



POSC 110 -- INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS
FALL 2000

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Office Hours: M, F 12-1; W 3-4; T/R 9:30-10:30

All work must be done in accordance with Radford University's Honor Code. "By accepting admission to Radford University, each student makes a commitment to understand, support and abide by the University Honor Code without compromise or exception."

A FEW SMALL THEORY COINS:

"For almost a half century, the debate about the quality and character of our common world has been stalled, and in recent years it has become all too clear that it is running on empty." (Rachel Gurstein, *The Repeal of Reticence*)

"The agent seeking significance in life, trying to define him- or herself meaningfully, has to exist in a horizon of important questions. That is what is self-defeating in modes of contemporary culture that concentrate on self-fulfillment in *opposition* to the demands of society, or nature, which *shut out* history and the bonds of solidarity." (Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*)

"For me, the fundamental political inquiry is the relation of love to power." (Michael Perry, *Morality, Politics, and Law*)

Every (Eric Voegelin, *Israel and Revelation*)

COURSE GOALS: This course examines the basic framework that underlies all political science. Its goals are to help students:

1. think about various understandings of what politics is;
2. understand the basic questions which political science asks;
3. think about the role of the citizen in politics; and
4. to think about what it means to be a human being and apply that to what it means to live together in a political community.

REQUIRED READING:

The Last Days of Socrates
The Grand Inquisitor
A Connecticut Yankee in King
Arthur's Court
Fahrenheit 451
Mumbo Jumbo
The Tempest

Plato
Fyodor Dostoevsky

Mark Twain
Ray Bradbury
Ishmael Reed
William Shakespeare

GRADING: Grading in this class depends on six announced discussions, short essays and journals, and in-class activities.

In-Class Activities: In-class activities are either brief writing exercises or group work. If you are in class and make a good-faith effort to participate in the activity, you will receive full credit. In-class activities are unannounced and cannot be made up. If you miss class due to documented university business, your absence will be excused. These are the only excused absences. These activities account for 25-percent of the final grade.

Short Essays and Journals: Essays and journals are worth 50% of the grade. Due dates are listed on the schedule. You are responsible for being aware of when assignments are due. There will be a short essay written in class for each of the six books. These essays will be no longer than the front and back of one loose-leaf page. No make-ups will be given during the semester. You may make up one short essay during the final exam period. Journal topics will be assigned throughout the semester. Journals will ask you to think and write about a general theme or question raised by a book. Journals should be typed single-space and not exceed one-page. Extensions may be granted for journals if they are arranged with me in advance.

Discussion: There will be 6 announced, formal discussions during the semester (one covering each book). You will receive the discussion questions about one week in advance. In order to participate in the class discussion, you need to bring to the class some notes on the question and a signed honor-code pledge that you have completed the reading. I will remind you of the dates, but you are responsible for being aware of when a discussion is scheduled. These discussions contribute 25-percent of the final grade.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

August 21-30	Introduction and overview
August 25	Journal 1 due
September 1	NO CLASS (Dr. Hrezo is attending a professional conference) Journal 2 due (e-mail it to me by midnight)
September 4-11	Read <i>The Apology</i> and <i>The Crito</i> in <u>The Last Days of Socrates</u>
September 8	Journal 3 due
September 13	Discussion
September 15	Short essay
September 18-25	<u>The Grand Inquisitor</u>
September 20	Journal 4 due
September 27	Discussion
September 29	Short essay
October 2	Journal 5 due
October 2-11	<u>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur's Court</u>
October 11	Journal 6
October 13	Discussion
October 16	Short essay
October 20	Journal 7
October 18-27	<u>Mumbo Jumbo</u>
October 27	Journal 8
October 29	Discussion
November 1	Short essay
November 3-10	<u>Fahrenheit 451</u>
November 8	Journal 9 due
November 13	Discussion
November 15	Short essay
November 17-29	<u>The Tempest</u>
December 1	Discussion
December 4	Short essay
December 6-8	What is politics?
Final	Journal 10 (1:00 Class: 12/12/00 at 2:00; 2:00 Class 12/15/00 at 11:00)