POT 4066-DW59
Summer 2017
Contemporary Political Theory

Department of Political Science
College of Sciences, University of Central Florida

COURSE OUTLINE

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Marien, Daniel.Marien@ucf.edu
Teaching Assistant: Zlatin Mitkov, zlatinmitkov@knights.ucf.edu
Office Hours: make appointment via email.

I. Subject Overview

This course in political philosophy focuses on the concept of social justice. We explore three broad approaches to answering this central question in politics: "What is fair or just?" What is not?

One approach is based on the promotion of individual freedom. Another focuses on the maximization of pleasure or utility. A third is shaped by the pursuit of virtue, i.e. notions of the good life. Each broad approach can spawn multiple versions.

We use one book and a set of other readings from a range of authors to guide us in this exploration. Harvard University political theorist Michael Sandel introduces us to a variety of theories on social justice. He closes his book by presenting an argument for a communitarian viewpoint. We also read excerpts from a book, authored by the late economist Milton Friedman, from the University of Chicago, and his wife Rose articulating a broadly libertarian viewpoint. A few others will also contribute to our reflections. Film and other video documents may also be occasionally assigned.

Students take weekly quizzes, post weekly answers to discussion questions and engage class participants with respectful disagreements at least four times during the semester.

Overall, this course provides an exciting opportunity to enlarge and enrich how we make judgments about the central questions of what is just and unjust, fair and unfair in policy, society, and economy. You may look at it as education for enlightening judgments about fairness and unfairness.

II. Course Materials

You will need to procure the following:

Michael Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009, ISBN: 978-0-374-5350-5. Also available in electronic format.

Additional assigned readings will be uploaded in Webcourses, under Files, under B) Additional Assigned Readings.

III. Basic Course Expectations

Students are expected to: (1) always have working connections to the internet; (2) to promptly procure the textbook; (3) to regularly log-on to the course's website in Webcourses **via the Home Page**. The Home Page is where you will find updates, general feedback and other useful information; (4) to take quizzes and submit postings in due time; (5) to regularly consult their Knights email (for personal messages); (6) to engage class participants articulating a disagreement in a respectful manner meeting the ECP standards (see Files, Grading Standards); (8) to respect the rules of academic honesty, in particular never to present text not their own as their own wording.

IV. Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. To explain and describe the themes, assumptions, ideas, and practical conclusions of three broad approaches to the concept of justice: utility, liberty and virtue.
2. To apply the three foregoing approaches to specific, concrete and controversial issues.
3. To demonstrate abilities in critical thinking, effective communication and writing, and attentive reading

V. Assessment Overview

Assessment Overview

WHAT	WHEN	POINTS
Before Course Perception of Ideologies This serves to free up your financial aid. **After Course Perception of Ideologies**	Friday 5/19: 11:59pm Attach file in Dropbox Friday 7/7: 11:59 PM Attach file in Dropbox	**2** **3**
Weekly Quiz Average Each quiz is over 40 points. The average is used to compute the final course grade	Week 1-4 (5/22 to 6/12) Week 6-8 (6/26 to 7/10 by Monday Evenings 11:59 P.M.	**40**
Weekly Discussion Post Average Each weekly post is scored over 25 points. The average is used to compute the final course grade	Week 1-4 (5/22 to 6/12) Week 6-8 (6/26 to 7/10 by Monday Evenings 11:59 P.M.	**25**
Four ECP Posts Engaging class participants with respectful and well thought out disagreements on their answers to Evaluation Questions. Each post should have a minimum of 300 words.	Anytime during Week 1-4 (5/22 to 6/12) Week 6-8 (6/26 to 7/10) by Monday Evenings 11:59 P.M. Start your post with the mention ECP	**10** 2.5 points for each post meeting the standards explained in Files under Grading Standards.

Mid-term Brief Essay 1,000 to 1,200 words On one of several pre-set questions with assigned sources	Week 5 due Monday June 19 at 11:59 PM Upload a file in Dropbox	**10**
Final Brief Essay 1,000 to 1,200 words On one of several pre-set questions with assigned sources	Week 9 due Monday July 17 at 11:59 PM Upload a file in Dropbox	**10**
TOTAL		**100**

HOW TO FIGURE YOUR FINAL COURSE GRADE:

Entre your personal scores for these values:

Before/After + Quiz Average + Weekly Post Average + ECP + Mid-term Essay + Final Essay = Total in points over 100.

