MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT RECITATION
POLI 271 SECTIONS 604, 607, 610
FALL 2009

TA: Amanda Cook
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Office hours: Thursdays 9-12 in Davis Library Reference (1st floor, past the elevators, to the left)
Or by appointment.

Recitation expectations: You are expected to come to recitation prepared to critically discuss assigned readings and topics from lecture. In order to participate successfully, you should read all assigned material carefully, review lecture notes, prepare questions, and engage thoughtfully with the material to determine how it is relevant to us as students, as people, and as citizens.

Classroom policies: Turn off cell phones before class starts (this means no texting during class). Laptops are prohibited in recitation; this class is discussion-based, so the instructional benefit of laptops is outweighed by their potential for distraction. You will find adequate time to jot down on paper any notes you wish to record.

Email policy: Feel free to email me whenever you have a quick question. I will get back to you reasonably quickly. However, longer discussions and all questions about grades should take place during my office hours.

Class participation grade: Participation is worth 10% of your overall grade in this course; the participation grade will be based on recitation attendance, class discussion, and discussion board posts.

Attendance and participation policies: Attendance will be taken each week. You have two free absences; each absence after that will result in one letter grade deduction from your participation grade. Please be on time; three lates will be counted as an absence. In addition to attendance, participation in recitation discussions is required—if you find that talking in class makes you uncomfortable, please come see me now so we can discuss how you can succeed in this class. Thoughtful participation by each student is essential for good class discussions.

Posting on the discussion board: Each week you will need to post a short response on the Blackboard discussion board before recitation. These responses must be posted by 9pm Thursday (the night before recitation). Please see the separate handout regarding these posts.

Guidelines for discussion and participation: It is important that our class discussions are marked by mutual respect. Remember that good participation in a class discussion requires active and open-minded listening in addition to talking. This means that students who are hesitant to talk will need to work on formulating their thoughts and speaking up and that students who are prone to over-talking will need to work on selectively holding back and bringing up only relevant points or questions. You will need to back up your arguments with evidence from the readings, so bring the texts to class with you. Never hesitate to ask a question if you are unclear about a point made in lecture or in our class discussion. When we all follow these guidelines, our discussions will be open, respectful, and engaging.
Grading policies: Expectations for papers and exams will be discussed in recitation before they are due. Papers will be turned in to me and graded by me. Late papers will be graded with a deduction of five points for every 24 hours late unless you provide documentation of medical or family emergency. After graded papers are handed back, there will be a 48-hour “cooling off” period during which you cannot approach me about your grade. At that point, I will entertain questions about grades. Since I will be looking at your paper with fresh eyes, I reserve the right to give you a new grade that is lower than your original grade if that is appropriate. That said, if you believe you received an unfair grade, do not hesitate to bring it to my attention—but the burden of proof is on you. If at any point in the semester you are unsure how you are doing in the class, I will be happy to let you know where you stand and what improvements can be made in your performance.

Short paper schedule: You will write five one-page papers throughout the course of the semester. These papers will be worth 20% of your final grade for the course (unlike the discussion board posts, they are not part of the recitation participation grade). We will talk more about expectations for these papers when the time comes. The short papers will be due in recitation on the following dates:

1. September 18
2. September 25
3. October 16
4. October 30
5. December 4

RECITATION RECAP:
- Do the reading.
- Post a short response on the Blackboard discussion board by Thursday 9pm.
- Come to recitation.
- Bring the texts with you.
- Engage in thoughtful and respectful discussion.

IMPORTANT DATES:
- Short paper September 18
- Short paper September 25
- First exam September 30
- Short paper October 16
- Short paper October 30
- Second exam November 4
- Long paper November 20
- Short paper December 4
- Final exam December 11