



**SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS**

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAMME

POLS 401: Some Aspects of Modern Social and Political Thought:

Power, Freedom and Justice

2009 TRIMESTER 1 AND TRIMESTER 2

9 March to 15 November 2009

LECTURER: Dr Xavier Márquez

ROOM: Murphy 541

OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 2-4 pm

PHONE: 463-5889

EMAIL: xavier.marquez@vuw.ac.nz

SEMINAR TIMES: Tuesdays 10:00-11:50 AM

VENUE: Murphy 531 (Kelburn Campus)

COURSE WEBSITE: On Blackboard

COURSE WIKI: Through the Blackboard course website

Course Delivery

This course is taught by means of a weekly seminar and an online component (on the course website on Blackboard).

The weekly seminar meetings provide opportunities to discuss the assigned readings in a critical and constructive manner. The lecturer will also use the seminar meetings to give some background information and to explain difficult points, but the main point of the seminar meetings is to provide opportunities for discussion.

The online component of the course consists of weekly participation in the course wiki and discussion board. Participation in these ensures that the student will be generally engaged with the material covered in class and able to participate in class discussions.

This course is externally assessed. There is a final three hour exam, which will make use of material posted on the course wiki over the course of the year.

Communication of additional information

Information about any changes to the timetable or programme will be announced in seminar, posted on Blackboard, and/or e-mailed to the entire class.

Course content

This course explores contemporary attempts to deal with the interrelated questions of power, freedom, and justice in modern society. Topics include the nature of power in general and the forms power takes in modern states; the nature of freedom and its forms, as well as their

relation to the forms of power; and the possibility of a just social order under modern conditions. We will approach these themes through careful readings of theoretical and philosophical works by Weber, Berlin, Arendt, Foucault, Habermas, Rawls, and others.

The course is divided into three main sections, roughly concerned with the topics of Power, Freedom, and Justice.

Learning objectives

Students passing the course should be able to:

- Articulate and critically evaluate various theories of power, freedom, and justice in contemporary political thought
- Trace the connections between these theories
- Recognize the basic controversies within the contemporary literature on these topics
- Apply some of these theories to the understanding of concrete cases and situations in contemporary politics

Expected workload

In accordance with Faculty Guidelines, this course has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote 18 hours per week to reading, writing, and researching material for this course. This includes 2 hours of seminar meetings per week.

Readings

The following books will be available for purchase in Vicbooks, though you may wish to shop around (there are many used copies floating around on the internet):

- Foucault, Michel. 1995 [1975]. *Discipline and Punish*. Translated by A. Sheridan. 2nd ed. New York: Vintage Books.
- Lukes, Steven. 2005. *Power: A Radical View*: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Rawls, John. 1971 (Revised edition 1990). *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Walzer, Michael. 1983. *Spheres of Justice: a Defense of Pluralism and Equality*. New York: Basic Books.
- Nozick, Robert. 1974. *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*. New York: Basic Books.

All of these books will also be available on closed (2-hour) reserve in the library

The following readings will be available through e-reserves and as a book of readings (student notes). The books from which they are drawn will also be available on closed reserve.

- Weber, Max. 1994. "The Profession and Vocation of Politics." In *Political Writings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 17 March.
- Weber, Max. 1978. *Economy and Society*. Translated by G. Roth and K. Wittich. 2 vols. Berkeley: University of California Press. Sections of chapter 1 available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 17 March.
- Arendt, Hannah. 1970. *On Violence*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World. Chapter 2 available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 31 March.

- Foucault, Michel. 2000 [1982]. “The Subject and Power.” In *Power*, edited by J. D. Faubion. New York: The New Press. Available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 7 April.
- Foucault, Michel. 2000 [1979]. “‘Omnes et Singulatim’”: Toward a Critique of Political Reason.” In *Power*, edited by J. D. Faubion. New York: The New Press. Available online free via Blackboard, on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 5 May.
- Habermas, Jurgen. 1996. *Between Facts and Norms: Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 4 available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 12 May.
- Berlin, Isaiah. 1969 [1958]. “Two Concepts of Liberty.” In *Liberty*, edited by Henry Hardy. London: Oxford U.P. Available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 19 May.
- Arendt, Hannah. 2006. *On Revolution*. New York: Penguin Books. Chapter 6 available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 26 May.
- Swift, Adam. 2006. *Political Philosophy: A Beginners’ Guide for Students and Politicians*. Cambridge: Polity Press. Chapter 2 available on e-reserve and in book of readings. Reading for 26 May.
- Pettit, Philip. 1996. “Freedom as Antipower.” *Ethics* 106(3):576-604. Available on e-reserve, through a link from blackboard, and in book of readings. Reading for 2 June.

