



B I S L A
Liberal Arts College

History of Political Philosophy: Late Modernity

Semester:	Spring 2022	
ECTS Credits:	6	
Hours/week:	90 + 90 min	
Language:	English	
Instructor:	Cole Simmons	
Meeting:	Mon: 2:30-4:10	Rorty Room
	Wed: 1:00-2:30	Rorty Room

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CONTENT

In this course we will cover Kant, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Marx, and Nietzsche and what went on across the Atlantic in America. We will end with a short look at postwar thought.

The Europeans we will read are the thinkers whose ideas have influenced political life after the ideas of the Enlightenment thinkers ceased being persuasive. The “self-evident” truths of the Enlightenment—from the theory of natural rights to the strictly materialist, monistic, interpretation of life—ran up against insuperable problems, or, were exposed as inadequate considering the times. What good were the rights of property and the encouragement of labor once the industrial revolution had humiliated the laborer? How important were all the doctrines of toleration when Christianity had been humbled and what was needed on the world stage was national might? What is the use of a nation when it is built on the stupid principle of “the greatest force is the greatest good”? These and other misgivings led several generations of thinkers into the camps of new philosophies away from the lingering but old liberal ideal which, nevertheless, continued to triumph through the USA, first in the World Wars and then again in the International Cold War. But anyone with eyes today can see, either these philosophers and their criticisms must be revived or something new must be done as liberalism falters all around us.

ASSIGNMENTS

The course will require two types of written assignments. You will be tested on your knowledge of the arguments used by the philosophers. You will also be asked, in separate assignments, to explore your own opinions in the light of the arguments discussed. The former type of examination is objective, insofar as no one is being asked to affirm or deny the arguments the philosophers make only show that you know them. The latter type of assignment is graded on more subjective grounds, which include clarity, inventiveness, grammar, and above all, evidence of some idea that you are working out in thought.

Participation in class discussion is a part of your grade.

Timeliness is of essence in this course.

Assignments have to be uploaded via Google Classroom by the due date. **Late submissions will incur grade penalty.**

Within 24 hours -10%,

1 to 3 days - 20%

4 to 7 days - 50%

More than a week late - 0%

CLASS MATERIALS

- When the text is available in print, having it in class is required and no electronic devices excepting e-readers are permitted.
- Bring a notebook and pen or pencil.

Grading scale

A – 100-93%,
B – 92-84%,
C – 83-74%,
D – 73-63%,
E – 62-51%,
Fx – 50-0%.

Four or more absences result automatically in Fx.

Regular attendance of all classes is of crucial importance in this course. Much of the explanation and implementation of what we learn towards your research project will take place in the seminars and skipping them will have impact on the quality of your research proposal. As per BISLA policy, four absences are permitted during the semester (these are to be reserved for cases of illness or family emergency). Any more absences result in failing the course. Do inform me prior to missing a class.

During this semester, it is essential that we remain safe. Thus, you are expected to stay at home and inform me when you have a raised temperature, feel short of breath, exhausted, experience upset stomach, etc. Contact the NCIZ hotline to arrange for testing. Check <https://korona.gov.sk/en/> for latest information and contact numbers.

Plagiarism policy

Plagiarism will automatically result in an Fx and may be subject to disciplinary proceeding and penalties stipulated in Disciplinary Code (up to expulsion).

All assignments at BISLA should be: (a) based on *your* reading of the sources, (b) based on *your analysis* of the sources, and (c) written by you. All used sources have to be properly referenced in the text as well as in the bibliography of your papers. You may also reference lectures and class discussions—there is a way to reference everything.

Definition of plagiarism: If you use a statement, argument or idea from someone without giving them credit, you are guilty of plagiarism. You can avoid plagiarism by citing your source(s). You must cite a source in two cases: first, whenever you are using the exact wording of the source (in this case, enclose the words in quotation marks; if you add words to the quotation, use square brackets) and, second, whenever you are summarizing or paraphrasing a statement, argument, idea or narrative from the source. If you do not do this, you are guilty of plagiarism. BISLA is using an APA style of referencing—you will find an APA manual on your Google Classroom page. Also, you can consult OWL Purdue Writing lab online or the APA blog for excellent tips and guidance.

APA formatting and style guide:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html

Required literature

- Class readers will have the assigned materials.

TOPICS and SCHEDULE SUMMARY

SPRING 2022 Class Schedule

Week 1: **Kant**

January 10: Introduction to course

January 12: Kant, “What is Enlightenment”

Week 2

January 17: Kant, “Perpetual Peace”

January 19: **Evaluation Day**

Week 3: **Hegel & Marx**

January 24: The 10 Excerpts

January 26: Selection on Historical Dialectic from *Phenomenology of History*

Week 4

January 31: Marx

February 2: Marx

Week 5

February 7: Marx

February 9: **Evaluation Day**

Week 6: **What’s Going on In America? (Liberalism Triumphs over Objections)**

February 14: Southern Liberals, Feeling Concerned... (Burke), Jefferson, & Madison

February 16: The Confident South. John C. Calhoun & Alexander Stephens

Week 7:

February 21: George Fitzhugh, Virginian Iconoclast

February 23: Ralph Waldo Emerson, Liberalism's Future in the United States, postwar

Week 8:

Reading Week

Week 9:

March 7: Lincoln vs. Douglas

March 9: Frederick Douglass, Abolition's Future, foundation of attack on Emerson's View.

Week 10

March 14: *The Settlement*—Foundation of World Empire set in Motion (Southerners enjoy posthumous victory through German Idealism softened by the Northern-Progressive *twist*, which proves to be the synthesis for empire.)

March 16: **Evaluation Day**

Week 11: **Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, Will and the Transvaluation of All Values**

March 21: Schopenhauer

March 23: Schopenhauer

Week 12

March 28: Nietzsche

March 30: Nietzsche

Week 13

April 4: Nietzsche

April 6: **Evaluation Day**

Week 14: **Prewar and Postwar**

April 11: Heidegger & Schmitt (Fascist Revolt)

April 13: Arendt & Foucault (“Never Again”)

Week 15

April 18: Strauss & Rorty (“This Too Shall Pass”)

April 20: **Evaluation Day**