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**POLS 235: Equality and Justice**

Course Description:

This course will investigate multiple dimensions of the principle of equality, such as equality in nature, equality among the sexes, equality among classes and equality before the law. We will look at classical and contemporary critiques of equality itself as a political concept and examine its value for politics. Some of the questions raised by this course will include, does an embrace of equality lead to a tolerant and socially just polity where resources and opportunity are available to all? Or does an uncritical adoption of equality lead to a stunted and conformist politics that is reluctant to accept change and restricts individual freedom? We will read some of the key thinkers in the western tradition to analyze their views on equality. We will begin with the classic Greek tragedy Antigone that explores complications and limitations of political justice and then examine the Roman perspective through one of Cicero’s famous Murder Trials. We will then move to the modern era to John Locke, whose concept of equality in nature and his consequent ideas of toleration of difference, were key to the founding of America. Jean-Jacques Rousseau will advance an intriguing argument that man’s progress and development is inextricably linked to inequality. We will read John Stuart Mill who explores the subjection of women and calls for equality between the sexes. Then we will turn to some of the most politically influential thinkers of the last century. Karl Marx will introduce us to the inequality fostered by capitalism and also argue that equality based purely on the accumulation of legal rights is insufficient. Emma Goldman, the noted feminist and anarchist will call for the elimination of the state and hence the creation of a pure equality. We will explore the colonial perspective on equality and justice from two very different vantage points, through Frantz Fanon and Mahatma Gandhi. In the concluding section of the course, we will read Friedrich Nietzsche who will provocatively ask whether or not equality simply leads to conformity. We will develop these insights further by focusing on the concrete issues of how countries come to terms with violent pasts of genocide and apartheid and forge a just and equal political order for the future.

Course Rationale:

The course is designed to help you:

* Understand the foundational concepts of equality and justice
* Critically explore these concepts from different angles
* Ask and confront challenging and difficult questions about their application in contemporary politics
* Improve your ability to write in depth and speak clearly about complex theoretical concepts

Course Requirements:

*Attendance and Participation:* This course will require active participation and regular work. You are expected to come to class having done the reading assigned for that day. I will regularly refer to the text in my lectures and ask you questions based on it. Regular attendance is a must. Class participation is essential to this course. You should come to class prepared to actively discuss a range of topics based on the reading and to unpack its broader implications.

*Short Essays:* You will be required to write two short essays (with the option of adding a third essay) for this course. Each essay will be 2-3 pages in length and should focus on a particular theme or question of your choosing that emerges out of the readings. The essays will be evaluated for the use of textual evidence and analysis and should help you to develop your critical writing skills in preparation for your final paper. Due dates for each of the short essays are clearly marked on the syllabus.

*Midterm Exam:* This class includes an in-class midterm exam, which will require you to respond to short essay questions based on the assigned readings and class lectures. Instructions for the midterm exam will be explained in detail in class prior to the date of the exam.

If you are permitted extra time during an exam because of a disability, you must inform me well in advance of the scheduled exam so alternative arrangements can be made for you.

If you need to reschedule the exam because of an athletic or university event or because of illness, you must submit documentary evidence for my consideration in advance of the scheduled exam.

If you miss the exam without prior notice you will not be allowed to make it up, except in rare cases, with detailed documentation from your doctor or DePauw Administration

*Final Research Paper:* Your final for the class will be in the form of a 8-10 pp research paper which should be submitted to me electronically on the date of the scheduled final exam by the Registrar’s Office. The paper will require you to draw on the theoretical insights from the thinkers we discuss to explore the practical questions of equality and justice in contemporary politics. You will be asked to focus on a specific case of a country coming to terms with the collective memory of its past and its attempts to create a new political order that addresses past injuries and resentments. Some examples are the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, the atonement trials in the American South, and Rwanda’s response to its genocidal past, among others. Details of the assignment will be distributed well in advance of the due date. You will have a great deal of freedom in choosing your topic and will submit a formal proposal to me for consideration. In the last few weeks of class, we will spend a considerable amount of time discussing this assignment. It will include tutorials on proposal and outline writing and peer review discussions.

LATE PAPER PENALTY: Papers submitted after the due date will be penalized by a third of a letter grade for every day that they are late.

Your grade for this course will be computed as follows:

Class Participation and Attendance 15%

Midterm Exam 30%

Final Research Paper 35%

Short Essays 20%

Course Materials:

The following books are required for purchase and are available in the DePauw University Bookstore.

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (Cambridge)

John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (Hackett)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (Hackett)

John Stuart Mill, *On the Subjection of Women* (Hackett)

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (Vintage)

Martha Minow, *Between Vengeance and Forgiveness* (Beacon)

Readings marked with an asterisk on the syllabus can be found on the Moodle page for this course. You should download and complete the readings in advance of the assigned date.

Laptop Policy:

You will **not** be permitted to use your laptops during the class period for taking notes or any other function. Exceptions will only be made for students with a documented disability. You will however be allowed the use of a laptop for all class exams.

Academic Integrity:

Violations of DePauw University’s Academic Integrity Policy will be taken very seriously and punished accordingly. All violations will be reported officially and the student will fail the assignment for which they are charged with the violation.

The complete Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: http://www.depauw.edu/univ/handbooks/dpuhandbooks.asp?ID=101&parentid=100

**SCHEDULE OF READINGS**

Jan 28 Introduction

Jan 30 \*Sophocles, Antigone

Feb 4 \*Sophocles, Antigone

Feb 6 \*Cicero, Murder Trials

**SHORT ESSAY #1 DUE Feb 11**

Feb 11 Locke, Two Treatises, pp.267-310

Feb 13 Locke, Two Treatises, 310-365

Feb 18 Locke, Two Treatises, pp. 366-428 and

Feb 20 Locke, A Letter Concerning Toleration, ALL

Feb 25 Rousseau, Discourse, pp. 1-35

Feb 27 Rousseau, Discourse, pp. 36-71

Mar 4 Mill, The Subjection of Women, pp.1-55

Mar 6 Mill, The Subjection of Women, pp.55-109

**MIDTERM EXAM MARCH 11**

March 13 \*Marx, On the Jewish Question

March 18th \* Goldman, Anarchism: What it Really Stands for

March 20th \*Goldman, Anarchism , contd.

**Spring Break: March 22-30**

April 1 \*Goldman, The Psychology of Political Violence

April 3 \* Fanon, The Wretched of the Earth (excerpt)

April 8 and 10 The Battle of Algiers (Film)

April 15 \*Gandhi, Selected Political Writings (excerpt)

April 17 Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, pp.13-56

**SHORT ESSAY #2 DUE APRIL 22**

April 22 Nietzsche, On the Genealogy of Morals, pp.57-106

April 24 Minow, Between Vengeance and Forgiveness, pp.1-45

**RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC DISTRIBUTED**

April 29 Library Research Session

May 1 Minow, Between Vengeance and Forgiveness, pp.46-90

May 6 In class Peer Review of Paper Outlines

**OPTIONAL SHORT ESSAY #3 DUE MAY 6**

May 8 Conclusion

**TUESDAY, MAY 13 Final Research Paper Due by e-mail only by 10PM**

**LATE PAPERS WILL BE PENALIZED BY A THIRD OF A GRADE**

**FOR EVERY DAY THAT THEY ARE LATE.**