Course Description

In this course we will consider the various views of the world that underlie and inform contemporary politics. We will concentrate on liberalism, capitalism, socialism, fascism, revolutionary and ethnic nationalism, and feminism. The course itself will be run as a critical discussion focusing on the assigned reading as an entry into the underlying philosophical and ideological questions around which the contemporary political debate turns. The purposes of the course are to foster a deeper understanding of the competing ideological claims that dominate the contemporary political arena so that the student will not merely be able to grasp the nature of this debate but also to make rational decisions about the validity of the competing positions.

Since the course will be run as a discussion, it is imperative that each student read the assigned selections carefully and critically before they are discussed. This means reading the material at least once and preferably twice before coming to class. This is especially important, since the student who has not done so will glean little from the discussion. To help students with the reading, study questions for each reading selection are available on the course home page. Each student will be required to provide written answers for the study questions for one day’s reading for the course chat group by 5pm on the day preceding class. Other students will be expected to read these answers before coming to class and may comment on or respond to them. Class participation and participation in the chat group will be included in the determination of the final grade. There will be three required papers each to be no longer than 5 typewritten pages on assigned topics. First drafts will be due on Tuesday Sept. 22, Oct. 20, Nov. 17. These will be distributed to other class members on Wednesday for copy-editing, etc. Copy-edited papers will be due in my box in 214 Perkins on Friday and can be picked up thereafter. Final drafts will then be due the following Tuesday Sept. 29, Oct. 27, and Nov. 24. There will be no extensions. There will also be a final examination. The papers will count 50%, the exam 35%, and class, section, and chat group participation 15% of the final grade.

Required Purchases - (available at Bookstore in Bryan Center)

Alger, Horatio, Ragged Dick and Mark the Match Boy (if sufficient copies are not available in the bookstore, they may be purchased from amazon.com)
Tucker, Robert, ed., The Marx-Engels Reader
Smith, Adam, The Wealth of Nations
Mill, John Stuart, On Liberty, ed., Rapaport
Hitler, Adolph, Mein Kampf, trans. Ralph Mannheim (will be arriving late)
Locke, John, Two Treatises of Government
Koestler, Arthur Darkness at Noon
Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (will be arriving late)

There are also a number of reading selections on line that can be accessed through the e reserves or through the course home page.

Class Schedule

8/31 Introduction

9/2 LIBERALISM
The State of Nature and Natural Right

9/3, 4 Section: Discussion of the Idea of the State of Nature

9/7 Property
Reading: Locke, pp. 283-302

9/9 Political Society
Reading: Locke, pp. 318-33, 347-63

9/10, 11 SECTION: Review of Locke

9/14 Tyranny and the Right of Revolution
Reading: Locke, pp. 398-419, 426-28

9/16 American Liberalism
Revolutionary Origins
Reading: Declaration of Independence (Reserve)

9/17, 18 SECTION: Obedience to Conscience
Reading: Thoreau, "Civil Disobedience"

9/21 Obedience to Law
Reading: Lincoln, "Lyceum Address" (Reserve)

9/22 PAPER #1 DRAFT DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 5PM

9/23 Individualism and Freedom
Freedom of Thought and Speech  

9/24, 25 SECTION: Critique of Liberalism  
Reading: Tocqueville (Reserve)

9/25 COPY-EDITED PAPERS DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 12:00 NOON

9/25 The Individual and Society  
Reading: Mill, chps. 3-5

9/29 FINAL DRAFT OF PAPER #1 DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 5 PM

9/30 CAPITALISM  
Origins of Capitalism  
Division of Labor and the Market  
Reading: Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Intro., Bk I, chps. 1-3

10/1, 2 SECTION: Radford, “The Economic Organization of a P.O.W. Camp” (Reserve)

10/5 Supply and Demand  
Reading: Smith, Bk. I. chps. 6-7

10/7 Labor and Wages  
Reading: Smith, Bk. I, chps. 8 (pp. 72-92), 10 (pp. 111-132)

10/8, 9 SECTION: Critique of Capitalism  
Reading: Melville, "The Paradise of Bachelors and the Tartarus of Maids" (Reserve)

10/14 Capital Accumulation  
Reading: Smith, Bk. II, chp. 3

10/15, 16 SECTION: Social Democracy  
Reading: Roosevelt, Berle, homas, Kristol (Reserve)

10/19 Market Failure and the Need for Government  
Reading: Smith, Bk. V, chp. 1, parts 1-3 (pp. 213-20, 231-240, 244-50, 296-309)

10/20 DRAFT OF PAPER #2 DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 5PM

10/21 The Dream of Capitalism  
Reading: Alger, *Ragged Dick*, pp. 39-130
10/22,23  SECTION: Alger, pp. 131-216

10/23  COPY-EDITED PAPERS DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 12:00 NOON

10/26  SOCIALISM
Origins of Socialism
Reading: Marx-Engels Reader, pp. 3-6, 681-82, 203-17, 291-93.

10/27  FINAL DRAFT OF PAPER #2 DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 5PM

10/28  Revolutionary Socialism
Reading: MER, pp. 469-91, 499-500

10/29,30  SECTION: Review of Marx

11/2  Historical Materialism
Reading MER, pp. 149-52, 155-57, 700-17

11/4  Critique of Socialism
Reading: Koestler, Darkness at Noon, pp. 1-133

11/5,6  SECTION: Anarchism and Terrorism
Reading: Selections in Reserve

11/9  Critique of Socialism
Reading: Koestler, pp. 134-216

11/11  NATIONALISM
Liberal Nationalism
Readings: Mazzini, Duties to Humanity and to the State (Reserve)

11/12,13  SECTION: Fascism
Reading: Mussolini, "The Principles of Fascism" (Reserve)

11/16  Nazism: Nation and Race
Reading: Hitler, Mein Kampf, pp. 284-329

11/17  FIRST DRAFT OF PAPER #3 DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 5PM

11/18  Party and State
Reading: Hitler, pp. 373-451
11/19,20 SECTION: Critique of Fascism  
Reading: Bettleheim, "German Concentration Camps," "Individual and Mass Behavior in extreme Situations" (Reserve)

11/20 COPY-EDITED PAPERS DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 12:00 NOON

11/23 Third-world nationalism  
Colonialism  
Reading: Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth, pp.35-70

11/24 FINAL DRAFT OF PAPER #3 DUE IN MY BOX IN 214 PERKINS BY 5PM

11/25 Violence  
Reading: Fanon, pp. 71-106

11/30 Ethnic Nationalism  
Reading: Anthony Smith, ed. Ethnicity and Nationalism, pp. 1-4, 48-57 (Reserve); and Ignatieff, Blood and Belonging, pp. 19-56 (Reserve).

12/2 FEMINISM  
Reading: Frye, "Oppression"

12/3,4 SECTION: Liberalism Feminism; The Conservative Position  

12/7 Socialist Feminism; Radical Feminism  

12/9 REVIEW