



## SYLLABUS SUMMARY

# Political Philosophy 2

POL/PHI 318 Section 01

**Semester** Spring 2024  
**Length** 16 Weeks  
**Credit Hours** 3  
**Course Location** Harold Miller Center 154A  
**Course Schedule** TTh, 2-3:15

**Instructor** Kevin Walker, Ph.D.  
**Office Location** Lower Welder  
**Office Hours** MWF 12-1; TTh 1-2  
**Email** KMWalker@umary.edu  
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### Course Description

“The state,” “human rights,” “liberty,” “progress” – these things prove our ability to master our own nature and make the very best of human power. But like all expressions of power, the modern project enjoys an ambiguous legacy. According to the history of ideas, these things were justified with the rejection of political wisdom, a sense of human purpose, and a view of our intrinsic dignity. The Enlightenment brought mass-education; but this, according to some critics, led to much social corruption; revolutions sought the end of grave injustices, yet they frequently ended in violent disaster. Today, we greatly enjoy the successes of modernity’s trial and error, but we cannot ignore the critics who point out the general aimlessness and despair of modern life. Even as it affects us in what we view as negative ways, we still make sense of political and social life based on purely modern assumptions. As more generations pass, the stronger those assumptions become – and they increasingly narrow our moral and spiritual outlook. In this course, we will free ourselves from those assumptions (as far as we can) by studying the great thinkers who engineered our world and learn to see them with critical assessment rather than blind acceptance. We will study the early groundwork for a scientific approach to government; we will consider the criticism and defense of Enlightenment liberalism; and we will look at the reactions against the successes of modernism, in both violent revolution and the quiet administration of a “planned society.” Lastly, we will consider the possibility of revising – if not rejecting – modernism and recovering the ancient way of thinking about human nature in relation to politics.

### Texts

The following texts are *required* (in order of reading):

- Hobbes, Thomas. *The Essential Leviathan: A Modernized Edition*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2016.  
Locke, John. *Second Treatise on Government*. Minola: Dover Publications Inc., 2002.  
Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Discourse on Inequality*. Translated by Maurice Cranston. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.  
Burke, Edmund. *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.  
Mill, John Stuart. *On Liberty*. Minola: Dover Publications Inc., 2002.  
Nietzsche, Fredrick. *Beyond Good and Evil*. Translated by Walter Kauffman. New York: Random House, 1989.

### Expectations

- **Participation and Attendance (5%)**. Come to class every day and be prepared to discuss the assigned reading based on the Reading Questions that will be passed out each week. Contact the professor as soon as possible for excused absences. Each unexcused or unexplained absence will result in the loss of a percentage point.
- **Discussion Questions and Responses (30% -- Questions 15%; Responses 15%)**. Write a short discussion question for an assigned day of class and respond to classmates’ questions on the Canvas Discussion forum. There will be a sign-up sheet.
- **Debates (20%)**. Present one side or the other of a key debate covered in class. There will be a sign-up sheet.
- **Essay (35% -- Phase I 5%; Phase II 5%; Phase III 5%; Final Draft 20%)**. This is an 8–10-page essay on a topic of your choice. It will be due in three phases for feedback from the instructor. There will be a prompt.
- **Presentation and Peer-Review Response (10%)**. This is a presentation on your essay, and a peer review of a classmates essay. There will be a prompt.

Late assignments will receive no higher than a B+ unless other arrangements are made by contacting the professor with a specific explanation.

## Academic Honesty

Students are expected to read the [University of Mary's Academic Honor Code and Honor System](#) and abide by all the standards of conduct and requirements contained therein. When a student is in doubt about whether or not an action might constitute an Academic Honor Code violation, s/he should request clarification from the instructor *before* the action in question is undertaken. The Academic Honor Code is available for review on [my.umary.edu](http://my.umary.edu) under the General University Policies link. To clarify: *Cheating* is copying one's own notes (e.g., a cheat-sheet) or someone else's exam. *Plagiarism* is copying text you did not write without proper citation as if it was your own, whether it is from online or from another essay.

## Artificial Intelligence

The whole purpose of AI software like ChatGPT is to generate fake text. There is therefore absolutely no reason for using AI software for this course. Use of these tools is strictly prohibited, and all assignments will be carefully screened by TurnItIn.com and ZeroGPT.com. Students will be notified about all incidents and offered a chance to explain, but their submission will be reported to the Vice President of Student Affairs.

