Political Theory 2004 Syllabus

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I. Course Description  
An application of methodological individualism to the study of collective decision making. The behavior of voters, bureaucrats and elected political agents will be examined. Special attention will be given to group theory, constitutional theory, and the economic reasons for limiting the size and growth of government.

II. Rationale  
This course directly supports Aims 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 of the Liberty University Statement of Purpose.

III. Prerequisite  
GOVT 200 or GOVT 220, preferably both

IV. Materials List

Required:
- Bastiat, Frederic. *The Law* (also available on-line)
- Budziszewski, J. *The Revenge of Conscience* [B]
- Samson, Steven. *Political Theory: Lectures, Outlines, Readings* [1-25]
- Scruton, Roger. *The West and the Rest* [S]

Optional (for Honors Students)
- Girard, Rene. *The Girard Reader*
- Mansfield, Harvey. *Student’s Guide to Political Philosophy*
- Schall, James. *Another Sort of Learning*

V. Course Objectives

1. The student will be exposed to philosophical and social scientific endeavors to explain and evaluate political institutions and political behavior.
2. The student will be introduced to the analysis and evaluation of various systems of ideas, schools of thought, and sub-disciplines of political science.
3. The student will be enabled to understand, participate in, and evaluate political processes.

VI. Graded Requirements

1. Each student is responsible for completing reading assignments prior to class and should keep a loose-leaf notebook of class materials. It is suggested that readings and study aids be brought to class.
2. Participation is an essential part of class. Textbook chapters, collateral readings, and current events will be the subject of class commentary and discussions. Students should be prepared to discuss textbook readings and current events.
3. Students will be tested on the lecture and reading material through a series of seven tests. An optional final exam made up of selected questions from the seven regular tests may be substituted for the two lowest test scores.
4. Tests must be taken at the scheduled date and time. Check for any changes on Blackboard. The lowest test score will be dropped upon satisfactory completion of one of the following: participation in one of the panel discussions (possible topics are listed below) or writing a short review (4-6 pp) of a book (or two short books) from the Selected Bibliography below. DUE DATE: December 3.
5. Honors Students are encouraged to read and discuss the collateral readings René Girard’s The Girard Reader, write a short paper (6-10 pages) developing and applying some aspect of his work in relation to the other readings, and participate in the panel discussion of his work. Others who wish to participate in this discussion may do the same. A brief list of Girard’s work and some of the available commentaries may be found on the syllabus online. Other options include a special take-home essay and short answer test on José Ortega y Gasset’s The Revolt of the Masses. The lowest test score will be dropped upon satisfactory completion of the assignment.

6. The grading scale is 100-90=A, 89-80=B, 79-70=C, 69-60=D, 59 and below=F.

VII. Attendance Students are supposed to arrive on time for every class meeting. Students who are absent due to illness or emergency should notify the professor prior to class or soon afterward. Excused absences include participation in university-sponsored events, serious illness (if accompanied by a physician’s note), military duties, or a family emergency. No more than three unexcused absences are accepted without penalty. Five unexcused absences will result in a failing grade. Prolonged absences for any reason will result in an incomplete or failing grade. Persistent tardiness will also have a detrimental effect on grades.

VIII. Dress Code Observe the Liberty Way. Food is not permitted. Students who are not in appropriate campus attire will not be admitted to class.

IX. Office Location, Phone, E-Mail, Hours

School of Business and Government, DH 1031
Phone: 582-2640
E-Mail: ssamson@liberty.edu
Hours: MWF 12:20-2:10; TR 8:00-10:40; R 10:50-12:05

CLASS SCHEDULE

August
Wed. 25 Introduction: Eccl. 1: 1-11; James V. Schall [see Blackboard]
Fri. 27 Glenn Martin; www.biblicalchristianworldview.net [see Blackboard for study aids]
Mon. 30 Russell Kirk [1]; Jeffrey Nelson [see Blackboard]; Collateral: Steven Samson www.visi.com/~contra_m/cm/features/cm11_models.html