Then convert that numerical total into a letter grade in accordance with the Grading Scale below.

Grading Scale (%)	
94-100	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0 - 59	F

VI. Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites include an open mind and a readiness to reflect on the subject matter. There are no prerequisites in the sense of having completed specific previous courses beyond English Composition.

VII. Course Credits

3 credits

VIII. Course Schedule

Always check the Home Page for updates, general feedback and other useful information. Changes are not likely, but, if they occur, they will be limited. Nevertheless not paying attention to announced change might hurt your grade.

The Weekly Module always updates the Course Outline: in case of a discrepancy between the Course Outline and the Module of the week, the Module is correct.

Week 1, May 15 to May 22: Utilitarianism: the Greatest Happiness of the Greatest Number

- Turn in your BEFORE course submission before Friday 5/19 at 11:59 PM
- Read the Course Outline.

- Read Sandel., chapters 1 and 2.

- **Take the Quiz** (before Monday evening May 22 at 11:59 P.M.) covering the reading materials assigned for the week.
- **Post your answers in the Week 1 Discussion Board** (before Monday evening May 22 at 11:59 P.M.).
- Instructor's Remarks and or video documents may also be assigned on any given week. Follow the instruction in the Weekly Module. The Weekly Module updates the Course Outline.

- This sequence of quiz and discussion question is repeated weekly with the exception of Week 5 (Mid-term Essay) and Week 9 (Final Essay).

Week 2, May 22 to May 29: Libertarianism

- Read Sandel, chapter 3 Libertarianism
- Milton and Rose Friedman, chapter 1 The Power of the Market

Week 3, May 29 to June 5: Markets and Morals

- Read Sandel, chapter 4

Week 4, June 5 to June 12: Market: Freedom or Constraint?

- Milton and Rose Friedman, chapter 2, pages 64-69 only.
- Lindbloom, "The Market as Prison."

Week 5, June 12 to June 19: Mid-term Essay

- Select one of the pre-set essay questions; read the assigned materials for this question; compose an essay (1,000 to 1,200 words) answering the question on the basis of the assigned materials; submit a file in the Dropbox by Monday June 19 at 11:59 PM.

Week 6, June 19 to June 26: Equalities

- Milton and Rose Friedman, chapter 5 Created Equal
- Sandel, chapter 6, Rawls

Week 7, June 26 to July 3: Virtue and Loyalty

- Sandel, chapters 8 and 9.

Week 8, July 3 to July 10: Communitarian and Libertarian Agendas

- Sandel, chapter 10
- Milton and Rose Friedman, chapter 10, especially pages 290-310.

Week 9, July 10 to July 17: Final Essay

- Select one of the pre-set essay questions; read the assigned materials for this question; compose an essay (1,000 to 1,200 words) answering the question on the basis of the assigned materials; submit a file in the Dropbox by Monday July 17 at 11:59 PM.

IX. Course Policies

Late Work Policy:
There are no make-ups for missing weekly quizzes or discussion postings.

Grades of Incomplete

The current university policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester. The instructor is the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

X. Course Policies: Technology and Media

Email: Use my email to communicate with me: Daniel.Marien@ucf.edu. Allow up to 48 hours for a response. Repeat message if you haven't received a response within 48 hours.

XI. Course Policies: Student Expectations

Disability Access:
The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities who need accommodations in this course must contact the professor at the beginning of the semester to discuss needed accommodations. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Academic Conduct Policy:

Academic dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated. If you are uncertain as to what constitutes academic dishonesty, please consult The Golden Rule, the University of Central Florida's Student Handbook (http://www.goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further details. As in all University courses, The Golden Rule Rules of Conduct will be applied. Violations of these rules will result in a failing grade for the entire course and can also result in expulsion from the University.

Turinitin.com:
In this course the instructor may utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. The instructor submits your texts to Turnitin at his discretion. Student found guilty of plagiarism will receive a failing grade for the entire course and may incur additional penalties.

In particular, weekly postings must be original. To ensure originality, students are not able to view classmates' posts before they have themselves posted in the Discussion Board. Students are also not able to edit their postings after having posted it in the Discussion Board. **It is strongly recommended that you compose your post in a word processing file, review it there for content and style and only then paste the final product in the Discussion Board.**

Quizzes are individual exercises with open access to the materials but limited time to answer the questions.

Consult the UCF Academic Integrity Flyer in Webcourses under Files under Assigned Readings for more details.