzes as many times as they wish, but only their final attempt will count toward their grade. The intention here is to reward students for reading carefully, and for the quizzes to give students immediate feedback as to how they are doing with the readings and course material.

### **Assignments**

Students will complete three SHORT assignments. Each assignment will be worth 15% of the student's final grade and will be broadly related to the topic and readings of the module. These assignments are intended to get students engaged with the course material and are an opportunity for students to get feedback on their work prior to writing their term paper. More detailed assignment descriptions will be provided on the website.

### **Paper**

Each student will prepare their paper from their choice of the assigned topics. The paper must be between 1500 and 2000 words and will account for 30% of the student's final grade. These papers are intended to showcase the student's knowledge of the course material, as well as the student's original thought.

In all papers, students will be expected to state their thesis, supported it by integrating appropriate assigned readings and class materials, in addition to citing any outside sources they wish to draw upon in THEIR argument. Their writing should demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and analysis of the key concepts covered in the course. Proper referencing and bibliographies are required. Students should expect to spend AT LEAST two to three weeks thoroughly researching and writing this paper. A more detailed description of the paper will be provided when the paper topics are assigned.

An assignment handed in after the due date will be considered a 'late' paper. 5% will be deducted for every late day up to a maximum of five late days after which time the assignment will not be accepted.

Students should maintain a back-up copy of all assignments!

### **Examinations**

There will be no exam in this course. Although it is true that in upper level university courses it is important for students to be able to recall large quantities of information quickly and precisely, for our purposes it is much more important for students to spend time engaging with the text and reflecting carefully. Many students will be

understandably excited by the idea of not having a final exam, but keep in mind that when grading exams professors take into consideration the time in which students were asked to craft their answers. Students should note that the same leniency will not be given in the context of their final papers and assignments.

## **EVALUATION**

The student's grades will be calculated as follows:

|                     |      |
|---------------------|------|
| Class Participation | 20%  |
| Quizzes             | 5%   |
| Assignments         | 45%  |
| Final Paper         | 30%  |
| Total               | 100% |

## **TEXTBOOK(S) REQUIRED**

Sweet, William. *Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*. 2012.

Readings from the textbook may be supplemented with hand-outs, web resources or articles from books held online.

## **ACADEMIC AND STUDENT CONDUCT**

Information on academic standing and student rights and responsibilities can be found in the current Academic Regulations that are posted on the Student Services/ Admissions & Registration web page.

## **PLAGIARISM**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence. Plagiarism occurs when students present the words of someone else as their own. Plagiarism can be the deliberate use of a whole piece of another person's writing, but more frequently it occurs when students fail to acknowledge and document sources from which they have taken material. Whenever the words, research or ideas of others are directly quoted or paraphrased, they must be documented according to an accepted manuscript style (e.g., APA, CSE, MLA, etc.). Resubmitting a paper which has previously received credit is also considered plagiarism. Students who plagiarize material for assignments will receive a mark of zero (F) on the assignment and may fail the course. Plagiarism may also result in dismissal from a program of study or the College.

## **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION**

Reasonable accommodations are available for students requiring an academic accommodation to fully participate in this class. These accommodations are available for students with a documented disability, chronic condition or any other grounds specified in section 8.0 of the Yukon College Academic Regulations (available on the Yukon College website). It is the student's responsibility to seek these accommodations. If a student requires an academic accommodation, he/she should contact the Learning Assistance Centre (LAC) at (867) 668-8785 or lassist@yukoncollege.yk.ca.

## THE LORENE ROBERTSON WRITING CENTRE

All students are encouraged to make the Lorene Robertson Writing Centre a regular part of the writing process for coursework. Located in C2231 (adjacent the College Library), the Lorene Robertson Writing Centre offers half-hour writing coaching sessions to students of all writing abilities. Coaching sessions are available in person and through distance technologies (e.g., email plus Skype or phone). For further information or to book an appointment, visit the Centre's website:  
[www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/student\\_info/pages/writing\\_centre](http://www.yukoncollege.yk.ca/student_info/pages/writing_centre).

## CLASS SYLLABUS

### WEEK            TOPICS AND READINGS

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#### **WEEK 1: Foundations of Political Thought**

Readings: *Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction” (pgs 1-20)

#### **WEEK 2: Tribe to Nation—State of Nature**

Readings:

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to Thomas Hobbes” (pgs 21-25)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, selections from the “Leviathan” (pgs 30-39 and 50-58)

Plato’s Republic, Book II (link provided online)

#### **WEEK 3: Rights**

Readings:

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to John Locke” (pgs 79-85)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, selections from the “Two Treatise of Government” (pgs 90-110)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to Jean-Jacques Rousseau” (pgs 113-124)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, selections from the “On the Social Contract” (pgs 125-141)

Assignment 1: Are all rights created equal?

#### **WEEK 4: Sovereignty, the State, and International Relations**

Readings:

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to Immanuel Kant” (pgs 161-169)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, selections from the “Perpetual Peace” (pgs 177-207)

#### **WEEK 5: Women, reason, and the state: the renaissance challenges millennia old ideas**

Readings:

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to Mary Wollstonecraft” (pgs 221-230)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, selections from “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman” (pgs 231-260)

#### **WEEK 6: Dissenters—Bentham and an Introduction to Utilitarianism**

Readings:

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction Jeremy Bentham” (pgs 261-270)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Anarchical Fallacies” (pgs 277-302)

Stanford Encyclopedia to Utilitarianism (link provided online)

## **WEEK 7: On Liberty and Utilitarianism**

### **Readings:**

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to John Stuart Mill” (pgs 303-313)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, selections from “On Liberty” and “Utilitarianism” (pgs 315-380)

Assignment: Lifeboat

## **WEEK 8: Bernard Bosanquet and British Idealism**

### **Readings:**

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to Bernard Bosanquet” (pgs 419-435)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “The Philosophical Theory of the State” (pgs 439-456)

## **WEEK 9: Jaques Maritain—Man and the State**

### **Readings:**

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Introduction to Jacques Maritain” (pgs 457-468)

*Modern Political Thought from Hobbes to Maritain*, “Lectures on Natural Law” and “Man and the State” (pgs 471-502)

## **WEEK 10: Rawls—Contracts and Constructivism**

### **Readings:**

Selections from John Rawls’ *A Theory of Justice* (link provided online)

## **WEEK 11: Conceptions of the ‘Self’**

### **Readings:**

Michael Sandel, “The Procedural Republic and the Unencumbered Self”, *Political Theory*, Vol. 12, No. 1 (1984) pp. 81-96

Term paper topics distributed

## **WEEK 12: Charles Taylor and the Politics of Recognition**

### **Readings:**

Charles Taylor, “The Politics of Recognition” (link provided online)

Assignment 3: Persons

## **WEEK 13: The Overlapping Consensus—Human Rights by Agreement**

### **Readings:**

John Rawls, “Theory of an Overlapping Consensus”, *Oxford Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 7, No 1 (1987), pp 1-25

## **WEEK 14: Dworkin, Legal Rights, Political Rights and International Law**

### **Readings:**

Ronald Dworkin, *Justice for Hedghogs*, Chapter 15, “Political Rights and Concepts”  
Eric J Scarffe, “‘A New Philosophy for International Law’ and Dworkin’s Political Realism”, *Canadian Journal of Law and Jurisprudence*, (2016)

**N.B.** This reading list maybe supplemented to with additional readings or revised as the instructor deems appropriate.