Textbooks can be purchased from Vicbooks located on the top floor of the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. Books of Reading are distributed from the Student Notes Shop on the ground floor of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from the shop the day after placing an order online.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday – Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays) 10.00 am – 1.00 pm Saturdays. Phone: 463 5515

Recommended Reading:

Other recommended readings will be listed either in the schedule or in the bibliography in the respective pages of the wiki on Blackboard. These will be either available through closed reserves or e-reserves, or they will be linked directly from the course website in blackboard. You are expected to add a little, through your work on the wiki, to the bibliographies.

Assessment requirements

Assessment for this course has three major components:

1. One research essay (4000-7000 words), due in several stages, with a final draft due at the end of trimester 2 (35%).
2. Online assessment: weekly contributions to the course wiki (35%).
3. An external final exam (30%).

This is an honours seminar. Participation in discussion is expected. Though there is no explicit grade for participation, your final grade may be ultimately adjusted upwards for

valuable and constructive participation in seminar discussions.

Research essay

The research essay is an in-depth exploration of some topic related to the course, of about 4000-7000 words (16-20 pages). We take research seriously: the essay should not be simply a summary of an existing literature, but a reasonable attempt at answering an interesting question that others have not answered before. A truly excellent essay should be of sufficient quality to be presented at a professional conference or published in a peer-reviewed journal.

Since this is primarily a political theory course, your research essay should make a theoretical argument focused on one or more of the thinkers discussed in the course. A number of “patterns” are possible for such an essay:

- *Apologetic essays*. For example, your essay may first discuss the views of thinker A on some question (e.g., the nature of social justice), discuss some objections raised by B and C, and then defend A against B and C.
- *Critical essays*. Or your essay may discuss the views of A on some question and then raise some objections that you think are fatal to A’s views, drawn from any number of sources: the writings of B and C, your own arguments, the evidence of some particular country or situation, etc. You will also need to consider possible responses or amendments by A of his/her views and reasons why those responses fail.
- *Combination essays*. You may discuss the views of A on some question, show that they are insufficient for some purpose, and argue that the views of B complement those of A.
- *Historical essays*. You may want to trace the ancestry of some view of A, or the connections between the views of A and those of B and C.
- *Interpretive-reconstructive essays*. Or you may offer an *interpretation* of some especially puzzling work of A, explaining how the views of A in that work cohere with his/her views on other works, and why your interpretation solves some outstanding puzzles about A’s thought raised by B and C, or how it saves A from some important objection raised by D.
- *Application essays*, a.k.a. “What would A say?” essays. You may discuss what A might say about some institution or situation. E.g., would Nozick say that the Treaty of Waitangi represents a just settlement with the Maori? (How would he criticize it? What alternatives might he support as a just settlement?). This pattern is especially useful in bringing to bear A’s views to critique some particular institution or situation, but you may also wish to support the institution or situation by appealing to the views of A.
- A variant of this is the *critical application* essay: you may first discuss what A might say about X (e.g., appropriate responses to the disadvantages experienced by Maori in New Zealand society) and then criticize the shortcomings of A’s views. This is especially useful when the views of A seem to offer some support or justification for the institution or situation in question.

There are other patterns, but any essay you write will be centred on an exposition of the views of one or more of the thinkers of the course and will develop a theoretical *argument* about those views. I have listed a number of potential topics on Blackboard as models; you are free to ignore these and come up with your own topics, or you may wish to tackle one of them (or adapt one of them to your own concerns).

