5AANB008 Political Philosophy II: History of Political Philosophy
Syllabus – Academic year 2013/14

Basic information

Credits: 15
Module Tutor: Dr Sarah Fine
Office: 902
Consultation time: Tuesdays, 4pm - 5pm; Wednesdays 11am - 12pm
Semester: First
Lecture time and venue: Wednesdays, 12pm – 1pm, room K1.28

*Please note that tutorial times and venues will be organised independently with your teaching tutor

Module description (plus aims and objectives)

Students will focus on the work of five major figures in the history of modern political philosophy: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, John Stuart Mill, and Karl Marx. In this way, students will be introduced to a selection of the central texts, concepts, and debates in political philosophy.

Aims:

- To engage with a selection of important texts in the history of political philosophy, and to consider why these are key texts.
- To draw upon the texts in order to think carefully about central debates, concepts, traditions and controversies in political philosophy.
- To reflect on enduring themes in political philosophy, such as the relationship/tension between liberty and authority, and between liberty and equality.

Objectives:

By the end of the module, the students will be able to demonstrate intellectual, transferable and practicable skills appropriate to a Level 5 module and in particular will be able to demonstrate:

- A good understanding of the core texts and debates that they have studied in depth.
- That they recognise the importance of these texts in the history of political philosophy.
- The ability to critically assess the arguments in question.

Assessment methods and deadlines

- Formative assessment: 2 x 1500 word essays.
  Deadlines: Essay 1, Fri 8 Nov 2013; Essay 2, Fri 20 Dec 2013.
- Summative assessment: 2 x 2000 word essays.

NB Please note that for semester I-only Study Abroad students, assessment requirements may vary.
Outline of lecture topics (plus suggested readings)

Weeks One and Two <2 and 9 Oct>: Thomas Hobbes
Suggested reading:

Weeks Three and Four <16 and 23 Oct>: John Locke
Suggested reading:

Weeks Five and Six <30 Oct and 13 Nov>: Jean-Jacques Rousseau
Suggested reading:

Weeks Seven and Eight <20 November and 27 November>: John Stuart Mill
Suggested reading:

Weeks Nine and Ten <4 December and 11 December>: Karl Marx
Suggested reading:
Hobbes
- ‘Hereby it is manifest, that during the time men live without a common Power to keep them all in awe they are in that condition which is called Warre; and such a warre as is of every man against every man’ (Leviathan, chapter 13). Discuss.
- What is the relationship between obedience and protection in Hobbes’s account of sovereignty?
- ‘Thomas Hobbes was liberty’s enemy’. Discuss.

Locke
- What is the role of tacit consent in Locke’s political theory?
- ‘”The Second Treatise” should be read primarily as a defence of property’. Discuss.
- Critically examine Locke’s argument that toleration should not be extended to Catholics and atheists.

Rousseau
- ‘The problem is to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before’ (Rousseau, The Social Contract, I: 4). Does Rousseau succeed in providing the solution?
- Critically analyse Rousseau’s remark that those who refuse to obey the general will shall be ‘forced to be free’ (The Social Contract, Book 1, Chapter 7).
- What is the role of the lawgiver in Rousseau’s The Social Contract?

Mill
- What is the significance, for Mill’s argument, of the distinction between self-regarding actions and other-regarding actions?
- ‘Mill’s defence of liberty is not utilitarian’. Discuss.
- ‘The Subjection of Women is obviously right but of little importance’. Discuss.

Marx
- What is the role of alienation in Marx’s critique of capitalism?
- What is wrong with exploitation?
- Critically assess Marx’s account of ideology.
## Suggested additional readings

### General

### Hobbes

### Locke

### Rousseau

### Mill

### Marx