POT 4331 - Utopia/Dystopia

Section: 0001

College of Sciences

School of Politics, Security, and Intl Affairs

Course Information

Term: Spring 2025
Class Meeting Days: TR
Class Meeting Time: 06:00PM - 07:20PM
Class Meeting Location: CB1 O308
Modality: P
Credit Hours: 3.00

Instructor Information

Paul Labedz
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Course Description

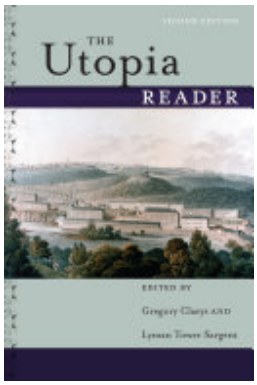
POT 4331 COS-POLS 3(3,0)Utopia/Dystopia: PR: ENC 1102. Examines political issues, such as justice, economic distribution and social organization by exploring both classic and contemporary utopias and dystopias. Occasional.

Student Learning Outcomes

After successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate a comprehension of political issues, such as justice, economic distribution and social organization by exploring both classic and contemporary utopias and dystopias.

Course Materials and Resources



The Utopia Reader, Second Edition
ISBN: 9781479864652
Authors: Gregory Claeys, Lyman Tower Sargent
Publisher: NYU Press
Publication Date: 2017-02-14

The Republic
ISBN: 0486411214
Authors: Plato
Publisher: Dover

Utopia
ISBN: 048629583
Authors: More
Publisher: Dover

Looking Backward
ISBN: 0486290386
Authors: Bellamy
Publisher: Dover

Brave New World
ISBN: 0060850523
Authors: Huxley
Publisher: Harper

Ecotopia
ISBN: 159714293
Authors: Callenbach
Publisher: Heyday

Handmaid's Tale
ISBN: 038549081X
Authors: Atwood
Publisher: Anchor

Walden Two
ISBN: 0872207781
Authors: Skinner
Publisher: Classics

Course Assessment and Grading Procedure

Examinations

FOUR (4) examinations will be made up of a combination of multiple choice, identification, and essay questions. The first exam will cover reading and lecture material from topics 1-2; the second exam will cover reading and lecture material from topics 3-4; the third exam will cover material from topics 5-7; the fourth exam will cover material from topics 8-10. Each exam is worth a maximum of 35 points.

Intentional Community Project (OPTIONAL)

Students will select a historical or contemporary attempt at establishing an intentional community and analyze the political, economic, and social principles underlying the community, along with the reasons for its success and/or failure. The instructor for the course will provide a list of

communities that students can use to complete the assignment. Students will be allowed to select an alternative community not found on the list, but this will be contingent upon permission being granted by the instructor. A student's response must be between 4-6 pages, double-spaced. This assignment is worth a maximum of 35 points and is due on the last day that our class meets for instruction. An email will be sent during the term with further instructions/requirements regarding this project.

Grading Scale

The overall grade for the course will be based on the student's performance on each of the above assignments. The maximum number of points a student can acquire is 150.

The grading scale is based on the following point distributions: 135-150=A, 120-134=B, 105-119=C, 90-104=D, 0-89= F.

Grades will not be based on a curve and will reflect the quality of the work submitted.

No extra credit opportunities will be available for this course.
Grading

Policies for Course Grade

Makeup Work Policy: formal documentation is required for makeup work.

Missed/Late Assignments: formal documentation is required for missed/late assignments.

Attendance: class attendance is strongly advised. Formal documentation should be provided for any absence.

Course Accessibility

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing access and inclusion for all persons with disabilities. Students with disabilities who need access to course content due to course design limitations should contact the professor as soon as possible. Students should also connect with Student Accessibility Services (SAS) (Ferrell Commons 185, sas@ucf.edu, phone 407-823-2371). For students connected with SAS, a Course Accessibility Letter may be created and sent to professors, which informs faculty of potential course access and accommodations that might be necessary and reasonable. Determining reasonable access and accommodations requires consideration of the course design, course learning objectives and the individual academic and course barriers experienced by the student. Further conversation with SAS, faculty and the student may be warranted to ensure an accessible course experience.

Academic Integrity

Students should familiarize themselves with UCF's Code of Conduct at Student Conduct and Integrity Office. According to Section 1, "Academic Misconduct," students are prohibited from engaging in:

a. Academic misconduct is defined as any submitted work or behavior that obstructs the instructor of record's ability to accurately assess the student's understanding or completion of the course materials or degree requirements (e.g., assignment, quiz, and/or exam). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to: plagiarism, unauthorized assistance to complete an academic exercise; unauthorized communication with others during an examination, course assignment, or project; falsifying or misrepresenting academic work; providing misleading information to create a personal advantage to complete course/degree requirements; or multiple submission(s) of academic work without permission of the instructor of record.

b. Any student who knowingly helps another violate academic behavior standards is also in violation of the standards.

c. Commercial Use of Academic Material. Selling of course material to another person and/or uploading course material to a third-party vendor without authorization or without the express written permission of the University and the instructor of record. Course materials include but are not limited to class notes, the instructor of record's

slide deck, tests, quizzes, labs, instruction sheets, homework, study guides, and handouts.

d. Soliciting assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements. The solicitation of assistance with an assignment, lab, quiz, test, paper, etc., without authorization of the instructor of record or designee is prohibited. This includes but is not limited to asking for answers to a quiz, trading answers, or offering to pay another to complete an assignment. It is considered Academic Misconduct to solicit assistance with academic coursework and/or degree requirements, even if the solicitation did not yield actual assistance (for example, if there was no response to the solicitation).

