POLS 2700 Issues in Political Thought  
Fall 2016

Dr. Wynne Moskop 
moskopww@slu.edu
314.977.2897
McGannon 136

Ofc hrs:  M 11am-1pm
W 11am-12pm
& by appointment

Required Reading

Available in campus bookstore and libraries:
Plato, *Symposium*, Jowett trans. (Dover)  
Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Irwin trans. (Hackett)  
Danielle, Allen, *Talking to Strangers; Anxieties of Citizenship since Brown v. Board of Education*  
(University of Chicago Press, 2006)  

For the major texts above, it is desirable for everyone to have a hard copy of the same translation available for reference during class discussions and for exams.

Shorter readings listed on the schedule are available online, in Pius Library electronic databases, or on electronic reserve (ERes). The password for electronic reserve is “friendship.” It is not case sensitive. Online readings should be printed out for use in class.

Description

The class will examine selected works in Western political thought—from ancient, modern, and contemporary eras—with a focus on the theme of civic friendship among citizens.

A number of historical and contemporary thinkers look to civic, or political, friendship as a model for a just political community. When we look for the roots of tensions and injustices in racially and economically diverse urban communities such as St. Louis, or in many countries that are becoming experiencing diverse through an influx of immigrants, it is clear that traditional nationalist bonds that unite a relatively homogeneous citizenry are an inadequate basis for civic friendship in contemporary pluralist democracies. We need different kinds of bonds for civic friendship today.

Starting early in the history of Western thought with Plato and Aristotle, we will investigate questions such as: When can citizens be friends? Under what conditions? What are the benefits of civic friendship? What are the consequences when citizens are not friends? If citizens are friends, how does that affect their attitude toward noncitizens?

Course objectives. At the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Understand key ideas about friendship, citizenship, and just political community in Western political thought
- Understand similarities and differences in treatments of these concepts by different thinkers
- Understand how different theoretical approaches are reflected in different political and social institutions and practices.
- Read and interpret primary sources in political theory
- Use primary sources in political theory to make coherent, well-supported written and oral arguments.
This course satisfies the political theory requirement for the political science major and the Arts and Sciences social science core requirement (described below).

**Social Science Course Requirements:**

Students will acquire conceptual tools and methodologies to analyze and understand their social world. With these tools, they will be able to act in their world more effectively and become forces for positive change. They will gain a better understanding of human diversity. Students will be able to think and write critically about human behavior and community. They will become aware of the various methodological approaches used by social scientists.

**Course Format and Requirements**

Because this course is about ideas, which are to be understood and applied critically rather than memorized, the format emphasizes opportunities to process theories of politics through discussion and writing. The class format is a structured discussion. Students will be expected to complete reading assignments on time and participate regularly in class discussions. Students should bring texts to class. Please print out online assignments. We will work with hard copies of readings. Most of the time, tablets and computers will not be allowed. At each class session, designated students will serve as "expert" discussants, responsible for raising questions about the reading assignment and commenting on questions raised by other students and by the instructor. In addition, each student will write two brief essays and take a mid-term exam and a final exam. There will be occasional pop quizzes to determine how well students have read and understand particular assignments. An additional requirement is that students fill out a course evaluation at the end of the semester.

**Attendance and Participation.** Because learning in this course depends heavily on everyone participating in class discussion, attendance is required at every class session. Absences are excused only if students 1) provide a good reason—e.g. illness, required university activity—preferably in advance and 2) turn in written responses to the study questions for the missed class.

Students who attend all sessions, participate regularly, do well as expert discussants, and show that they have reflected on the reading materials earn an “A” in class participation. Students who fall short on any of these aspects of participation can expect lower grades. For instance, students who attend all sessions and participate well only when it is their turn to be a discussant earn a “satisfactory” rating (C) in class participation, as opposed to a “good” (B) or “excellent” (A). For every two unexcused absences during each half of the semester, the class participation component of the grade will be lowered one letter. (Ex. If a student who normally participates at a “B” level has two unexcused absences, the participation grade automatically falls to a “C.”)

**Grading.** Grades will be determined as follows: class participation (includes attendance, work as discussant and results of pop quizzes) - 1/3, essays - 1/3, exams - 1/3.

Midterm and final grades will be reported in terms of the College of Arts and Sciences grading scale: A (4.0), A- (3.7), B+ (3.3), B (3.0), B- (2.7), C+ (2.3), C (2.0), C- (1.7), D (1.0), F (0.0). However, grades given on assignments and the manner of calculating grades are up to individual professors.

**Academic Integrity Policy**

*Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service which SLU embodies its mission. The
University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at:


Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has adopted its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

Specific College of Arts and Sciences Academic Honesty Policies and Procedures may be found at:

http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml

Title IX

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; akratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy www.slu.edu/here4you.

