

POLITICAL THOUGHT
Bluefield State College
POSC 300—FALL 2013
CRN: 10670
Section: 001
WEBBD

Colin S. Cavell, Ph.D.
Class TR: 2:00-3:15 p.m. (14:00-15:15)
Office Hours: TBA
VOICE: 304.327.4034 (W)

Course Room No.: B105
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512-924-2364 (M)

A survey of ancient, medieval, modern, and post-modern political thought. Special attention given to contemporary political ideologies, including fundamentalism, feminism, environmentalism, and communitarianism. PR: POSC 200 or ENGL 201.

Grading Policy: 20% for Attendance & Participation*; 20% for the Class Presentation; 20% for the Midterm Exam; 20% for the Research Paper; and 20% for the Final Exam. A Guidelines sheet will be distributed outlining the requirements for your Class Presentation and for your Research Paper.

Grading Scale: 90-100=A; 80-89=B; 70-79=C; 60-69=D; 0-59=F. These numerical scores correspond to the following evaluations: “A” = Excellent; “B” = Good; “C” = Satisfactory (NOTE: A grade of “C” or better is required in major courses); “D” = Poor (passing, except in major courses); “F” = Earned Failure (removed only by repeating the course; upon successfully passing the course, the first grade is “excluded” from grade point average. The second grade is “included” in the recalculation of the grade point average); and “I” = Incomplete.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of POSC 300, students should be able to read and provide an immanent critique of texts; to articulate arguments and examine their flaws; be familiar with the basics of logical, ethical, and dialectical reasoning; be familiar with arguments, both pro and con, regarding the nature of the “good life”, ethical considerations for everyday life, questions of political rule in modern society, the state of nature and the basis for a social contract, private property, the value of tolerating alternative beliefs, the nature of labor, money, and commodities, the purposes of government, proper ordering of political relationships, class struggle, the basics of political economy, resolving the contradiction between liberty and order, and the equality of the sexes.

Academic Integrity Policy: Academic integrity is expected of all students. This means that all work for this class must be undertaken and completed by you alone without collaboration from others. Any dishonesty in the performance of course work, such as plagiarism or cheating in other forms, will be reported. In the event the student is charged with some form of dishonesty, the Student Discipline Policy will be followed. The full text of the BSC Academic Honesty Policy can be found at: <http://www.bluefieldstate.edu/academics/academic-honesty-and-proctoring>. In addition, students should be aware that research paper assignments must be submitted to [Turnitin](#) for the purpose of grading and checking for plagiarism. Submitted assignments will be included in the BSC dedicated database of assignments at Turnitin.

Attendance Policy*: Attendance in class is mandatory. It is the student’s responsibility to sign the attendance sheet each day of class; failure to sign the attendance sheet—even if in attendance—will be counted as an absence. “When the number of clock hours of willful absences exceeds the number of semester hours of credit, the instructor will notify the Registrar that the student has exceeded the permissible number of absences and should be withdrawn from class.” Students with Excused Absences must submit to me a hard copy of the campus publication *The Bulletin* announcing your allowed absence in order to get credit for the day(s) of your absence. “It is the responsibility of the student to...provide supporting documents for institutional and unavoidable absences” (*Bluefield State College Academic Catalog 2012-2014*, p. 55). As well, you are expected to follow the syllabus and accordingly be prepared for each day’s class. This means that you must read the pre-assigned readings before class so that you will be prepared to discuss and debate in class the subject matter scheduled for that day and answer questions related to the issues being covered.

* Absence from class may be made up by preparing a **two-page, typed** (i.e. using maximum 12 point font size and maximum double-spaced text with one-inch margin on all sides), **summary** on the missed material scheduled to be covered the day(s) of your absence. The summary must be in your own words and must **not** be copied material from the text(s), the internet, or any other

source(s). **All summaries must be turned in to me by the last day of classes if you want credit for your absences.**

Cell Phone Policy:

Turn off all cell phones during class or put on vibration. If you absolutely must answer your phone, leave the classroom before answering your phone and return only after you have completed your conversation.

Withdrawal Policy: Academic Withdrawal from the course prior to the deadline date for withdrawal as published within the academic calendar is accomplished by securing a Change In Schedule form and having it signed by appropriate persons. Blank copies of the change in schedule form are available in the offices of the Registrar, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the Dean and the advisor. After obtaining the required signatures, the student must submit, prior to the deadline date, the change in schedule form to the Office of the Registrar.

Disability Services Statement: BSC is committed to full inclusion of all students. Students who, by nature of a documented disability, require classroom, equipment, testing or assignment accommodations should contact the Student Support Services at 304.327.4227 to request accommodations before the start of the semester. Your immediate attention to these arrangements is necessary to assure a positive learning experience.

Free Tutoring Services Available: BSC offers **free online tutoring for all BSC students** in the following subjects: Math; Accounting, Managerial; Accounting, Financial; Writing (all subjects); Grammar; Microeconomics; Macroeconomics; Statistics; Spanish. Chemistry, etc. This service is free and available 24 hours a day to all BSC students. Go to <http://www.smarthinking.com/> and follow these instructions.

Required Texts:

Cahn, Steven M.. 2011. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*. (Second Edition) New York, NY & Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press. [ISBN 978-0-19-539661-4]

*****This class is web-enhanced and students will be able to access supplemental materials on the BSC BlackBoard website, including chapter outlines, chapter PowerPoint summaries, etc.*****

Mandatory LiveText Assessment Statement:

"An active LiveText account is a required resource for this course because at least one assignment *must* be submitted electronically using this online platform. LiveText is used by Bluefield State to help maintain our national accreditations, to demonstrate the quality of our academic programs, and to improve teaching and learning. As a student, you have the option to use your account for secure online storage of your academic work, and to create digital documents such as electronic portfolios or reflective journals, which can be shared with prospective employers or other audiences.

