Due to the frequent use of the word “revolution” in our daily lives, our scientific-theoretical knowledge of this unique socio-political phenomenon is quite limited. Political science does not have a systematic theory of revolution. Historically, revolutions seem to be specific to a place and time. However, does that mean revolutions do not share common traits or theoretical underpinnings? Throughout this course, we will investigate the ideas, ideals, values, and aspirations that have driven the great sociopolitical transformations we call “revolutions.” We’ll engage with a variety of questions, including: How does a revolution differ from a reform, a revolt, or an insurgency? What is the relationship between a revolution and the state, class, race, or the notion of the nation? What is the relationship between a revolution and violence? Does revolution relate to democracy? What are the origins of revolutions, and what are their symptoms? What exactly is expected to change in a society after a revolution and to what extent? To investigate these questions, we will read, analyze, and discuss texts of different writers, some of whom participated or were leaders of revolutions: Vladimir Lenin, Maximilien Robespierre, Karl Marx, Thomas Paine, Antonio Negri, Hannah Arendt, Rosa Luxemburg, and others.

This course is also an exercise in a critical, theoretical thinking therefore, while the course is technically a lecture, we will proceed in a form of a seminar based on exchange of ideas, discussions, valuations and re-valuations of key arguments represented in assigned texts. Overall, the course consists of an in-depth reading of assigned texts, discussions and intensive class sessions, which will require your active participation and substantive contribution. The course does not have traditional form exams instead, for your mid-term and final exams you will be required to write academic research papers. In addition, there will be short written homework assignments and in-class presentations, which will be evaluated and will be counted as a part of your overall course grade. There will also be an unscheduled, short answer in-class assignments. You should be ready to dedicate a substantial amount of time and effort for this course. Your prior engagement in political science and political theory courses may be useful but is not essential or required.
Learning Objectives

✓ To become familiar with the major theoretical aspects of the concept of revolution.
✓ To be able to analyze, interpret and critically evaluate the key concepts, ideas and arguments by different writers presented in the selected course readings.
✓ Expand and deepen the understanding of concepts such as “class,” “state,” “constituent power,” “the people” and others involved in discussions and arguments about revolution presented in course readings.
✓ Expand the ability to interpret political theory texts – their arguments, style, and levels of meaning.
✓ Strengthen skills of analytical thinking and argumentative academic writing.
✓ To be able to establish theoretical relationships between the political concepts and contemporary political context.

Course Requirements

As a student enrolled in this course and receiving institutional academic credit, your responsibilities are:

✓ Attend all lectures.
✓ Arrive to lectures on time and do not be late.
✓ Complete all readings prior or by the assigned date and come to class prepared.
✓ Contribute to a respectful academic environment, refraining from unrelated conversations or use of technology (cell phones, laptops and other devices)
✓ Bring the assigned readings to a class session with you.
✓ Be an active: take notes, ask questions, raise points of critique.
✓ Be an active participant of in-class discussions.
✓ Be respectful of other diverse points of view by other classmates and engage in an intellectual debate in a civilized manner

Required Books

Reading and writing are essential methods and “tools” of academic work. By reading, we engage with ideas of different thinkers each of whom interpret different subjects of their studies in their own way, using specific methodologies and constructing particular arguments. Through close reading of assigned texts you should be able to deconstruct these arguments, critically evaluate and use the knowledge and understanding of them to formulate and develop your own ideas. There is a list of required books for this course. We will not read all of them in their entirety, but selected chapters and sections. The required books have been ordered and are available for you in University’s bookstore. If you decide to acquire books from other sources, make sure you have the same exact editions as a bookstore as we want to make sure we are literally “on the same page” of the text during the lectures. It is important for you to have the exact same editions as stated in this syllabus. If you order books from somewhere else, make sure you time your orders properly to make sure your books arrive on time for the class and not later.

Note: Books are a must for this course. There will be virtually no additional study material such as power points, summary tables and alike. Be it a book or an article posted online, the text in hand is what you need for this course.
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ISBN 978-0-8166-6774-1


ISBN-10: 0-486-40893-0

Additional readings in a form of PDF files will be placed on Blackboard and available to you for assigned classes. Make sure you print out the sections of required texts and bring them with you to a classroom on a day the reading is assigned for discussion.

