

# FUNDAMENTAL ISSUES OF POLITICS

Political Science 1001  
Section 1

C. L. Eubanks  
Spring -- 2014

## Part I: The Origins of Political Consciousness

Topics: The Principle of Subjectivity & the Homeless Spirit  
Political Consciousness: The Transition from Tribal to Individuated Politics  
Two Species of Political Being  
Authority: Customary and Rational/Legal  
Private and Public Lives

Readings: Sophocles, *Antigone* from *Sophocles: The Oedipus Cycle*  
\*\*“Jihad vs. McWorld,” by Benjamin Barber (<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/199203/barber>)

## Part II: The Metaphysical Foundations of Politics

Topics: Politics and Knowing: Epistemology  
Politics and Being: Ontology  
Politics and Justice: Ethics  
Democritus – Materialism – Marx  
Plato – Idealism – Kant  
Aristotle – Potentiality & Happiness  
Nietzsche – Chaos and Postmodernism

Readings: \*\*Democritus: Introduction and “The Physical World,” “Character,” “Knowledge,”  
“Government,” and “Justice,”  
([http://www.humanistictexts.org/democritus.htm#\\_Toc509721154](http://www.humanistictexts.org/democritus.htm#_Toc509721154))  
\*\*Plato, *The Republic*, Book VII, “The Allegory of the Cave”  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/republic.8.vii.html>)  
\*\*Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book I  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>)  
\*Nietzsche, *The Gay Science*, Book III, §125

## Part III: The Normative and Empirical Dimensions of Politics

Topics: Politics as the Master Science  
Politics as Search for Justice  
Politics & Ethics  
Political Economics  
The Best Constitutions  
Normative & Scientific Study of Politics

Readings: \*\*Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Book II, III, & V  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>)  
\*\*Aristotle, *Politics*, Book III  
(<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.html>)

\*\*\*\*EXAMINATION #1 – TENTATIVE DATE: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 17\*\*\*\*

## Part IV: Disorder & Deliverance: The *Nomos* & the Foundations of Political Order

- Topics: Power & Authority  
Political Culture, Socialization, & Ideology  
The American Political Culture  
Protecting the *Nomos*  
Moses and the *Nomos* of Liberation
- Readings: Euripides, *Hecuba*  
\*“The Behavior of Genes,” by Gene Robinson,  
*New York Times*, December 13, 2004  
\*\**Exodus* (Shemot 1-6) Click JPS for English Text  
(<http://www.hareidi.org/bible/Exodus.htm>)  
\*Michael Gerson, “The Kind of Village it Takes”

## Part V: Structures of Governance: Absolutism vs. The Rule of Law

- Topics: Power: Its Use and Abuse  
The Covenant & the Contract  
The Constitutional Republic  
The Laws of the State & the Laws of the Gods
- Readings: Hobbes, *The Leviathan* (Chapters XIII, XIV, XV)  
(<http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/phl302/texts/hobbes/leviathan-contents.html>)  
James Madison, Federalist #10  
([http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/fed10.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed10.asp))  
\*David Brooks, “The Bursting Point”  
\*Daniel Elazar, Covenant and the American Founding  
Preamble, American Constitution  
(<http://caselaw.lp.findlaw.com/data/constitution/preamble/>)  
Declaration of Independence (Esp. second paragraph)  
(<http://www.ushistory.org/declaration/document/index.htm>)  
Sophocles, *Antigone* (Revisited)  
\*\*Henry David Thoreau, *Essay on Civil Disobedience*  
(<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/WALDEN/Essays/civil.html>)  
\*\*Martin Luther King, Jr.  
([http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles\\_Gen/Letter\\_Birmingham.html](http://www.africa.upenn.edu/Articles_Gen/Letter_Birmingham.html))

## Part VI: The International System: Conflict and Cooperation Among Nation-States

- Topics: International Structures of Decision-Making  
Conflict in the Anarchy of Sovereigns – War & Its Causes  
The Just War Doctrine  
War & Democracy
- Readings: \*\*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy – Just War  
(<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/war/>)  
\*Chris Hedges, War: Realities and Myths  
\*Wendell Berry, “Making It Home”