## Reasonable Accommodations

The University of Mary, in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and in the spirit of our mission, offers support for disabled students who provide required documentation. Students with disabilities who need accommodations should apply to the [Office of Student Accessibility Services](#). For further information, contact Dr. Lynn Dodge, coordinator of Student Accessibility Services, in the Student Success Center (lower level of Welder Library) at (701) 355-8264 or [ljdodge@umary.edu](mailto:ljdodge@umary.edu).

## Excused Absence Policy

The University has a policy on excused absences related to sponsored/sanctioned activities and events. The policy is available for review online. Students participating in such activities and events are expected to review this policy and comply with it. As long as appropriate prior notification is given according to this policy, students and faculty reach a mutual agreement concerning make-up work, and students complete the work in question, faculty shall not penalize a student for missing a class or exam when they were granted an excused absence from the university. Any questions concerning the policy may be referred to the course instructor who may refer the question to the athletic director, student activities director, or academic affairs for response.

## Channel for Communication Relating to this Course

Aside from the instructor, students may report or appeal decisions to: Dr. Mark Springer, Department Chair ([mmspringer@umary.edu](mailto:mmspringer@umary.edu)), and the Dean of SOAS Dr. Diane Fladland ([dflade@umary.edu](mailto:dflade@umary.edu)).

## Benedictine Values

Each of the Benedictine values – hospitality, service, community, moderation, respect for persons, and prayer – are emphasized at different points throughout the course in discussing the pursuit of the common good. Still, a political philosophy course is focused on two:

- **Community.** All human communities are political in some way or another. As Aristotle taught, we are “political animals,” meaning that whenever any group of people tries to live together, they will get political. Like all aspects of our human nature – our bodies, our minds, our relationships, our fine art, etc. – politics is meant to be a glorious reflection of the image of God in us; like all of those things, it too is corrupted by sin. Our response should be to discern its original glory and become agents of redeeming our political life. This class will offer the tools to help us do that, whether as public officials or as private citizens.
- **Respect for Persons.** Any just political order depends entirely on the acceptance of the dignity of the human person. It is the standard we appeal to every time we get angry: complaints about injustice are themselves revelations of justice that exists by nature. It is Jesus Christ's maxim to “do under others as you would have them do unto you” (Matthew 7:12); the Declaration of Independence's claim that it is “self-evident that all men are created equal”; Abraham Lincoln's statement that “as I would not be a slave, so I would not be a master” (Fragment from c. 1858); or Martin Luther King's observation that “[a]ny law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust” (Letter from a Birmingham Jail, 1963).

## Class Schedule

Read each text listed under that particular day.

### I. Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

January 11

Introduction and Welcome

January 16

*Leviathan*, Introduction and Chapters I-V

January 18

*Leviathan*, Chapters VI-VIII

Essay Topic Chosen January 19

January 23

*Leviathan*, Chapters X-XII

January 25

*Leviathan*, Chapters XIII-XVI

January 30

*Leviathan*, Chapters XVII-XXIII

February 1

*Leviathan*, Chapters XXIV-XXXI

### II. John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*

February 6

*Second Treatise*, Chapters I-VI

February 8

*Second Treatise*, Chapters VII-XII

Essay Phase I – Due February 9

February 13

*Second Treatise*, Chapters XIII-XIX

February 15

*Discourse on Inequality*, Introduction and First Part

### III. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

February 20

*Discourse on Inequality*, Introduction and First Part

February 22

*Discourse on Inequality*, First Part

February 27

*Discourse on Inequality*, Second Part

February 29

Spring Break

### IV. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

March 5

*Reflections on the Revolution*

March 7

*Reflections on the Revolution*

March 12

*Reflections on the Revolution*

March 14

*Reflections on the Revolution*

Essay Phase II – Due March 15

V. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*

**March 19**

*On Liberty*, Chapter I

**March 21**

*On Liberty*, Chapter II

**March 26**

*On Liberty*, Chapter III

**March 28**

*On Liberty*, Chapters IV-V

VI. Fredrick Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

**April 2**

*Beyond Good and Evil*, Preface and Chapter 1

**April 4**

*Beyond Good and Evil*, Chapters 2-3

**April 9**

*Beyond Good and Evil*, Chapters 5-6

**April 11**

*Beyond Good and Evil*, Chapter 7

**Essay Phase III Due – April 12**

**April 16**

*Beyond Good and Evil*, Chapter 9

**April 18**

Conclusion: Pope Leo XIII, *Sapientia Christiana* (1890)

**April 24**

Presentations – 8-10am

**Essay Final Draft – Due April 26**