**TWENTIETH CENTURY POLITICAL THEORY** **(PS 4423/6423)**

Spring 2016 |Tue/Thur. 8.00-9.15 am | Bowen 160

**CONTACT INFORMATION:**

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

Few would dispute that freedom is, or should be, a central value in contemporary western political communities, yet our political discourse and policies reveal substantial disagreement about what freedom means or entails. In this class we will read authors who approach the thorny issue of freedom, as well as what they see as the most pressing threats to it, from a range of perspectives including liberalism, existentialism, Marxism, postcolonial theory, feminist theory, and post-structural theory. In so doing, we will also consider how their visions of freedom and related critiques of domination and oppression are nested in broader theories concerning selfhood and identity, economics, and the role of government in ordering social life. Finally, we will examine how freedom structures our communities and social relations and thus consider the value of freedom itself.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

* To acquire a deeper understanding of the concept of freedom and its role in social, economic, and political life.
* To become familiar with arguments and analyses from various philosophical and theoretical schools, including liberalism, existentialism, Marxism, post-colonial theory, feminist theory, and post-structural theory.
* To improve speaking and listening skills through thoughtful and respectful classroom discussion
* To strengthen our command of English prose through careful reading and writing.

**METHODS OF EVALUATION**

* 4 Response papers (1 page each): 20% (5% each)
* Essay 1 (Tue, March 22): 20%
* Essay 2 (Wed., April 27): 30%
* Final exam (Friday, April 29): 20%
* Twitter assignment (weekly): 10%

**CLASS ASSIGNMENTS**

**Response Papers**

* **Response papers** must be submitted on the same day as the reading to which they respond is assigned. In other words, **you may not write a response paper about a reading that we have already covered in class**.
* You must write each response paper on a separate part of the course. There are four parts to the course, so you need to submit a response paper for each part.
* The response papers must include two basic components: First, a summary of the reading’s main arguments. In this section, your goal is to provide the reader with the basic outlines of what the author says, much as you would find in a book review. Use quotations sparingly. In the second section of the response paper you should try to evaluate and analyze what you have read. Possibilities for what to write in this section include, but are not limited to: developing a critique of the argument; exploring the assumptions you think the author has made, and considering whether they seem plausible; making connections with other readings and/or themes of the class; contemplating the relevance of the text to contemporary life. You are encouraged (but are not required) to use these papers as the basis for your essays.

**Essays**

The **two essays** will test reading comprehension, writing, and ability to construct a persuasive argument using the texts we will have read in class. I will circulate prompts with more detailed instructions and guidelines at least two weeks before the due date and encourage you to meet with me to discuss any ideas, questions, or problems you encounter as you write. They will be 4-5 and 5-6 pages long.

**Final exam:** multiple choice, true/false, quote identification questions, and short essay questions.

**Twitter Participation**:

* Please use the hashtag **#freedommsu** in your tweets. This allows me and other members of the class to find your tweet. You should search for this hashtag to find new tweets at least once a week, ideally more often.
* To receive full credit for this assignment you must tweet **twice a week** during the entire course of the semester.
* Your tweets can take various forms:
  + A pithy summary of the reading,
  + A response to the reading,
  + A question about the reading,
  + A continuation of the discussion we’ve had in class,
  + A retweet or link to a relevant article, webpage, story etc, with an explanation of its relevance to the topic we are currently discussing in class
  + A response to another student’s tweet.

**GRADUATE STUDENTS**

Graduate students must submit a response paper (following the instructions above) each week throughout the semester. They will answer the same two essay prompts as undergraduates, but are expected to write 8 and 10 pages for the two papers respectively. The weighting of assignments remains as listed above.

**STANDARDS OF ACHIEVEMENT**

I will grade your papers, response papers and all test and exam questions that do not have a simple right or wrong answer according to the following scale. More detailed guidelines will be included with the paper prompts.

**A (100-90%):** Very good to excellent work, with few, if any, missteps.

**B (89-80%):** Good to very good work, with some missteps but also flashes of excellence.

**C (79-70%):** Satisfactory work that sincerely attempts to analyze the readings and issues at hand, but with serious flaws.

**D (69-60%):** Work attempting to engage the readings and issues at hand, but without the execution befitting an MSU student.

**F (59% or less):** Work that does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment.

**TITLE IX**

MSU is committed to complying with Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination, including violence and harassment, based on sex. This means that MSU’s educational programs and activities must be free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual violence and/or harassment by any member of the University community, you are encouraged to report the conduct to MSU’s Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 325-8124 or by e-mail to

titleix@msstate.edu. Additional resources are available at http://www.msstate.edu/web/security,

or at http://students.msstate.edu/sexualmisconduct/ . Other good organizations with online resources are Know Your IX, End Rape on Campus, and SurvJustice.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Mississippi State has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students. The code is as follows: “As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.” Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor Code. Student will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor Code. For additional information, please visit: http://honorcode.msstate.edu/policy.

**SUPPORT SERVICES**

Students who need academic accommodations based on disability should visit the Office of Student Support Services, 01 Montgomery Hall, call 662-325-3335, or visit the website at [www.sss.msstate.edu](http://www.sss.msstate.edu)

**LATE WORK POLICY**

Please contact me as soon as you have any concerns about meeting a deadline to discuss the possibility of an extension. Papers submitted after the relevant deadline will be penalized five percentage points per day (or any part thereof), unless you are able to provide evidence of a medical or family emergency.