\*\*\*\*EXAMINATION TWO – TENTATIVE DATE: MARCH 24\*\*\*\*

## Part VII: Democratic Republics

Topics: Characteristics of Democratic Regimes  
Majority Rule and Minority Rights  
Conflict Resolution in a Democracy  
The Discourse of Democratic Politics

Readings: Euripides, *Hecuba* (Revisited)  
\*\*"Defining Democracy"  
<http://www.ait.org.tw/infousa/zhtw/docs/whatsdem/whatdm2.htm>  
\*\*"Politics and the English Language," by George Orwell  
<http://www.resort.com/~prime8/Orwell/patee.html>  
\*\*"Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital," by Robert D. Putnam

## Part VIII: Freedom, Identity, and the Needs of Strangers

Topics: Identity and Politics  
Freedom and Ambiguity  
The Needs of Strangers  
Pathos and Community

Readings: Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*  
\*\*J. S. Mill, *On Liberty* (Chapters I, II, & III)  
[http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/m/mill/john\\_stuart/m645o/](http://etext.library.adelaide.edu.au/m/mill/john_stuart/m645o/)  
\*\*Sojourner Truth, *Ain't I a Woman*  
<http://www.kyphilom.com/www/truth.html>  
\*Adrienne Rich, *What Does A Woman Need to Know?*  
Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*

## Part IX: The Philosopher, the Citizen, & the City

Topics: Pericles' Model of Citizenship  
Socratic Model of Citizenship  
Civic Virtue, Judgment, Skepticism & Ambiguity

Readings: \*\*"Pericles' Funeral Oration," Thucydides, *The History of the Peloponnesian War*  
<http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pericles.htm>  
\*\*Plato, *Apology*  
<http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/apology.html>

**\*\*\*FINAL EXAMINATION  
MONDAY, MAY 5, FROM 10:00AM TO NOON  
DODSON AUDITORIUM\*\*\***

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** As the title of the course indicates, we are going to examine the **FUNDAMENTAL** issues of politics. We will begin with the origins of political consciousness. Thereafter, we will inquire into questions of power, authority, order and disorder, political cultures and ideologies, justice, liberation, identity, and the needs of the community. Moreover, we shall examine these and other concepts by learning how to construct normative arguments about politics and how to engage in the empirical study of politics. By its very nature, then, this course is an exploration of ideas; essentially it emphasizes a critical understanding of theoretical perspectives on politics.

**ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES:** This course is a general education elective. Thus, it is designed to contribute to your understanding of self and of culture. In this light, the course is intended to acquaint you with some of the classic narratives and philosophies of western civilization, so as to give you an understanding of other cultures and other times; to acquaint you with the some of the moral and ethical issues of politics; and to encourage critical and analytical thinking, as well as a precise and graceful use of language. Toward the latter end you should purchase and use a good dictionary, or at the very least consistently access the Merriam Webster Dictionary internet site at no cost. See: <http://www.m-w.com/> . As a social science general education elective this course is designed to acquaint you with various view of human nature, as well as how human beings organize themselves into political societies, real and imagined. You will be expected to achieve an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference. All general education courses are designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that facilitate the improvement of the civic life of communities.

**READINGS:** The reading materials required for the course consist of two books and a series of readings that are available on the Internet or Moodle. The books may be purchased at any of the area bookstores or on-line. They are: **Euripides, *Hecuba*; and Sophocles, *Sophocles: The Oedipus Cycle***. The Internet readings are identified with their Web Site addresses, given in the syllabus and on Moodle. They are indicated by a double asterisk. **If at any time these addresses do not work as hot links, please let me know.** You are also required to read essays from a variety of newspapers and magazines. I will assign these throughout the semester. Some are listed on the syllabus, designated with one asterisk; others may be added throughout the semester. These will be posted on Moodle. Finally, you should get in the habit of reading a good newspaper on a regular basis. Many are available on the internet at no cost: the *Christian Science Monitor* (<http://www.csmonitor.com/>); and the International Herald Tribune (<http://www.ihf.com/>). A hard copy of the *New York Times* is also available, free, at various campus locations.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS & EXAMINATIONS:** There will be **three major examinations** in this course. The **first two of these examinations will be given during the semester**, as designated on the syllabus, and will count 35 points each. Tentative dates have been given for these exams. The **final examination, which is scheduled for Monday, May 5, from 10☉) AM to Noon**, will count 70 points and will be cumulative in nature, although it will emphasize the last three sections of the course quite heavily. Rescheduling the Final Examination for a different time is possible only under certain special circumstance and must be approved by the Deans of your respective Colleges. (See Special Instructions for Final Exams on the LSU Web Site – Office of the Registrar – Final Exams. <https://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/registraroffice/academics/final-exams/>