A research essay is a complex project that requires consistent work over an extended period

of time. It is not possible to write a good research essay at the last minute. Therefore, you will submit the essay in several stages, as follows:

1. A research proposal (1-2 pages), describing the question to be explored and the basic thesis to be argued. This will form the nucleus of the introduction to the paper. It is due on **Tuesday 28 April (the first day after the midterm break, before the seminar meeting) via [e-mail](#) to me and posted to the Blackboard discussion board for comments from the class**. Your research proposal may change after this date; you are not locked into it, and you are encouraged to discuss it with me before this date.
2. Along with a revised research proposal, turned into an introduction, you will next submit a section that contains an exposition of the views of A (or A, B, and C) that you plan to defend, criticize, and/or apply to some situation. (E.g., this section may contain a discussion of the views of Rawls and Walzer on the justification of economic inequality). This second draft (background plus revised research proposal turned into the introduction to the essay) will be due on **Tuesday 14 July via [e-mail](#) before class**.
3. The contents of the third draft will depend on the pattern of your paper (see above): it may contain, along with a revised introduction and the section containing the views of A (or B and C), also critiques of these views, or a description of the case to which they apply. This need not be very complete, but a draft of this will be due on **Tuesday 8 September (after the midterm break) via [e-mail](#) by 5 pm**.
4. A final draft of the entire essay, with your entire argument, revised and reorganized as needed, will be due on **via [e-mail](#) by 5 pm Monday 12 October**.

See the course website (on Blackboard) for a fuller description of the requirements for each stage.

The instructor will provide extensive written feedback at every stage of this process.

You are also encouraged to read each other's drafts at any stage, and provide constructive feedback, though of course all written work should in the final instance be yours alone. In particular, you are encouraged to use the Blackboard discussion board as a place to post responses to other people's proposals or to particular inquiries later in the course; such responses will count in lieu of contributions to the wiki (see below).

Though only the final draft will receive a grade, failure to turn in any of the intermediate stages on time (or to present the proposal to the class) will result in the deduction of at least 5% of the final grade. For example, if you fail to submit the research proposal on the due date, you may lose 5% of the 35% that the research essay is worth (2 points of your total grade) the first day, plus 2% of the 35% that the research essay is worth for every additional day up to 8 days; so that you may lose up to 19% of the 35% of the research essay for every missed section of the essay (or about 8 points of your total grade).

Every stage of the research essay should be submitted **via e-mail only** on the due date. I will acknowledge receipt of your work within a reasonable time frame (usually less than a few hours); if you have not heard from me within a day or so, **you need to assume I have not received your work**.

Online assessment

Studies show that the best ways to learn are active, participatory and social, rather than passive and purely individual. Studies also show that the best way to learn course material and participate effectively in class discussions is to remain engaged with such material over the course of the term. In order to further these objectives, this course has a weekly form of online assessment.

You can fulfil the requirements for this component of the course by contributing weekly to the course wiki, starting in the week of 9 March.

The course wiki for this course is like a miniature version of Wikipedia: a website that you can edit without worrying about HTML or anything of the sort. The aim is to construct, collectively, a website that reflects the major views on the concepts studied in the course, the relationships among the thinkers studied, and the controversies surrounding the study of these concepts, i.e., a miniature *encyclopedia* of these political concepts.

To that end, you will contribute weekly to the site. You may contribute in a variety of ways:

- Gradually and in conjunction with others write an account of the basic concepts of the course, i.e., power, freedom, and justice, as well as related concepts
- Describe and summarize the basic views of each of the thinkers we shall discuss in this course, especially their views related to these concepts: how they define them, how they use them, how their theories serve to criticize other accounts of these concepts, etc.
- Add critical commentary on the theories of these thinkers
- Reorganize and clean up the contributions of other people
- Add to the bibliographies for each of these writers
- Annotate these bibliographies with mini-reviews or summaries of the secondary literature
- Add new pages with content related to the themes of the course
- Post study questions in the pages for each theme discussed in the course
- Answer study questions or discuss possible answers
- Provide links to external sources
- Summarize the readings in the pages for each particular theme discussed in the course
- Provide background information necessary for fully understanding the readings
- Add multimedia content related to the course (pictures, illustrative video, etc.)

As the pages of the wiki take shape, you will find them an invaluable resource for studying for the final exam and for writing your own research essay.

There will also be available on Blackboard a discussion board where you can coordinate work on the wiki, raise questions concerning any topics in the course, and respond to the queries of others. Contributions to the discussion board count as contributions to the wiki for grading purposes.

I will comment weekly on your work in the wiki (collectively, not individually: I will post comments on the pages as they take shape) and deal with any technical or formatting

problems you may run into. I will also monitor the discussion board and occasionally answer questions there, though I will always give you a chance to answer them first.