September
Wed.  1 Francis Lieber [2-3]
Fri.  3 René Girard [4-5]; Collateral: Gil Bailie: www.florilegia.org/articles-soul.shtml
Mon.  6 M. 1; Herodotus [7]
Wed.  8 M. 2; Thucydides [8]
Fri.  10 M. 3; Titus Livius (Livy) [9]; FIRST TEST
Mon. 13 M. 4; Augustine [10]
Wed. 15 M. 5; Thomas Hobbes [11]
Fri. 17 M. 6; Abraham Kuyper [12]
Mon. 20 M. 7; David Hume [13]; SECOND TEST
Wed. 22 M. 8; Abraham Lincoln [14]
Fri. 24 M. 9; Edmund Burke [15]
Mon. 27 M. 10; Jean-Jacques Rousseau [16]
Wed. 29 M. 11; C. S. Lewis [17]; Collateral: Kelley L. Ross: www.friesian.com/rent.htm

October
Fri.  1 M. 12; Thomas Sowell [18]; THIRD TEST
Mon.  4 M. 13; H. G. Wells [19]
Wed.  6 Frederic Bastiat [20]; www.jim.com/bastiat.htm or //bastiat.org/en/the_law.html Collateral: Friedrich Hayek:
POTENTIAL DISCUSSION PANELS

Girard, René


________. I See Satan Fall Like Lightning, trans. James G. Williams. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001. Girard explores a number of Biblical themes as he seeks to develop a Christian anthropology and shows how the Bible serves as an antidote to the scapegoating and persecution he sees at the heart of other religions.


355pp. Girard examines the development of mimetic desire as an increasingly sophisticated theme in Shakespeare’s work. Girard’s review of several plays (and a lecture on Shakespeare in James Joyce’s Ulysses) bears comparison with the analyses of Harold C. Goddard and Harold Bloom.


Kuehnelt-Leddihn, Erik von

Campbell, Francis Stuart [pseudonym]. The Menace of the Herd: or Procrustes at Large. Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1943. 319pp. An analysis of the origins of and spread of totalitarianism. The author is described as follows on the slip cover: “Francis Stuart Campbell has led an adventurous life. Although a scholar, he has always been on the move. He was present in all the hot spots in Europe. There is not a revolution, a revolutionary government, or an upheaval in our times that he has not gone through personally. He was in Nazi Germany during the Reichsparteitag; in Soviet Union during the big famine of 1932 and 1934; he witnessed two Austrian revolutions in 1934; he was on the front during the Spanish Civil War; he has seen the Italian Fascism in all its phases. He has observed the Croat unrest and numerous other upheavals of society.”


________. The Intelligent American’s Guide to Europe. New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1979. 422pp. Not so much a travelogue as a treatise on the historical, geographic, cultural factors that have shaped Europe. After an overview, the author discusses each country, including some of the individual states that vanished into the Soviet Union. It concludes with “America, Europe, and the Continuing War.” Personal copy on reserve.


and totalitarianism, contrasts monarchism with both, and shows through electoral maps that Nazism thrived where Catholicism was recessive. This reprint edition omits the electoral maps of the original. Personal copy on reserve.

Minogue, Kenneth R.

________. Alien Powers: The Pure Theory of Ideology. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1985. 230pp. This work, written in Australia and the Netherlands, is a systematic treatment of the author’s critique of the modern confusion of ideology (similar to Thomas Sowell’s “unconstrained vision” or Irving Babbitt’s “idyllic imagination”) with politics.


SELECTED WEBSITES

Historical, Cultural, Religious, and Educational
Acton Institute: www.acton.org
Association for Classical Christian Education (Douglas Wilson): www.classicalhomeschooling.org
Boundless: www.boundless.org
Catholic Educator’s Resource Center (CERC): http://www.catholiceducation.org
Center for Public Justice: www.cpjustice.org
Center for the Advancement of Paleo Orthodoxy (David Hall): www.capo.org
Coalition on Revival (Jay Grimstead): www.reformation.net
Contra Mundum: http://www.contramundum.org
Cornerstone Forum (Gil Bailie, a René Girard protégé): www.florilegia.org
Cultural Conservatism: www.culturalconservatism.org
Ethics and Public Policy Center: www.eppc.org
Family Research Council: www.frc.org
Foundation for American Christian Education (Rosalie Slater): www.face.net
Foundation for Economic Education: www.fee.org
Intercollegiate Studies Institute: www.isi.org
McKenzie Study Center and Gutenberg College: www.mckenziestudycenter.org
New Criterion (Hilton Kramer and Roger Kimball): www.newcriterion.com
Probe Ministries (Kerby Anderson): www.probe.org
Reformation Covenant Church (RCC): http://www.reformationcovenant.org/
Summit Ministries (David Noebel): www.summit.org
Teaching Home: www.teachinghome.com
Trinity Forum: www.ttf.org
WallBuilders (David Barton): www.wallbuilders.com
Wilberforce Forum (Chuck Colson): http://www.wilberforce.org
Williamsburg Charter: www.religioustolerance.org/wil_burg.htm
Young America’s Foundation (Ron Robinson): www.yaf.org

