RPOS 103
Introduction to Political Theory
Fall 2012
August 27 - December 11
Tu-Th, 08:45-10:05
Fine Arts Building, 0126

Instructor: Onur Bilginer
Contact: obilginer@albany.edu
Office Hours: 11:30 am – 1:00 pm (Tu/Th), at HU B16

Required Books:
Plato, The Republic (Hackett) trans. by Grube and Reeve
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Basic Political Writings (Hackett)
John Locke, Second Treatise of Government (Hackett)

Additional Readings on E-Reserve (the class password: 1032012)
John Rawls, Selections from A Theory of Justice
Adam Smith, “Of the Real and Nominal Price of Commodities,” and “Natural and Market Price of Commodities” from The Wealth of Nations.
Robert Nozick, Selections from Anarchy, State and Utopia

Course Objective:
This course mainly focuses on justice, democracy and property. On the completion of the course, you should have become familiar with some of the canonical works in political theory (their strategy of argument, style, and levels of meaning) and gained an understanding of the differences between older political arguments and present ones and how different political arguments can be applied to everyday life. This course will also help you develop a capacity to analyze the meaning of political concepts and test political arguments for their coherence.

Assignments and Course Obligations:
You will have three exams, all of which will be essay style and focus on lecture material and assigned readings. Aside from the exams, participation is an extremely important component of this course. Since our class time is valuable, students are also expected to come to class on time and prepared to begin promptly. Students are expected to have read the assignments closely and carefully, and be ready to engage in discussion and debate. Students are allowed 3 "free" absences. Each absence in addition to this will result in a deduction from your participation grade. Regular attendance and completion of readings is expected.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: “Students are the only people who can notify a professor about his/her disability. Be sure to discuss your accommodation letter
with your professor and work out the details.” Participants with special needs are strongly encouraged to visit this website: http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml.

**Grading:**
First mid-term: 25%
Second mid-term: 25%
Final Exam: 30%
Attendance/Participation: 20%

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas without giving any reference or credit to the original author. Please be warned that should I find you have plagiarized, you will receive an immediate E in the course and further actions will be taken, including sending your case before a university committee. You can find a detailed description of what constitutes plagiarism in http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/

**Class Schedule:**
August 28, Tuesday: Introduction
August 30, Thursday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book I
September 4, Tuesday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book II
September 6, Thursday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book III
September 11, Tuesday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book IV
September 13, Thursday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book V
September 18, Tuesday: **Class Suspended**
September 20, Thursday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book VI
September 25, Tuesday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book VII
September 28, Thursday: Plato’s *Republic*, Book VIII
October 2, Tuesday: **First Mid-Term**

October 4, Thursday: Rousseau’s *Social Contract*, Book I
October 9, Tuesday: Rousseau’s *Social Contract*, Book II
October 16, Tuesday: Locke’s *Second Treatise of Government*, chps. 1-5,
October 18, Thursday: Locke’s *Second Treatise of Government*, chps. 7-11, 13, 19
October 23, Tuesday: Rousseau’s *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Preface & Part I
October 25, Thursday: Rousseau’s *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality*, Part II
October 30, Tuesday: **Review/Discussion**
November 1, Thursday: **Second Mid-Term**

November 6, Tuesday: Adam Smith, “Of the Real and Nominal Price of Commodities,” and “Natural and Market Price of Commodities” from *The Wealth of Nations*. (E-reserve)
November 8, Thursday: Karl Marx’s *The Communist Manifesto*, pp 473-500
November 13, Tuesday: Read a short selection from Marx’s *Capital* on “The Working Day” pp. 361-376
November 15, Thursday: Marx’s “Critique of the Gotha Program” pp. 525-541
November 20, Tuesday: Rawls’s *Theory of Justice* on the Two Principles of Justice: Read chs. 1-3, 11
November 22, Thursday: **Class Suspended**
November 27, Tuesday: Rawls’s *Theory of Justice* on the Difference Principle and the Tendency to Equality: Read chs. 13, 16, 17
November 29, Thursday: Rawls’s *Theory of Justice* on the Original Position, the Veil of Ignorance and the Reasoning leading to the Two Principles of Justice: Read chs. 4, 20, 24, 26.
December 4, Tuesday: Selections from Robert Nozick’s *Anarchy, State and Utopia*
December 6, Thursday: Locke/Nozick-Rawls-Marx Debate
December 11, Tuesday: **Final Review: Q/A**