

POLITICAL THOUGHT
Bluefield State College
POSC 300—FALL 2015
CRN: 11159
Section: 001
WEBBD

Colin S. Cavell, Ph.D.
Class TR: 2:00-3:15 p.m. (14:00-15:15)
Office Hours: TBA
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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: 15% for Attendance & Participation*; 25% for participation in the Soliya Connect Program, or, alternatively for those students who have previously participated in the Soliya Connect Program, a 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, participation in the Soliya Program, 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.

Institutional Learning Outcomes for General Studies:

ILO1: Communication [AAC&U WRITTEN AND AAC&U ORAL COMMUNICATION]

Students will communicate effectively both orally and in writing.

ILO2: Information Literacy [AAC&U INFORMATION LITERACY]

Students will select appropriate resources, prioritize information in terms of relevance and reliability, question and evaluate the complexity of the information environment, and use information in an ethical manner.

ILO5: Social, Artistic, and Cultural Literacy [AAC&U GLOBAL LEARNING AND AAC&U CIVIC ENGAGEMENT]

Students will analyze and compare diverse social and cultural patterns, texts, and performances and will evaluate them from a global perspective.

ILO6: Scientific Literacy [AAC&U INQUIRY AND ANALYSIS]

Students will understand and apply scientific concepts and develop science inquiry and research skills.

ILO7: Critical and Ethical Reasoning [AAC&U CRITICAL THINKING AND AAC&U ETHICAL REASONING]

Students will interpret, analyze, and construct ethical arguments.

(effective August 8, 2013)

Program Learning Outcomes:

PO2: Understand and/or apply basic knowledge of principles and methods found in the social sciences disciplines.

PO3: Communicate effectively within a social science area of concentration.

PO6: Apply ethics across the social science disciplines.

Course Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of POSC 300, students should:

CLO1: be able to read and provide an immanent critique of texts;

CLO2: be able to articulate arguments and examine their flaws;

CLO3: be familiar with the basics of logical, ethical, and dialectical reasoning;

CLO4: be familiar with arguments, both pro and con, regarding the nature of the "good life";

CLO5: comprehend the ethical considerations of everyday life and the questions of political rule in modern society;

CLO6: be aware of the various conceptions regarding the state of nature, the basis for a social contract, and conceptions of private versus public property;

CLO7: be able to appreciate the value of tolerating alternative beliefs;

CLO8: understand the value and role of human labor, money, and commodities;

CLO9: be able to understand the various conceptions of the purposes of government, the proper ordering of political relationships, the nature of class struggle, the basics of political economy, the contradictions between liberty and order, and the effects of race, gender, class, and other divisions on society;

CLO10: be able to articulate, either orally or in writing, a coherent, logical, and critically persuasive argument, embodying a defensible conception of human freedom, on a designated topic relating to political philosophy.

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 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.*****

Helpful LiveText Assessment Statement:

“Institutions under the West Virginia Higher Education Policy Commission are committed to excellence in instruction and to programming, which requires student mastery of essential academic skills. To help assure attainment of these necessary skills, an assessment program is utilized to determine the effectiveness of the undergraduate curriculum in preparing students in essential skill areas. Students are required to participate in periodic institutional and programmatic assessment activities as directed by the College. Students not participating in required assessment activities may be denied participation in certain college events such as commencement exercises. Assessment data is used to examine academic programs for quality regarding curriculum, instruction, and student competencies” (2015-2016 Academic Catalog).

August 17 [Monday]: Classes begin for Fall 2015 Semester

August 18 [Tuesday]: Introduction to Political Thought

Main Themes: We exist? Why? Where are we? Who is “we”? What should we do?

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

August 20 [Thursday]: How Shall We Live?