**Office Hours**
You should not feel any hesitation to come see me to talk about the course material during my office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. in Humanities B16 office. You are also very welcome to approach me for a conversation after or before class if you have time or schedule a different time for a meeting if you are not available for a meeting on my office hours.

**Blackboard and SUNY E-mail inboxes**
Your homework assignments will be posted on Blackboard in addition to being e-mailed to your “suny.edu” mailboxes. Make sure you check blackboard and your university E-mail regularly for course updates, changes in syllabus and other announcements.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism means to pass off someone else’s work as your own. Please be warned that if found guilty of plagiarism, you will automatically fail the course and receive an E grade. Further actions will be taken, including sending your case before a university committee. Remember, taking text off internet sites and "reworking them" will also earn you an E along with further disciplinary actions. The whole idea of this course is for you to engage in active, critical thinking of your own and to demonstrate that you worked with the texts, understood them and, based on understanding and knowledge acquired, were able to develop your own ideas and arguments. Any attempt to plagiarize in this course will be taken very seriously and may have an extremely negative outcome.
Course grade breakdown
Midterm exam (midterm paper): 20%
Final exam: (final research paper): 30%
Two homework papers: 15% each (30% all together)
Participation: 15%
Attendance: 5%

Exams, homework papers, attendance and participation

Exams
Both, midterm and final exams are in the form of academic research paper. Your midterm paper should be of 6 pages long. Your final exam paper should be 9-10 pages long. Each paper should be of the following standard: Times Roman 12pt. font, double spaced with consistent citation/footnotes style through the paper and bibliography list.

Homework
Your homework papers should be of the same format as exam papers but only 4-5 pages long. (not less than 4 pages)

Attendance and participation
Regular attendance and active in-class participation are essential in this course if you want to succeed. The topic of the course is complicated and complex. We will be discussing various aspects of different arguments and ideas associated with revolution and will be clarifying and analyzing the assigned texts. Missing classes will diminish your ability to better understand the topic which subsequently will affect your homework and exam papers. I highly recommend you do not miss classes.

Grade Appeals
In order to appeal a grade on a particular assignment, you should contact your TA or the professor during office hours within 2 weeks of receiving the assignment back and submit a written explanation of your reasons for believing that the grade should be changed, not to exceed 2 pages. A grade appeal may result in the grade being raised, or left as is, depending on the results of the review. After two weeks, grade complaints will not be considered unless there are mitigating circumstances like a serious illness.

What do I do if I am sick or need alternate arrangements to fulfill course requirements?
Any mitigating circumstances should be brought to the attention of the professor as soon as possible. Any foreseeable circumstances (athletic event, religious holidays, travel, etc...) must be raised at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible. Remember, extenuating circumstances do not excuse you from requirements of the course but only allow for an accommodation to fulfill these requirements as an exception to general standards of the course.

Excused Absences
If you must miss an exam or more than two normal classes, you must have documentation from the dean of undergraduate studies (Lecture Center 30 Phone: 518-442-3950) or your grade will be adversely affected.
Reasonable accommodation
Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (Campus Center 137, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations (http://www.albany.edu/studentlife/dss/Accommodation.html).
If you wish to discuss academic accommodations, for the above reasons or other cases including religious holidays, inform the instructor at the beginning of the term. Reasonable accommodations are generally established well in advance and rarely granted retroactively.

What can I do to succeed academically in this course?
The Basics: Read, show up, participate, do a good homework
The most important factor for success is studying assigned readings, regular attendance of lectures and discussion sections, good presentation and participation in the course in a form of paying attention, taking notes, participating in discussions.

Attendance
Regular attendance of class sessions is of crucial importance. It is during the class sessions we will be unpacking and braking down more complicated ideas and arguments and analyze concepts. Missing the class will mean you are left on your own to go through the same process. It is easier and more rewarding to participate in this process together with instructor and your fellow students.

Writing Center Services (Humanities 140)

Academic Support Services (Library Room 94)
Arrange individual and group tutorial as well as study skills workshops on time management, how to improve your concentration, essay exam skills, listening skills, and overcoming procrastination. Visit their website: http://www.albany.edu/oass/support_services.htm or contact them at 442-5180.
Course Outline

1) Aug. 28, Tuesday
• Introductory discussion – What is “Revolution”?