Individual Thinkers
Bastiat, Frederic: http://bastiat.org
Dooyeweerd Centre for Christian Philosophy: www.redeemer.on.ca/Dooyeweerd-Centre
SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


Bobbitt, Philip. The Shield of Achilles: War, Peace, and the Course of History. New York: Anchor Books, 2002. 823pp. Bobbitt, who is LBJ’s nephew, is a professor of law at the University of Texas and has served with the national security council. Parts I and III of Book I are particularly relevant.

Boorstin, Daniel J. The Genius of American Politics. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953. 189pp. Practicality rather than great theories account for the American success, according to this Jeffersonian scholar who later served as Librarian of Congress. JA 84 U5 B6


Djilas, Milovan. The New Class: An Analysis of the Communist System. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1957. Written in prison by the ex-Communist vice president of Yugoslavia, who lived to see the fall of Communism. HX 365.5 D49


Dostoevsky, Fyodor. The Grand Inquisitor, ed. Charles B. Guignon, trans. Constance Garnett. Indianapolis; Hackett, 1993. Classic. Selected chapters (Book V, chs. 3-5, Book VI) from The Brothers Karamazov that deal with the nature of God and man that dramatizes the temptations in the wilderness. Ellis Sandoz has written a study of it entitled Political Apocalypse. PG 3326 B7 G3 (full novel)


Malthus, the utopian socialists, Marx and Engels, Veblen, Keynes, and Schumpeter. Hayek is given only brief consideration.


Kuyper, Abraham. Lectures on Calvinism. The 1898 Stone Lectures at Princeton. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1931. 199pp. Kuyper was a Dutch theologian, legislator, founder of the Free University of Amsterdam, leader of the Antirevolutionary Party founded by Guillaume Groen van Prinsterer, and prime minister of the Netherlands, 1901-05. In 1907 his 70th birthday was the occasion of a national celebration. BX 9422 K8


Ortega y Gasset. History as a System and Other Essays toward a Philosophy of History. New


Rosenstock-Huessy, Eugen. The Christian Future: or The Modern Mind Outrun. New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1946. 243pp. A remarkable professor of law and history whose Out of Revolution presents the “autobiography of western man” and whose influence is still evident through his students, such as Harold J. Berman and Page Smith.


*Schall, James V., S.J. Another Sort of Learning: Selected Contrary Essays on How Finally to Acquire an Education While Still in College or Anywhere Else: Containing Some Belated Advice about How to Employ Your Leisure Time When Ultimate Questions Remain


*________. Student's Guide to Liberal Learning. Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2000. A short essay that is much in the spirit of his earlier work; may be read with Mansfield. LC 1011 S33


*Sorokin, Pitirim. The Crisis of Our Age: The Social and Cultural Outlook. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1941. 326pp. A comprehensive world view by the highly influential Harvard sociologist who contended that western civilization was entering a phase of disintegration. In later works, such as The American Sex Revolution, he criticized the fads and fallacies of modern social science. HM 101 S76


*Tinder, Glenn. Political Thinking: The Perennial Questions, any edition. Boston: Little, Brown, 1970, 1974, 1979, etc. A Christian political scientist's consideration of the "ultimate questions" as they impinge on political philosophy -- with sections on estrangement and unity, inequality and equality, power, restraints on power, the ends of power, and
historical change. JA 81 T56


Weaver, Richard M. Ideas Have Consequences. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1948. 187pp. One of the founding works of the conservative intellectual movement: a critique of the Modern mind and its deviation -- via medieval nominalism -- from Christian realism. CB 19 L4

Weil, Simone. The Iliad: or the Poem of Force. Wallingford, PA: Pendle Hill, 1957 [1940]. 37pp. An examination of force, defined as “that x that turns anybody who is subjected to it into a thing,” by a Jewish-Christian teacher and philosopher after the fall of France.