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Attendance for the entire duration of each and every class is mandatory. You are allowed three unexcused absences during the semester. After that, I will deduct 0.5% from your overall grade for each class that you miss. On the other hand, if you have no unexcused absences for the whole semester you will receive 5% extra credit to your overall grade.

**REQUIRED READINGS**

The following texts have been ordered at the Campus Barnes and Noble:

J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1978)

Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the* Earth (New York: Grove Publishing, 2005).

Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

Other assigned texts

In addition to the books above, the following articles and chapters are either available online or I will email you a copy of them.

Jean-Paul Sartre, *Existentialism is a Humanism*

Downloadfrom <http://www.marxists.org/reference/archive/sartre/works/exist/sartre.htm>

I will email you the following:

Hannah Arendt, “Freedom and Politics: A Lecture,” *Chicago Review* Vol. 14, No. 1 (1960): 28-46.

Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty,” in Henry Hardy (ed.) *Liberty: Isaiah Berlin* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002)

Milton Friedman, “The Relation between Economic Freedom and Political Freedom,” in Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).

Iris Marion Young, “Fives Faces of Oppression,” in Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1990)

Monique Deveaux, “Personal Autonomy and Cultural Tradition: The Arranged Marriage Debate in Britain,” in Monique Deveaux, *Gender and Justice in Multicultural Liberal States* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, “A Genealogy of ‘Dependency’: Tracing a Keyword of the US Welfare State” *Signs*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1994): 309-336

Michel Foucault, “The Subject and Power,” *Critical Inquiry* Vol. 8, No. 4 (1982): 777-795.

Judith Butler, “Beside Oneself: On the limits of Sexual Autonomy,” in Judith Butler, *Undoing Gender* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

Saba Mahmood, “The Subject of Freedom,” in Saba Mahmood, *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005).

Etienne Balibar, “The Proposition of Equaliberty.”

Jacques Derrida, “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or, How Not to Speak in Mottos.”

Roberto Esposito, “Freedom and Immunity.”

**Part 1: Classical Debates**

Week 1:

Tuesday, January 12: Introduction to the class

Thursday, January 14: J.S. Mill, *On Liberty* pp. 1-25

Week 2:

Tuesday, January 19: Mill, *On Liberty* pp. 25-71

Thursday, January 21: Mill, *On Liberty* pp. 71-113

Week 3:

Tuesday, January 26: Jean-Paul Sartre, “Existentialism is a Humanism.”

Thursday, January 28: Hannah Arendt, “Freedom and Politics: A Lecture”

Week 4:

Tuesday, February 2: Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Freedom,” pp. 118-144

Thursday, February 4: Berlin, “Two Concepts of Freedom,” pp. 145-172

**Part 2: Capitalism, Empire, and Freedom**

Week 5:

Tuesday, February 9: Milton Friedman, “The Relation between Economic Freedom and Political Freedom.”

Thursday, February 11: Herbert Marcuse*, One Dimensional Man*, introduction to first edition and chapter 1.

Week 6:

Tuesday, February 16: Marcuse*, One Dimensional Man*, chapter 2

Thursday, February 18: Marcuse*, One Dimensional Man*, chapters 9 and 10

Week 7:

Tuesday, February 23: Iris Marion Young, “Five Faces of Oppression”.

Thursday, February 25: Foreword or Preface to Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*

Week 8:

Tuesday, March 1:Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, pp.1-30

Thursday, March 3: Frantz Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, pp. 30-62

Week 9:

Tuesday, March 8: Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, chapter 2

Thursday, March 10: Fanon, *Wretched of the Earth*, pp.181-207

Week 10: SPRING BREAK

**Part 3: Feminist Interventions: Dependency, Agency, and Autonomy**

Week 11:

Tuesday, March 22: Nancy Fraser and Linda Gordon, “A Genealogy of ‘Dependency’: Tracing a Keyword of the US Welfare State”.

**First paper due in class today.**

Thursday, March 24: Monique Deveaux, “Personal Autonomy and Cultural Tradition: The Arranged Marriage Debate in Britain”.

Week 12:

Tuesday, March 29: Judith Butler, “Beside Oneself: On the limits of Sexual Autonomy.”

Thursday, March 31: Saba Mahmood, “The Subject of Freedom.”

**Part 4: The Power of Freedom**

Week 13:

Tuesday, April 5: Nikolas Rose, *Powers of Freedom*, pp. 1-31

Thursday, April 7: Rose, *Powers of Freedom*, pp. 31-60

Week 14:

Tuesday, April 12: Rose, *Powers of Freedom*, chapter 2

Thursday, April 14: Rose, *Powers of Freedom*, chapter 4

Week 15:

Tuesday, April 19: Rose, *Powers of Freedom*, chapter 5

Thursday, April 21: Jacques Derrida, “Liberty, Equality, Fraternity, or, How Not to Speak in Mottos;” Roberto Esposito, “Freedom and Immunity.”

Week 16:

Tuesday, April 26: Last day of class

**Wednesday, April 27: Second paper due by 5pm to my office.**

Thursday, April 28: Reading day

**Final Exam:**

Friday, April 29, 8-11 am