POLI 110B: Sovereigns, Subjects and the Modern State

Winter 2022
Tue/Thu 11 am-12.20 pm

Instructor: Zeynep Pamuk  
E-mail: zpamuk@ucsd.edu  
Office hours: Tue, 4-6 pm

TA: Linh Le  
E-mail: klle@ucsd.edu  
Office hours: Wed, 2-4 pm

Course description

This course is an introduction to political philosophy through close examination of some of the major texts and thinkers of the Western political tradition. We will focus on concepts such as political regimes and sovereignty, authority and political obligation, freedom and the limits of authority, equality, power and democracy. We will pay special attention to how political philosophers have conceptualized the design, aims and effects of political institutions.

Texts

These books are available at the UCSD bookstore and at online booksellers.

Machiavelli, The Prince (CUP)  
Machiavelli, Discourses on Livy (Chicago)  
Hobbes, Leviathan (CUP)  
Locke, Two Treatises of Government (CUP)  
Rousseau, Basic Political Writings (Hackett)

Assessment

Grades will be determined based on participation (15%), weekly assignments (15%), a midterm exam (20%), a 5-page paper (20%) and a final exam (30%).

The weekly assignment is to post two discussion questions on the Canvas discussion board by the end of Monday, starting on week 2. These will be graded on a satisfactory/unsatisfactory basis.

Attendance and participation

Active participation and engagement with the materials is expected from all students and forms part of the grade for the course. If you are unable to participate in the class discussion, you must make it up by participating through the Canvas discussion board. You can do so by writing short responses to the discussion questions posted by other students.
Academic integrity

Any written work you submit for evaluation should be the result of your own research and writing. You must adhere to standard citation practices in this discipline and properly cite any books, articles, websites, lectures, etc. that have helped you with your work. If you receive any help with your writing, you must clearly acknowledge this assistance. If you are unsure about what constitutes academic integrity, you can find information at the following link: https://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/

Course outline

Jan 4/6  Introduction
Machiavelli, The Prince: Chs 6-9, 15-18, 25

Jan 11/13 Machiavelli Discourses on Livy: Book I, chs. 1-6, 16-18, 57-58; Book III chs 1, 3

Jan 18/20 Hobbes, Leviathan: Chs. 13-16


Feb 1  Midterm exam

Feb 3  Writing workshop

Feb 8/10 Locke, Second Treatise: Chs. 1-5, 7-9

Feb 15/17 Locke, Second Treatise: Chs 11, 18-19

Feb 22/24 Rousseau, Discourse on the Origin of Inequality: Dedication, Preface, Part II

Rousseau, On the Social Contract: Intro, Book 1, chs. 1-6


Mar 8  Paper due. No lecture

Mar 10  Review session