

POLI1041.06: MW 3-4:15 p.m., GASSON HALL 203
Grayson Gilmore (gilmoreg@bc.edu)
Office Hours: Wednesdays, 12-1pm, Carney 236

FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS OF POLITICS I

This is an introduction to the study of politics through a consideration of some of the basic elements associated with governing: the political association, justice, constitutions, equality, liberty, conflict among citizens, between citizens and governments, and conflict among governments. We will discuss the critical issues that concern Western liberal democracy, beginning with its intellectual foundations and then moving on to the questions it raises and the challenges it faces in our time. A strong emphasis will be placed on important readings, discussion, and writing.

Required Texts

Please obtain the exact editions of each of these texts – we will be reading from them in class and it is important that everyone have the same translation and page numbers. Check the ISBN to be sure.

- **A Student's Guide to Political Philosophy** by Harvey Mansfield, Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 1882926439
- **Aristotle's "Politics": Second Edition**, trans. Carnes Lord, University Of Chicago Press, 0226921840
- **Leviathan** by Thomas Hobbes, ed. Edwin Curley, Hackett, 0872201775
- **A Letter Concerning Toleration** by John Locke, ed. James Tully, Hackett, 091514560X
- **On Liberty** by John Stuart Mill, ed. Elizabeth Rappaport, Hackett, 915144433
- **Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy** by Francis Fukuyama, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 0374227357
 - o *NOTE: the paperback edition of this book will be released October 12th. You may wish to wait to purchase this book in order to save some money.*
- **The Future of Freedom: Illiberal Democracy at Home and Abroad** by Fareed Zakaria, W. W. Norton & Company, 0393331520

Course Requirements

Your grade will have three components:

1. Three 1500-word interpretive essays (worth 20%, 25%, and 30% of the grade). These papers will be on topics to be announced. Papers will lose 3 points out of 100 for each 24 hours that they are late.
2. Your attendance and participation (worth 15% of the grade). More than one unexcused absence will lower your grade. I am of course willing to make exceptions for genuine emergencies.
3. Eight sets of discussion questions (**two for each of the four parts of the course**) worth 10% of the grade. These papers must be emailed to me at gilmoreg@bc.edu by NOON THE DAY BEFORE we discuss the relevant assignment in class. Failure to provide enough questions will result in a subtraction of 2 points of the final grade for each set not completed. **Please see the final section of the syllabus for details concerning this assignment.**

This course is writing intensive and the *quality* of your writing will greatly affect your grade. If you have trouble writing clear, grammatical, and well-organized papers, you should take advantage of the Connors Family Learning Center's writing assistance program. Also, if English is not your first language, the Connors Center has special resources to help you with your papers.

Information is available at: <http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/writing.html>

Plagiarism (unattributed use of the thoughts and words of others) in a paper will result in an automatic *F* for the course and additional disciplinary action recommended by the College. You should review the University's statement on Academic Integrity and take the Political Science Department's Academic Integrity Quiz. The relevant websites are:

- <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity.html>
- <http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz.html>

If you are a student with a documented disability seeking reasonable accommodations in this course, please contact Kathy Duggan, (617) 552-8093, dugganka@bc.edu, at the Connors Family Learning Center regarding learning disabilities and ADHD, or Paulette Durrett, (617) 552-3470, paulette.durrett@bc.edu, in the Disability Services Office regarding all other types of disabilities, including temporary disabilities. Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations.

Classroom Policies

A few simple rules:

- You will not be allowed to use laptops.
- Audio recording is allowed as long as you obtain prior permission from me.
- Eating, drinking, etc. will be forbidden if it becomes disruptive.

Office Hours, Email, etc.

My office hours are Wednesdays, 12-1pm, or by appointment, in Carney 236. Please feel free to stop by my office as often as you'd like. The best way to reach me outside of office hours is through email at gilmoreg@bc.edu.