Your contributions will be assessed on a weekly basis, according to the following scheme:

- 0 points. No contribution to the wiki or discussion board
- 1 point. Minimal contribution (e.g., proofreading a wiki page, minimal comment on discussion board)
- 2-3 points. Regular contributions (e.g., contributing summaries, study questions, answers to study questions, and other substantial additions to the wiki, raising interesting questions in the discussion board or answering them)
- 4 points. Exceptional contributions (e.g., major contributions to the wiki, excellent study questions or answers, outstanding contributions in the discussion board)

You need to accumulate 50 points over the course of the year to obtain your full 35% mark for this assessment component, starting in the second week of the term. On average, therefore, you need to be accumulating a bit more than 2 points per week (there are 23 weeks in the course, not counting breaks or study periods) if you want to obtain the full 50 points, though you may miss a week occasionally, and you are credited for all contributions you make (regardless of whether you achieve the full 50 points).

The last day for contributions to the wiki is **Monday 12 October**.

You will be assessed **only** on your **individual** contributions. However, since the wiki is a collective project, I may adjust your final grade for this component according to the quality of the final product. The point of this is to recognize that the whole is sometimes more than the sum of its parts. I will not penalize anyone for the failures of others to contribute, but I will reward you if I think that the wiki as a whole is better *because* of your contributions.

Final exam

The final exam is cumulative, integrative, and closed book, and will last 3 hours. This is an externally assessed exam to be scheduled during the examination period 19 October - 15 November 2009. The students will answer 3 out of 8 essay questions. Questions will be based on material posted on the wiki, including study questions posted by students.

Return of assignments

All essays will be returned *electronically* with comments within a reasonable time. It is your responsibility to make sure I have a *valid e-mail address* for you where you can receive these. Marks and comments for the online assessment will be made available via e-mail and on Blackboard.

Mandatory course requirements

To gain a pass in this course each student must:

- a) Submit the written work specified for this course, on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work)
- b) Sit the final exam, and obtain a 40% or higher mark in it.

There is a uniform deadline for the final submission of all written in-term work (including research papers) for honours courses. Students are advised that this deadline will be firmly

adhered to; extensions will only be granted in exceptional circumstances, under the conditions stipulated in Victoria University's aegrotat regulations. Extensions must be approved by the Honours Coordinator (Professor Stephen Levine) in advance of the deadline. In 2009 the deadline will be 5 p.m. on **Monday 12 October**. Work not submitted by this deadline will not be taken into consideration when determining final results.

Statement on legibility

Students are expected to write clearly in the final exam. Where work is deemed 'illegible', the options are:

- the student will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) within a specified time frame after which penalties will apply
- the student will be given a photocopy of the work and asked to transcribe it to an acceptable standard (preferably typed) and lateness penalties apply
- if the student does not transcribe it to an acceptable standard, the work will be accepted as 'received' (so any associated mandatory course requirements are met) but not marked.

Statement on the use of Turnitin

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which identifies material that may have been copied from other sources including the Internet, books, journals, periodicals or the work of other students. Turnitin is used to assist academic staff in detecting misreferencing, misquotation, and the inclusion of unattributed material, which may be forms of cheating or plagiarism. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. You are strongly advised to check with your tutor or the course coordinator if you are uncertain about how to use and cite material from other sources. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions will not be made available to any other party.

Academic integrity and plagiarism

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet

- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

GENERAL UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND STATUTES

Students should familiarise themselves with the University's policies and statutes, particularly the Assessment Statute, the Personal Courses of Study Statute, the Statute on Student Conduct and any statutes relating to the particular qualifications being studied; see the *Victoria University Calendar* or go to the Academic Policy and Student Policy sections on:

<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy>

This website also provides information for students in a number of areas including Academic Grievances, Student and Staff conduct, Meeting the needs of students with impairments, and student support/VUWSA student advocates.

Schedule of Seminar Meetings

This schedule of readings is necessarily tentative. We may move a little faster or a little slower, as interest and the difficulty of the readings dictate. Any changes will be discussed in seminar meetings and announced through Blackboard.

Week 1: Introduction

Tuesday 10 March

- Organizational meeting and introduction to the themes of the course. No reading.