Student Success Center

Writing assistance. I encourage you to take advantage of the Student Success Center's services; getting feedback benefits writers at all skill levels. The Center offers one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, call 977-3484 or visit http://www.slu.edu/x34508.xml.

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center, a one-stop shop, which assists students with academic and career related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:
Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.

University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning) by visiting the Student Success Center or by going to www.slu.edu/success.

Disability Services Academic Accommodations

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please contact Disability Services, located within the Student Success Center, at Disability_services@slu.edu or 314.977.3484 to schedule an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services and viewed within Banner via the instructor’s course roster.

Tentative Schedule (May be adjusted depending on needs and interests of the class as we move along)

Jan 11: Introduction: Aristotle thought that citizens of a polis should be friends who share a mutual purpose or good. But what can be the foundation of such a political, or civic, friendship in diverse contemporary societies in which citizens are “strangers” to each other in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, socioeconomic class or other factors?

Questions about Little Rock and Ferguson

Jan 13 Danielle Allen, Talking to Strangers, 3-24

Jan 15: In class, we will view an eight-minute excerpt from The Drinking Party, a 1965 film adaptation of Plato’s Symposium, set in Oxford rather than ancient Athens. It captures the gist of the first three speeches in the Symposium. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gKTOvr‐FqN4. If you have time, you can watch the film before class. Read first half of Plato’s Symposium—through the end of Agathon’s speech, 3-36 in our text.

Jan 18: MLK Day. No class.

Jan 20 Finish Plato’s Symposium

Jan 22: Mary P. Nichols, Excerpt from Socrates on Friendship and Community (2009), 57-89, ERes


Jan 27: Plato, The Republic

Jan 29: Plato, The Republic

Feb 1: Class will not meet. Draft of Paper #1 due by 6 pm by email to moskopww@slu.edu and all students in your tutorial group. This will be a short paper, 750-word maximum. The first draft will be graded S or U depending on whether the student has met basic criteria for the paper (available in handout on “paper requirements”). To guard against the possibility of careless drafts that waste the time of other students and the instructor, a grade of “U” on the draft will result in a penalty of a full letter grade on the final version of the paper.

Feb 3: No regular class. Instead students will meet in small tutorial groups to review and improve each other’s draft papers. Students are responsible for bringing to the tutorial session a hard
copy of your own paper and the other papers in your group. Each member of a tutorial group is expected to critique each of the other papers (using the criteria in the handout), to ask questions that might help clarify the paper, and to suggest how each paper might be improved. A written version of your critique should be turned in to the author of the paper and the instructor. On the basis of critics in the tutorial, you will revise your paper and turn in a final version. **Revision of paper #1 is due by email to moskopww@slu.edu before the beginning of class on Feb. 5.**

Feb 5: Paper #1 due by email before beginning of class. In class, we will draw on student papers to review.

Feb 8: Allen, *Talking to Strangers* 25-49


Feb 12: Aristotle, *NE* continued

Feb 15: Aristotle, *NE* continued

Feb 17: Aristotle, *NE* continued

Feb 19: Aristotle, *The Politics*

Feb 22: Aristotle, *Politics* continued


Feb 26 Aristotle, *Rhetoric* continued

Feb 29 Allen,*Talking to Strangers*, 53-top of 54, 64 bottom-68, 69-98


Mar 4 Midterm exam

Mar 14 *Leviathan* continued

Mar 16 *Leviathan* continued

Mar 18 Allen, *Talking to Strangers*, 101-139;

Mar 21 Allen, 140-159

Mar 23 & 26 Easter holiday. No class.

Mar 28 Rousseau, *Letter to d’Alembert on the Theatre, Eres*

Mar 30 Rousseau, *Letter* continued


Apr 4 Rousseau, *Social Contract* continued

Apr 6 *Jane Addams*, “Charitable Effort” (ch. 2 in *Democracy and Social Ethics*, 1902), [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15487/15487-h/15487-h.htm#page_013](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/15487/15487-h/15487-h.htm#page_013);


Apr 11 Addams, “The Objective Value of a Social Settlement (1892),”

Apr 13 Review and discussion of students’ paper topics; work on papers in class

Apr 16 No class. Paper #2 due by 6pm to moskopww@slu.edu.

Apr 18 Joan Tronto, Caring Democracy

Apr 20 Caring Democracy continued

Apr 23 Caring Democracy continued

Apr 25 Democratic citizenship and race – institutions and practices of democracy, TBA

Apr 27 Democratic citizenship and race, TBA

Apr 30 Democratic citizenship and race, TBA

May 2 Review

May 4 Final Exam, 12-1:50 pm