Course Description
This course examines selected modern political theorists. We will be seeking to evaluate the assumptions, principles, and implications of their respective ideas. Our aim will be to both place these theorists in conversation with one another and to evaluate the light they might shed on contemporary political questions. Topics to be addressed include human nature, the creation of political order, the force of tradition, and ethics.

Course Readings
The following texts must be purchased for this course.
Friedrich Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals and Ecce Homo, New York: Vintage

There will also be other readings in addition to these books. Some of these readings will be distributed in class, others will be placed on reserve at the Hatfield Library, and some readings can be found online through links that will be provided. Finally, be aware that there will likely be additional reading assignments that are not yet delineated in the syllabus.

Course Requirements
The assignments for this course are rigorous and challenging and my expectations for the work you will be doing will be lofty. The reading assignments demand your careful attention, thoughtful analysis and willingness to pursue difficult questions. This course will be taught as a seminar. Accordingly, all members of the class bear responsibility for engaging not simply with the texts, but also with fellow classmates, in the collective effort to develop a rich understanding of these political theorists. Fulfilling this responsibility to the seminar demands that you come to class
having completed the assigned reading and having noted ideas, questions, and passages from the texts of particular relevance to our class discussions.

Exams:
There are three exams in this class. The first will focus on tension between liberalism and conservatism in the work of late 18th century theorists Kant, Burke and Wollstonecraft. The second exam will ask you to consider the quite different, revolutionary, and influential 19th century theories of Marx and Nietzsche. The third and final exam will invite you to explore two late 20th century theorists, Hannah Arendt and Michel Foucault, each of whose work both bears the distinct imprint of these earlier figures and has been significant in shaping a generation of contemporary political theorists.

Class Participation:
In addition to the writing assignments, class participation represents the other major course requirement. This course is a small selective seminar; the success of the course depends on students coming to class having completed the reading assignments and prepared for the day’s class with thoughts and questions about the texts. Indeed, each person in this class has a responsibility to contribute their ideas, questions, and insights in class. And just as importantly, each person has a responsibility to listen thoughtfully and respectfully to the ideas expressed by others. Both speaking and listening will be assessed as part of your class participation grade. How can I evaluate listening, you ask? One vital indicator of your efforts as an active listener is your capacity to respond to the comments of your fellow students with insights, questions, and observations.

In addition to regular class participation, each student in the class will be responsible for leading two class discussions – and we will talk more about what this entails.

Finally, let me clearly state that class participation begins – but by no means ends – with attendance. More than 3 unexcused absences from class over the course of the semester will significantly impact your class participation grade.

* Note: I fully appreciate that students like fast and thorough comments on their writing assignments. Unfortunately “fast” and “thorough” do not often go together well. I will strive to return your papers in a timely fashion. As a general rule, you should receive your papers back within two weeks of turning them in.

** Another Note: A penalty of 1/3 grade per day will be imposed on assignments submitted late (one day’s lateness would reduce a B+ to a B). I generally do not grant extensions, but if extraordinary circumstances arise, please consult with me as soon as possible -- and certainly prior to the due date of the paper.
**** Of Special Note: I take plagiarism very seriously. Plagiarism takes many forms, but the common denominator is presenting someone else’s words or ideas as your own. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, I encourage you both to err on the side of caution and to seek advice from me or from the Writing Center. Students found guilty of plagiarism will receive a zero for the assignment AND WILL BE REPORTED TO THE DEAN.

****** Statement Concerning Disabilities: Students with documented disabilities who may need accommodations, who have any emergency medical information the instructor should know of, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation, should make an appointment with the instructor as early as possible, no later than the first week of the term.

Grading

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Essay Exams</td>
<td>25% (75% total)</td>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>100%</td>
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Schedule of Events

1) T 8/28 Introduction. What is Modern?
2) TH 8/30 – No Class, APSA conference in Chicago
3) T 9/4 Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History," "What is Enlightenment?"
4) TH 9/6 Kant, "On the Common Saying: 'This May be True in Theory, but…"
5) T 9/11 Kant, "Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch."
6) TH 9/13 Kant, "The Metaphysics of Morals."
8) TH 9/20 Burke, Reflections, pp. 77-218.
9) T 9/25 Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Men, 1-64.
12) TH 10/4 EXAM #1


23) T 11/13 **EXAM #2**


26) TH 11/22 THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS


28) TH 11/29 Michel Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?” (on reserve).


30) TH 12/6 Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, Parts 4-5, pp. 75-159.