I. POWER

Week 2: Power: The Standard Account

Tuesday 17 March

- Weber, *Economy and Society*, part I, chapter I, pp. 29-38, 53-56 (on e-reserve and in book of readings); "The Profession and Vocation of Politics," in *Political Writings*, pp. 309-369 (on e-reserve and in book of readings).

Week 3: Alternative Accounts: the "Third Face" of Power

Tuesday 24 March

- Lukes, *Power*, introduction, chapter 1 and chapter 3.

Week 4: Alternative Accounts: Power as Collective Action

Tuesday 31 March

- Arendt, *On Violence*, chapter 2 (on e-reserve and in book of readings). It is also recommended that you look at Arendt's *The Human Condition*, especially chapter 1, sections 1-3 (pp. 1-21); chapter 5, sections 24-34 (pp. 175-247).

Week 5 Alternative accounts: Power and Identity

Tuesday 7 April

- Foucault, "The Subject and Power," in *Power*, pp. 326-348 (available on e-reserve and in book of readings); *Discipline and Punish*, part 1.

MID-TRIMESTER BREAK BEGINS MONDAY 13 APRIL

Week 6: Alternative Accounts: Power and Knowledge

Tuesday 28 April

- Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, part 3.

Week 7: Alternative accounts: Power, Knowledge, and Biopower

Tuesday 5 May

- Foucault, "Omnes et Singulatim," (on e-reserves and in book of readings; also freely available online via a link on blackboard); Lukes, *Power*, chapter 2.
- **Research proposal due via [e-mail](#) and posted on the discussion board in blackboard before class.**

Week 8: Power and Democracy

Tuesday 12 May

- Habermas, *Between Facts and Norms*, chapter 4 (available on e-reserve and in book of readings).

II. FREEDOM

Week 9: Two Concepts of Liberty

Tuesday 19 May

- Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in *Four Essays on Liberty*, entire (available on e-reserve and in book of readings).

Week 10: Criticisms of Berlin and Defences of Positive Freedom

Tuesday 26 May

- Swift, *Political Philosophy: A Beginners' Guide for Students and Politicians*, chapter 2; Arendt, *On Revolution*, chapter 6, pp. 215-281 (available on e-reserve and in book of readings).

Week 11: A Third Conception of Freedom? Republican Freedom

Tuesday 2 June

- Pettit, "Freedom as Antipower" (available on e-reserve and in book of readings).

STUDY/EXAMINATION PERIOD FOR TRIMESTER 1 BEGINS MONDAY 8 JUNE

MID-YEAR BREAK BEGINS THURSDAY 2 JULY

III. Justice

Week 12: The liberal theory of justice

Tuesday 14 July

- Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Part 1, chapter 1.
- **Second section of research essay due via e-mail before class**

Week 13 Rawls, continued

Tuesday 21 July

- Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, chapter 2. You are encouraged to read critiques or reviews of Rawls as well (list any new ones you find in the bibliography).

Week 14 Rawls, continued

Tuesday 28 July

- Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, chapter 4, sections 31-32, 35-37, chapter 5, sections 41-45, chapter 6, sections 53-54. You are encouraged to read critiques or reviews of Rawls as well (list any new ones you find in the bibliography).

Week 15 A communitarian response

Tuesday 4 August

- Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, chapters 1-3.

Week 16 Walzer, continued

Tuesday 11 August

- Walzer, *Spheres of Justice*, chapters 4-5, 12-13. You are encouraged to read critiques or reviews of Walzer as well (list any new ones you find in the bibliography)

Week 17 A libertarian theory of justice

Tuesday 18 August

- Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, chapters 1-5. (Skim 4).

MID-TRIMESTER BREAK BEGINS MODAY 24 AUGUST

Week 18 Nozick, continued

Tuesday 8 September

- Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, chapter 7. You are encouraged to read critiques or reviews of Nozick as well (list any new ones you find in the bibliography).
- **Third draft of research essay due via e-mail before class.**

Week 19 Nozick, continued

Tuesday 15 September

- Nozick, *Anarchy, State, and Utopia*, chapters 8, 10. You are encouraged to read critiques or reviews of Nozick as well (list any new ones you find in the bibliography).

The four weeks from Monday 21 September to Monday 6 October can be used for optional review meetings, additional meetings, and individual consultations with the lecturer about the research essay; you should be writing and revising the bulk of your research essay during this period.