All regular examinations are objective in nature and will cover both lecture and reading materials. Absences from examinations are excused only for valid medical reasons or for legitimate extracurricular activities. **Make-up examinations are essay and will be given only for excused absences.** In addition, you will be asked to prepare a short normative justice essay. This written assignment will count for 20 points. Instructions will be posted on Moodle and discussed in class. This assignment will be **due April 11**.

During the course of the semester eight reading quizzes will be given. They will be administered on Moodle and will be open for at least one week. Reading quizzes are intended to facilitate your ability to read and understand difficult texts. Each of these reading quizzes will be worth 5 points. Finally, at least eight one point bonus quizzes will be given during the course of the semester. You must attend class to acquire the password for a bonus quiz. The maximum you can earn with bonus quizzes is 5 points. **No make-ups will be given for bonus quizzes.**

## Course Examinations and Graded Assignments Summary

Examination #1	=	35 points
Examination #2	=	35 points
Normative Justice Essay	=	20 points
Final Exam	=	70 points
Eight Reading Quizzes	=	40 points
Total	=	200 points

**GRADES:** Final grade distribution in the course will look like the following:

A = 180-200 = 90%

B = 160-179 = 80%

C = 140-159 = 70%

D = 120-139 = 60%

F = 119 & Below

**ADDITIONAL NOTES:** LSU Policy on class attendance is clear: **“Class attendance is the responsibility of the student. The student is expected to attend all classes. A student who finds it necessary to miss class assumes responsibility for making up examinations, obtaining lectures notes, and otherwise compensating for what may have been missed.”** Indeed, it is virtually impossible to do well in this course, or any course, without attending class on a regular basis. I do not permit any note-taking service to publish my lectures; nor do I post lecture notes on the internet. However, I do post lecture outlines. **Laptop computers and tablet computers are not allowed in class.** Recording devices are allowed, so long as it is understood that the recordings and notes are for your own personal use and **not for public dispensation or sale. Indeed, the latter is a violation of copyright protection of intellectual property.**

Finally, classroom etiquette requires that students be attentive and respectful to one another (that means listening when others are making comments or asking questions). If you must arrive late, please do so unobtrusively. Turn your cell phones off when attending class. **Leaving class early, except for emergencies, is unacceptable.** Similarly, talking during lectures and discussions, reading newspapers, taking catnaps, reading email and/or browsing the web are not acceptable classroom behavior. Excessive absenteeism and/or discourteous behavior will result in dismissal from class.

**MOODLE:** You may access Moodle through your MyLSU Account. **Indeed, you should check to see if you are properly registered in the course by accessing your Account.** In addition, Moodle will contain the course syllabus, with reading hot links, copies of assigned readings, lecture outlines, examination reviews, and, of course, your examination and assignment grades. It will also be used to administer the reading quizzes and the bonus quizzes.

**OFFICE HOURS:** My office hours this semester are **Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 9:00 to 10:30 AM and 12:30 to 1:00 PM.** If you find these hours inconvenient, please let me know and I will arrange another time for us to meet. Please do not hesitate to come to my office to discuss the course, your progress in it, or, for that matter, anything you like! My office is located in **Stubbs Hall, Room 237.** I encourage you to communicate by e-mail as well, particularly with questions about course material. My e-mail address is **poeubk@lsu.edu.** Office Phone: **578-1944.**