Schedule of Reading

Part I

Aug 31	Introduction
Sep 2	Fareed Zakaria, <i>Future of Freedom</i> , Chapter 5.
Sep 7	Labor Day. No class.
Sep 9	Mansfield, <i>Student's Guide</i> Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> 1.1-2, 3.1-13, 6.1-5
Sep 14	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Introduction, Chapter 13 entire, 14.1-4, 15.1-3
Sep 16	Locke, <i>Letter Concerning Toleration</i>

Part II

Sep 21	Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>
Sep 23	Huntington, <i>Clash of Civilizations?</i>
Sep 28	Francis Fukuyama, <i>The End of History?</i>
Sep 30	Alexander Solzhenitsyn, <i>A World Split Apart</i> Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, <i>Europe's Crisis of Culture</i>
Oct 5	Khomeini, <i>Necessity of Islamic Government</i> 1st Long paper due via email by noon.
Oct 7	Michael Oakeshott, <i>Rationalism in Politics</i>
Oct 12	Columbus Day. No class.
Oct 14	Milton and Rose Friedman, <i>The Power of the Market</i>
Oct 19	Robert Kuttner, <i>Imperial Market</i>
Oct 21	Pope John Paul II, <i>On the Social Concern</i>

Part III

Oct 26	Francis Fukuyama, <i>Political Order and Decay</i> , Chapters 1-5.
Oct 28	<i>Political Order and Decay</i> , Chapters 6-11.
Nov 2	<i>Political Order and Decay</i> , Chapters 12-17.
Nov 4	<i>Political Order and Decay</i> , Chapters 18-24.

2nd Long paper due via email by noon.

Nov 9 *Political Order and Decay*, Chapters 25-31.
Nov 11 *Political Order and Decay*, Chapters 32-36.

Part IV

Nov 16 Fareed Zakaria, *Future of Freedom*, Intro, Chapter 1
Nov 18 *Future of Freedom*, Chapter 2
Nov 23 *Future of Freedom*, Chapter 3
Nov 25 Thanksgiving. No class.
Nov 30 *Future of Freedom*, Chapter 4
Dec 2 *Future of Freedom*, reread Chapter 5
Dec 7 *Future of Freedom*, Conclusion, Afterword
Robert Kagan, *The Ungreat Washed*
Dec 9 Review and Discussion.

Final Long paper due via email at noon.

Reader Response Assignment: Discussion Questions

You are required to submit **eight** sets of discussion questions (**two for each of the four parts of the course**). Each submission should contain at least **three** questions aimed at facilitating substantive discussion in class. Your ability to submit excellent questions will demonstrate:

- That you have mastered the reading.
- That you have reflected on the important issues at stake.
- That you are able to see the broader implications of those issues.
- And that you are able to identify interpretive or theoretical puzzles which you are not yet able to solve.

The most important measure of a good question is: **can it generate productive discussion in class?**

Tips:

- Questions can be provocative, even controversial, as long as they are not polemical.
- One strategy is to find *unstated* assumptions and ask why they are unstated.
- Another strategy would be to connect the important themes of the reading to **relevant** contemporary political disputes.

Bad Questions:

- Questions which can be answered with a simple yes or no.
- Straightforward matter of fact questions: “How old was Socrates at this time?”
- Vague questions: “What’s the point of this conversation?”
- Off topic: “What would Socrates say about global warming?”
- Asking for a summary.
- Questions copied from the Internet: this is a violation of academic integrity.
- Questions requiring too much outside knowledge: “How does Plato’s portrayal of Gorgias differ from his extant speeches?”
- Questions that read like essay prompts: “Use examples to support your answer.”

Good Questions:

- “[Stephen] Douglas appeals to the authority of the Supreme Court to explain why he does not give his personal opinion on an issue. Is this a wise move for a politician? Is it plausible to imagine a contemporary politician blindly agreeing with a Supreme Court ruling if his or her opinion was to the contrary? What does this say about how America’s political system has shifted?”
- “Does Hobbes’ example of bees and ants living ‘sociably with one another’ in comparison to men who cannot live in a society without any coercive power serve as an appropriate counter-model for the human state of nature? Why, or why not?”