2) Aug. 30, Thursday
• Syllabus and course overview

PART I
The Old and The New

3) Sept. 4, Tuesday

4) Sept. 6, Thursday
• Hannah Arendt, On Revolution, Chapter II “The Social Question” (pages.49 – 105)

5) Sept. 11, Tuesday
• Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution, Chapter II “The Old Regimes” (pages.27 – 64.)

6) Sept. 13, Thursday
• Thomas Pain, The Rights of Man, Part I (pages. 7 – 27)

7) Sept. 18, Tuesday
• Thomas Pain, The Rights of Man, Part I (pages. 27 – 67)

PART II
Sovereignty, Tyranny and the Question of the Legitimate Government

8) Sept. 20, Thursday
• Declaration of Independence (On Black Board)

9) Sept. 25, Tuesday
First homework assigned

10) Sept. 27, Thursday
PART III
Revolution and Constituent Power

11) Oct. 2, Tuesday
First homework due
  • Sieyes, *What is the Third Estate?* (On Blackboard)

12) Oct. 4, Thursday
  • Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State.* (Pages 14.5 – 34.5)

13) Oct. 9, Tuesday
  • Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State.* (Pages 140 – 154.5)

14) Oct. 11, Thursday
  • Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State.* (Pages 154.5 – 164.5)

15) October 16, Tuesday
  • Antonio Negri, *Insurgencies: Constituent Power and the Modern State.* (Pages 164.5 – 174.5)

Workers Revolutions: class, state, capitalism, communism

16) Oct. 18, Thursday
Midterm Paper Announced
  • Crane Brinton, *The Anatomy of Revolution*, Chapter IV “Types of Revolutionists” (pages 93 – 120)

17) Oct. 23, Tuesday
  • Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Communist Manifesto* (On Blackboard)

18) Oct. 25, Thursday
  • V.I. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, Chapter I “Class Society and The State.” (Pages 7 – 20)

19) Oct. 30 Tuesday
  • V.I. Lenin, *State and Revolution*, Chapter V “The Economic Base of The Withering Away of The State” (Pages 69 – 84)

20) Nov. 1 Thursday
Mid-term paper due
  • *Writings on the Paris Commune*. “The Civil War in France” (Pages 9-15) and “The Paris Commune” (Pages 43 – 68)

21) Nov. 6 Tuesday
  • *Writings on the Paris Commune*. “The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State.” (Pages 75 – 87) and “The Commune of Paris” (Pages 89 – 100)

Lenin and Soviet Revolution

22) Nov. 8 Thursday
  • *Revolution at The Gates*, “On Slogans” (Pages 62 – 68) and “One of the Fundamental Questions of the Revolution” (Pages 106 – 112) and “The Bolsheviks Must Assume Power” (Pages 113 – 123)
23) Nov. 13 Tuesday
Second homework paper announced
• Revolution at The Gates, “The Tasks of the Revolution” (Pages 124 – 132) and “The Crisis Has Matured” (Pages 133 – 141) and “Meeting of the Petrograd Soviet of Workers ’ and Soldier’s Deputies.” (Pages 162 – 164)

Revolution and Present Reality

24) Nov. 15 Thursday
• Revolution at The Gates, “Afterword: Lenin’s Choice” (Pages 167 – 178)

25) Nov. 20, Tuesday
• Revolution at The Gates, “Welcome to the Desert of the Real!” (Pages 229 – 178)

26) Nov. 27, Tuesday
Second homework paper due
• Revolution at The Gates, “Against Pure Politics” (Pages 263 – 284)

27) Nov. 29, Thursday
• Revolution at The Gates, “Cultural Capitalism” (Pages 284 – 292) and “Cyberspace Lenin?” (Pages 292 – 297)

28) Dec. 4, Tuesday
Final exam paper question announced
• How to Begin from the Beginning (On Blackboard)

29) Dec 6, Thursday
Last class session

Final exam papers due hard copy handed to me personally at the same class location
ON THURSDAY, DC. 13, between 10:30am – 12:30pm.