If you do not already have a LiveText account, you can purchase your five year account for \$98.00 at the college bookstore or online with a credit or debit card at www.livetext.com. LiveText will be a required resource in many different courses throughout your program, and you can use the same account for any course that requires it for the full five years, so **you only need to purchase the account one time**. If you already have an active LiveText account, you do not need to purchase another one. After five years you can extend your membership if you continue to need it for additional coursework or would like to maintain it for your personal use."

— Tracey Anderson, Ed.D., BSC Director of Institutional Research and Effectiveness

Aug. 19: Classes begin for Fall 2013 Semester

Aug. 20: Introduction to Political Thought

Main Themes: Nature of the “good life”, ethical considerations for everyday life, questions of political rule in modern society, the state of nature and the basis for a social contract, private property, the value of tolerating alternative beliefs, the nature of labor, money, and commodities, the purposes of government, proper ordering of political relationships, class struggle, the basics of political economy, resolving the contradiction between liberty and order, and the equality of the sexes.

Explain Syllabus: Go over class requirements, required books, class presentation, research paper, midterm and final exams.

Readings: Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Defence of Socrates”

Aug. 22: How Shall We Live?

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Defence of Socrates”

Aug. 27: How Shall We Live? (cont’d.)

Quiz: Open book quiz (all required books are necessary to pass this quiz)

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Defence of Socrates”

Aug. 29: How Shall We Live? (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Defence of Socrates”

Sept. 3: Justice & Injustice

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Crito”

Sept. 5: Justice & Injustice (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Crito”

Sept. 10: ‘The Good’ for Humanity & Moral Virtue

Readings: Cahn text, Richard Kraut “Introduction,” Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics: Books I & II”

Sept. 12: ‘The Good’ for Humanity & Moral Virtue

Readings: Cahn text, Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics: Books I & II”

Sept. 17: Moral Virtue (cont’d.) & Intellectual Virtue & Pleasure, Happiness

Readings: Cahn text, Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics: Books V, VI & X”

Sept. 19: Moral Virtue (cont’d.) & Intellectual Virtue & Pleasure, Happiness

Readings: Cahn text, Aristotle, “Nicomachean Ethics: Books V, VI & X”

Sept. 24: Assertion of a Divine Plan

Readings: Cahn text, Paul J. Weithman “Introduction,” Augustine, “The City of God: Book XIX”

Sept. 26: Assertion of a Divine Plan (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Augustine, “The City of God: Book XIX”

Oct. 1: Devil vs. God or Evil vs. Good

Readings: Cahn text, Paul J. Weithman “Introduction,” Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologiae: Question 90, Question 91, & Question 94”

Oct. 3: Devil vs. God or Evil vs. Good (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologiae: Question 90, Question 91, & Question 94”

Oct. 8: MIDTERM EXAM [2:00-3:15 p.m.]

Oct. 10: Foundations of Modern Political Thought

Readings: Cahn text, Roger D. Masters “Introduction,” Niccolo Machiavelli, “The Prince: Chs. V – IX, XII, XV – XVIII

Oct. 15: Foundations of Modern Political Thought (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Niccolo Machiavelli, “The Prince: Chs. V – IX, XII, XV – XVIII

Oct. 17: Advice for Would-Be Princes

Readings: Cahn text, Niccolo Machiavelli, “The Prince: Chs. XXI, & XXV

Oct. 22: The State of Nature

Readings: Cahn text, Jean Hampton, “Introduction,” Thomas Hobbes, “Leviathan”

Oct. 24: The State of Nature (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Thomas Hobbes, “Leviathan”

Oct. 29: A Labor Theory of Value

Readings: Cahn text, A. John Simmons, “Introduction,” John Locke, “Second Treatise of Government”

Oct. 31: A Labor Theory of Value (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, John Locke, “Second Treatise of Government”

Nov. 5: Man Is Born Free

Readings: Cahn text, Joshua Cohen, “Introduction,” Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Of the Social Contract: Books I & II”

Nov. 7: Modern Political Economy: Labor, Money, & Commodities

Readings: Cahn text, Charles L. Griswold, Jr., “Introduction,” Adam Smith, “The Wealth of Nations: Book I”

Nov. 9: Last Day to Withdraw with “W” for Full Semester Classes

Nov. 12: The Real is Rational

Readings: Cahn text, Steven B. Smith, “Introduction,” G.W.F. Hegel “Philosophy of Right: Preface, Second Part”

Nov. 14: The Real is Rational (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, G.W.F. Hegel “Philosophy of Right: Third Part”

Nov. 19: Nothing to Lose But Your Chains

Readings: Cahn text, Richard Miller, “Introduction,” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party”

Nov. 21: Nothing to Lose But Your Chains (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Manifesto of the Communist Party”

Nov. 24: **Research Papers Due** (Research Papers must be submitted today) Entering Relations Independent of Our Will

Readings: Cahn text, Karl Marx, “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy”

Assignment: Research Papers Due today. Hand in a hard copy of your Research Papers to me in class and upload an electronic copy to Turnitin.

Nov. 25-29: Thanksgiving Day Holidays — College closed (No Classes)

Dec. 3: In-Class Presentations; Entering Relations Independent of Our Will (cont’d.)

Readings: Cahn text, Karl Marx, “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy”

Assignment: Complete all readings & submit all work.

Dec. 5: Conclusion: In-Class Presentations Due. **(Last day of classes. All course work MUST be completed by this date. No submissions will be accepted after this date.**

Assignment: Complete all readings & submit all work.

Dec. 10: **FINAL EXAM [2:00-3:15 p.m.]**

Dec. 16: Final grades due to Registrar electronically