

**PS 3550: Research Preparation Seminar: Political Theories of Justice | TR 11:00-12:20 pm, Ritter 111 | Spring 2018 | Dr. Heath Fogg Davis | GH 447 | [hfd@temple.edu](mailto:hfd@temple.edu) | Office/Hours: W 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm + by appointment**

### **Course Description**

The research preparation seminar is meant to prepare you for the capstone seminar. The signature feature of the capstone seminars is the research paper. In the capstone seminar, we will focus on the iterative steps in the writing process. To prepare you for that adventure, this seminar will concentrate on the preliminary steps that will make your writing process more manageable, efficient and, yes, even fun! Each research preparation seminar, like each capstone, focuses on a specific political theme, and a particular set of research methods.

### **Theme**

The theme of this research preparation seminar is “Political Theories of Justice.” What is justice, and how does justice relate to the political theory concepts of rights, obligations, duties, virtues, freedoms, democracy, patriotism, citizenship, and political ideals? How do the utopian and dystopian visions of political society laid out by philosophers and popular culture help us explore political questions about political participation, the environment, the global order, and social identities such as gender, race, class, sexuality, religion, and disability?

### **Research Methods**

The research methods for this course are drawn from the political science field of **political theory**, which is sometimes also referred to as political philosophy.

### **Macro Learning Goals**

In this seminar you will learn:

- How to identify a research interest
- How to develop that interest into a research topic
- How to further develop a research topic into a research question

### **Micro Learning Goals**

You will also learn:

- The unique features of political theory research methods
- How these methods differ from the research methods used in the other 3 fields of political science (American Politics, International Relations, and Comparative Politics)
- How to practice using political theory research methods to frame solve political problems related to the theme of justice

**Prior Knowledge**

- Basic understanding of U.S. government (i.e., federalism, separation of powers, and judicial review). We assume that you have completed PS 1101: The American Political System.
- Basic understanding of political theory (i.e., distinctions between and among liberalism, conservatism, and radicalism). We assume that you have successfully completed PS 2496: Introduction to Political Theory.

**Required Reading**

There is one required book for this course: *The Craft of Research* (4<sup>th</sup> Edition) There are copies available for purchase at the TU Campus Bookstore. All other required readings will be posted to Canvas.

**General Premise**

In this class, the onus is truly on you as an integral part of our collective learning community. I will direct and help you, but the class is about practicing research techniques, reading texts closely, learning how best to assimilate the work of others into, and alongside, your own insights. It is vital that you are aware of the audience of peers and get used to producing knowledge for the consumption of others.

**COURSE POLICIES****Attendance**

You should neither miss a class nor be late. Each of you has a serious responsibility to the members of this seminar. Therefore, you must arrive to class on time, and be prepared and ready to work.

Late arrivals and early departures are disruptive and unacceptable; if you anticipate being late or having to leave early on a regular basis, please make other arrangements. In the unlikely event that you arrive late to class, take a seat closest to the door in order to minimize disruption.

Please refrain from leaving and returning as it disrupts the classroom atmosphere.

**Class Engagement**

Active course engagement and an attentive presence are essential. A seminar is not like a lecture course. You cannot hide. You must come to class prepared to present your response to the reading assignment when asked, to engage course material thoughtfully, and to share your observations and insights with your classmates.

**Class Etiquette**

This class is designed to encourage discussion and exchanges of ideas in conjunction with the development of critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. I expect you to treat your fellow students with respect and courtesy, listening when they speak and refraining from personal attacks in your own statements. You may of course disagree with your fellow students, but listen attentively when they are speaking and respond in a courteous manner. Most of us have experienced how unnerving it can be to give a presentation, ask a question, or even speak up in a classroom setting. Extend to your classmates the same cordiality you would like them to extend to you.

## Notes

In a seminar format it is tempting to let note-taking fall by the wayside. Resist this temptation! To help you stay on track with note taking I have posted a template to Canvas that is meant to guide your reading and help you determine what sort of information and evaluation should be included in your notes.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Participation (10%)**: See rubric. Midway through the semester you will use this rubric to perform a self-assessment, and I will give you a mid-semester participation grade that takes into account your and my assessments. This grade is meant to give you a benchmark for improving. It does not directly factor into your final participation grade.
2. **Resonance Presentation (10%)**: Each student will take a turn in leading our seminar discussion with a short presentation. Because of the large size of our seminar, you will either work in pairs or trios. Here are the instructions:

### Instructions:

#### Step A.

Together, choose an artifact from our contemporary world that is connected in some way to the reading assignment for that day. This might be a brief YouTube video of a movie or television scene, a news article, an artistic image, song lyrics, a poem, a photograph, an object, or anything else that you'd like to share with us. Be creative!

**Step B.** Each person should then take Explain the **resonance** you've identified between the artifact and the reading assignment. You can discuss any aspect of the reading. Here I'm asking you to explain to us *why* you chose your cultural artifact.

The total time of the presentation should not exceed 15 minutes. Check out the rubric on Canvas to see how you will be evaluated.

My hope is that you will find this format less daunting and more interesting than a traditional class presentation.