Responses to Academic Dishonesty, Plagiarism, or Cheating

Students should also familiarize themselves with the procedures for academic misconduct in UCF's student handbook, *The Golden Rule*. UCF faculty members have a responsibility for students' education and the value of a UCF degree, and so seek to prevent unethical behavior and respond to academic misconduct when necessary. Penalties for violating rules, policies, and instructions within this course can range from a zero on the exercise to an "F" letter grade in the course. In addition, an Academic Misconduct report could be filed with the Office of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity, which could lead to disciplinary warning, disciplinary probation, or deferred suspension or separation from the University through suspension, dismissal, or expulsion with the addition of a "Z" designation on one's transcript.

Being found in violation of academic conduct standards could result in a student having to disclose such behavior on a graduate school application, being removed from a leadership position within a student organization, the recipient of scholarships, participation in University activities such as study abroad, internships, etc.

Let's avoid all of this by demonstrating values of honesty, trust, and integrity. No grade is worth compromising your integrity and moving your moral compass. Stay true to doing the right thing: take the zero, not a shortcut.

Title IX

Title IX prohibits sex discrimination, including sexual misconduct, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and retaliation. If you or someone you know has been harassed or

assaulted, you can find resources available to support the victim, including confidential resources and information concerning reporting options at Let's Be Clear and UCF Cares.

For more information on diversity and inclusion, Title IX, accessibility, or UCF's complaint processes contact:

- Title IX – OIE – Office of Institutional Equity & askanadvocate@ucf.edu
- Disability Accommodation – Student Accessibility Services – Student Accessibility Services & sas@ucf.edu
- Access and Community Engagement (including the Ginsberg Center for Inclusion and Community Engagement, Military and Veteran Student Success, and HSI Initiatives)
- UCF Compliance and Ethics Office – Compliance, Ethics, and Risk Office & complianceandethics@ucf.edu
- The Ombuds Office is a safe place to discuss concerns.

Reporting an Incident or Issue

If you believe you have experienced abusive or discriminatory behavior by any faculty or staff member, contact the Office of Institutional Equity online or at 407-823-1336. You can also choose to report using the UCF Integrity Line and can report anonymously or as yourself at 1-855-877-6049 or using the online form. UCF cares about you and takes every report seriously. For more information see the Reporting an Incident or Issue Webpage.

Deployed Active-Duty Military Students

Students who are deployed active duty military and/or National Guard personnel and require accommodation should contact their instructors as soon as possible after the semester begins and/or after they receive notification of deployment to make related arrangements.

Campus Safety

At UCF Public Safety and Police, safety is the top priority. Emergencies on campus are rare, but if one should arise, it's important to be familiar with some basic safety and security concepts.

- In an emergency, always dial 911.
- Every UCF classroom has an **Emergency Procedure Guide** posted on a wall near the door, which will show you how to respond to a variety of situations. This guide can also be found online here.
- In the event of an active threat, remember **AVOID, DENY, DEFEND**. Choose the best course of action and act immediately. Watch the video here to learn more.
    - **AVOID**. Pay attention to your surroundings and have an exit plan. Get as much distance and as many barriers between you and the threat as quickly as possible.
    - **DENY.** When avoiding is difficult or impossible, deny the threat access to you and your space. Lockdown by creating barriers, turning the lights off and remaining quiet and out of sight. Make sure your cell phone is silenced, but do not turn it off.
    - **DEFEND.** When you are unable to put distance between yourself and the threat, be prepared to protect yourself. Commit to your actions, be aggressive and do not fight fairly. Do whatever it takes to survive.
- For emergencies on campus, UCF will utilize the UCF Alert system. All UCF students, faculty and staff are automatically enrolled to receive these email and text alerts, however, it's a good idea to frequently ensure your contact information is up to date.

Financial Aid Accountability

All instructors/faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete this activity by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

Class Schedule

Here is a week-by-week list of topics, examination dates, and associated readings.

DISCLAIMER: The schedule is subject to change if certain topics prove to require more or less time.

Topic 1: Introduction to Political Utopia/Dystopia: establishing a basis for comparison.

Readings: Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader,* Introduction

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Topic 2: Evolution of Utopian Thought: Plato*, The Republic*

Readings: Plato, *The Republic* (read entire book)

EXAM 1: 13 FEB

Topic 3: Evolution of Utopia Thought: Thomas More*, Utopia*

Readings: Thomas More, *Utopia* (read entire book)

Topic 4: Evolution of Utopian Thought: Bacon, Campanella, and Harrington

Readings: Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader,* pp. 106-125, 137-140

EXAM 2: 27 MARCH

Topic 5: Utopian Socialism

Readings: Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader,* pp. 192-205, 207-219

Topic 6: Marxism and Utopia

Readings: Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader*, pp. 227-228

Topic 7: Anarchism and Utopia

Readings: Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader*, pp. 170-175, 407-420

EXAM 3: 17 APRIL

Topic 8: Victorian Socialism

Readings: Edward Bellamy, *Looking Backward* (entire book); Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader*, pp. 273-29, 312-319

Topic 9: Dystopia

Readings: Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (read entire book); Margaret Atwood, *The Handmaid's Tale* (read entire book); Gregory Claeys and Lyman Tower Sargent, *The Utopia Reader*, 398-407

Topic 10: Modern Utopia

Readings: B.F. Skinner, *Walden Two* (read entire book) and Ernest Callenbach, *Ecoptopia* (read entire book)

EXAM 4: Tuesday, 29 APRIL, 4-650PM

I hope you enjoy the class and feel free to contact me if you have any questions.