Readings: Readings: Cahn text, Richard Kraut “Plato, Introduction”, Plato “Defence of Socrates”

August 25 [Tuesday]: Justice & Injustice

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Crito”

August 27 [Thursday]: The Good’ for Humanity

Readings: Cahn text, Plato “Crito”

Sept. 1: Greek Philosophy, c. 4th Century B.C.E. (Before the Common Era)

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

Sept. 3: [Online Book Quiz] Moral Virtue

Quiz Assignment: Online Book Quiz (the course text book is necessary to pass this quiz. On the course BlackBoard page, click on “Quizzes” to find the Online Book Quiz.)

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

Sept. 8: Intellectual Virtue

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

Sept. 10: Pleasure, Happiness

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

Sept. 15: Assertion of a Divine Plan**Readings:** Cahn text, Paul J. Weithman “Introduction,” Augustine, “The City of God: Book XIX”**Sept. 17:** Assertion of a Divine Plan (cont’d)**Readings:** Cahn text, Paul J. Weithman “Introduction,” Augustine, “The City of God: Book XIX”**Sept. 22:** Devil vs. God**Readings:** Cahn text, Paul J. Weithman “Introduction,” Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologiae: Question 90, Question 91, & Question 94”**Sept. 24:** Evil vs. Good**Readings:** Cahn text, Paul J. Weithman “Introduction,” Thomas Aquinas, “Summa Theologiae: Question 90, Question 91, & Question 94”**Sept. 29:** Advice for Would-Be Princes**Readings:** Cahn text, Roger D. Masters “Introduction,” Niccolo Machiavelli, “The Prince: Chs. V – IX, XII, XV – XVIII**Oct. 1:** Advice for Would-Be Princes (cont’d)**Readings:** Cahn text, Roger D. Masters “Introduction,” Niccolo Machiavelli, “The Prince: Chs. V – IX, XII, XV – XVIII**Oct. 6:** Advice for Would-Be Princes (cont’d)**Readings:** Cahn text, Roger D. Masters “Introduction,” Niccolo Machiavelli, “The Prince: Chs. V – IX, XII, XV – XVIII**Assignment: Catch up with your readings; Study for the Midterm Exam****Oct. 7-11:** MIDTERM EXAM [online]**Oct. 12 [Monday]:** Mid-semester grades due to Registrar electronically**Oct. 13:** The State of Nature**Readings:** Cahn text, Jean Hampton, “Introduction,” Thomas Hobbes, “Leviathan”**Oct. 15:** The Nature of the State**Readings:** Cahn text, Jean Hampton, “Introduction,” Thomas Hobbes, “Leviathan”**Oct. 20:** The Value of Labor**Readings:** Cahn text, A. John Simmons, “Introduction,” John Locke, “Second Treatise of Government”**Oct. 22:** A Labor Theory of Value (cont’d)**Readings:** Cahn text, A. John Simmons, “Introduction,” John Locke, “Second Treatise of Government”

Oct. 27: Man (& Woman) Is Born Free

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

Oct. 29: But Everywhere He (& She) Is In Chains

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

Nov. 3: Modern Political Economy: Labor, Money, & Commodities

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

Nov. 5: Modern Political Economy: Labor, Money, & Commodities (cont’d)

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

Nov. 6 [Friday]: Last Day to Drop with “W” or Withdraw from the College

Nov. 10: The Real is Rational

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

Nov. 12: The Rational Is Real

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

Nov. 17: Nothing to Lose But Your Chains

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

Nov. 19: Entering Relations Independent of Our Will; **In-Class Presentations Due** (In-Class Presentations MUST be completed by today)

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

Assignment: In-Class Presentations Due today. This is the last day for in-class presentations. Make sure to complete your presentation by this date..

Nov. 23-27: Thanksgiving Day Holidays — College closed (No Classes)

Dec. 1: Class Struggle; **Research Papers Due** (Research Papers must be submitted today)

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 (follow submission instructions on course BlackBoard page).

Dec. 3: Conclusion: **(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. 4-11: FINAL EXAM [online]

Dec. 14: Final grades due to Registrar electronically