3. **Quizzes (10%)**: There will be several impromptu quizzes given at the start of class throughout the semester. Each quiz will consist of 3 short questions from the reading assignment due that day. You are permitted to use your notes to answer these questions, but not our course readings or the Internet. The purpose of the quizzes is to reward those who complete the reading assignment, and to encourage good note taking. Each quiz will be graded as follows: 3 correct answers=100; 2 correct answers=85; 1 correct answer=70; 0 correct=50; absent=0. *I will drop your lowest score when calculating your final grade.* Everyone is allowed one absence or bad day.

**4. Presentation 2: (15%):** You are required to give a brief presentation of your research question during the final weeks of the semester (schedule to be determined). *I will post the rubric to Canvas.*

#### **5. Four assignments:**

**Assignment #1: 10%**

**Assignment #2: 10%**

**Assignment #3: 15%**

**Assignment #4: 20%**

#### **Deadlines**

*Late assignments will not be accepted.* An absence from class does not excuse a late paper. Your syllabus clearly indicates due dates so plan accordingly.

#### **Disability Disclosure Statement**

This course is open to all students who meet the academic requirements for participation. Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss the specific situation as soon as possible. Please contact Disability Resources and Services at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to coordinate reasonable accommodations for your coursework and participation.

#### **Statement on Academic Freedom**

Freedom to teach and freedom to learn are inseparable facets of academic freedom. The university has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and responsibilities (Policy # 03.70.02) which can be accessed through the following link: [http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy\\_non=03.70.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_non=03.70.02)

#### **Plagiarism**

This instructor and the University take plagiarism extremely seriously. Personal pride should be sufficient deterrent, but there are also severe academic penalties for academic dishonesty. Please consult the University Bulletin concerning Temple's policy on plagiarism. Any kind of plagiarism for this class will result in failure of the course. The infraction will also be reported to university authorities.

#### **Finally**

Please remember that I hold everyone accountable to these course policies. They are here to provide a framework for the class, without which we would not get much accomplished. This seminar should be a fun time, as well as a challenging period of intellectual growth, and I look forward to working with you.

### Course Schedule

*Reading assignments are to be completed for the day listed.* I reserve the right to make adjustments to our reading assignments, but will always give you fair warning at least one week in advance. You are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the reading assignment.

WEEK	DATE	MODULE	REQUIRED READING	ASSIGNMENTS
1	1/16	Getting Started	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introduction: no reading assignment</li> </ul>	
	1/18	Fears + Apprehensions about academic writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Craft, Intro + ch. 1</li> </ul>	Worksheet 1
2	1/23	Deontology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kant, "Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals"</li> </ul>	
	1/25	Intrinsic Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sandel, "What isn't for Sale?"</li> </ul>	Worksheet 2
3	1/30	Natural Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mills, "Whose Fourth of July?"</li> </ul>	
	2/1	Conservatism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Oakeshott's Conservatism"</li> <li>Craft, ch.2</li> </ul>	Worksheet 3
4	2/6	Consequentialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mill, <i>Utilitarianism</i></li> </ul>	
	2/8		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Singer, "Famine, Affluence and Morality"</li> <li>Craft, ch.3</li> </ul>	Worksheet 4
5	2/13	Communism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Marx, <i>Communist Manifesto</i></li> </ul>	

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Waldron, "Homelessness and the Issue of Freedom"</li> </ul>	
	2/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appiah, "Should Everyone Go to College?"</li> <li>Craft, ch.4</li> </ul>	Worksheet 5 <b>Assignment 1 Due by midnight</b>
6	2/20	Liberalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mill, <i>On Liberty</i></li> <li>Maya Salam, "The Opioid Epidemic: A Crisis Years in the Making"</li> </ul>	
	2/22			
7	2/27		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rawls, <i>A Theory of Justice</i></li> <li></li> <li>Okin, "Justice, Gender and the Family"</li> </ul>	
	3/1		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Craft , ch. 5</li> </ul>	Worksheet 6 Worksheet 7
8	<b>3/6</b>		<b>Spring Break</b>	
	<b>3/8</b>		<b>Spring Break</b>	
9	3/13	Disability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Arneil, "Disability, Self-Image and Modern Political Theory"</li> <li>"What is Universal Design?"</li> </ul>	
	3/15		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appiah, "Stereotypes and the Shaping of Identity"</li> </ul>	Assignment 2 Due 3/16 By midnight Worksheet 8

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Craft, ch.6</li> </ul>	
10	3/20		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feldblum, "Gay is Good: The Moral Case for Marriage Equality and More"</li> </ul>	
	3/22		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Davis, "Checking a Box to Get into College"</li> </ul>	
11	3/27	Non-Human Animals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Singer, "Taking Animal Rights Seriously"</li> </ul>	
	<b>3/29</b>		<b>WPSA (No Class)</b>	Assignment 3 Due 3/30 by midnight
12	<b>4/3</b>		<b>MSU Talk (No Class)</b>	
	4/5		Research Question Presentations	
13	4/10		Research Question Presentations	
	4/12		Research Question Presentations	
14	4/17		Research Question Presentations	
	4/19		Research Question Presentations	
15	4/24		Research Question Presentations	
	4/26		Research Question Presentations	
	4/30			Assignment 4 Due by midnight