Columbia University
Department of Political Science

G6601 Issues in Political Theory
Fall 2015

Instructor: Prof. Nadia Urbinati

Seminar: Tuesdays 6:10pm-8:00pm
Classroom: 711 IAB

Office hours:
Tuesdays 12:00-1:30 or by appointment
719 International Affairs Building

The course will be held in a seminar format. This seminar is primarily intended for those who plan to take the Comprehensive Examination (either as a major or a minor) in Political Theory or who wish to fulfill the third field requirement in Political Theory. However, it is open to all graduate students with the proviso that, if 20 or more students in the three categories listed above wish to register, no enrollment will be accepted from others. All students in the three categories listed above will be accepted, even if their number exceeds 20. If the course is oversubscribed, preference will be given to those committed to taking it for a letter grade as against an R.

The course does not cover the comps requirement in its entirety and inevitably it has to be selective in the choice of topics to be discussed. The teacher has chosen to discuss issues, within the areas of the comps examination that are part of the satellites and the subject of debate among political theorists. It must be emphasized that it will be necessary for students to do more reading than that contained in the weekly assignments to have a reasonable prospect of passing comps.

Structure

Beginning in week 2 (September 15), each session will include the discussion of one or two pre-circulated short papers written by students. Each student (including those taking the course for an R) will be required to write at least one such paper in the course of the semester. These papers must not exceed 3 pages in length (double spaced; 900 words) and must contain only points of discussion. Knowledge of the readings for the week should be assumed. Summary of the reading, except in the case and as far as they are integral to the questions raised, are to be avoided. Papers will be distributed to participants by e-mail.
They must be posted before midnight on the Sunday preceding the session for which they are required.

Grades

Grades will be based on a take-home examination. Take-home examination will be based on three sets of question: questions related to Part I, Part II and Part III. Candidates will be asked three questions, one from each part (each paper must not exceed 900 words in length). The introductory papers will not enter explicitly into the final grade. However, where the average of grade on take-home examination lies between two grades, the paper and contributions to the class generally will be taken into account to reach a definite grade.

The take-home examination to be returned on December 14 (topics will be sent to each student by email 48 hours in advance). Answers should be deposited in Professor Urbinati’s mailbox by 4:00pm. Late answers will not be allowed (unless late delivery is cleared in advance with the Instructor on a medical/personal basis).

The take-home exam will count for approximately 60% of the final grade and any contributions to class discussion will count for approximately 40% of the grade. No incompletes will be given in this class.

Readings

Purchase of the following books is strongly recommended. The books have been ordered at Book Culture. The other books or articles are readily available in a variety of editions and also Columbia Library in Internet.

Nicolò Machiavelli, The Prince (Hackett)
John Locke, Second Treatise of Government (Hackett)
Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations (Modern Library)
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Basic Political Writings (Hackett)
Jean Bodin, On Sovereignty (Cambridge)
Immanuel Kant, Political Writings (Cambridge)
First Week: Introduction (September 8)
http://clio.cul.columbia.edu/cgi-bin/Pwebrecon.cgi?v1=4&ti=1,4&Search_Arg=pettit%20AND%20companion%20AND%20political%20AND%20philosophy&Search_Code=CMD&SL=None&CNT=50&PID=idqabKse1YzkgBVMvJjQeYcnuHNh&SEQ=20090831100839&SID=3

Part I: Basic Concepts

Week 2: Power (September 15)
Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince

Week 3: Liberty and Equality I (September 22)
Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan, chapter 21;
Benjamin Constant, “The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns,” in Political Writings (Cambridge);

Week 4: Liberty and Equality II (September 29)
Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty,” in Four Essays on Liberty;
Quentin Skinner, “The Paradoxes of Political Liberty,” in Liberty ed. by David Miller;

Part II: Principal Structures of Collective Action

Week 5: The State (October 6)
Jean Bodin, On Sovereignty Bk. I, chs. 8 and 10;
Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan chs. 17-18, 30;
Carl Schmitt, Political Theology.

Week 6: Markets (October 13)
Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations* Bk 1, chs. 1-4, 7-8; Bk. 2, chs. 1-3; Bk. 3, chs. 1-4; Bk. 4, Chs. 2. 7; Bk. 5, Ch. 1; Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*

**Week 7: Ideology (October 20)**

**Part III: Issues in Contemporary Political Theory**

**Week 8: Constitutionalism (October 27)**

**Week 9: Democracy (November 10)**

**Week 10: Representation (November 17)**

**Week 11: Boundaries (November 24)**

**Week 12: Rights (December 1)**


Ronald Dworkin, “Taking Rights Seriously,” in *Taking Rights Seriously*;


**Week 13: Justice (December 8)**


John Rawls, “Justice as Reciprocity,” in *Collected Papers* (19990;

John Rawls, “Social Unity and Primary Goods,” in *Collected Papers*;