

GVPT100 – Introduction to Government and Politics
Winter 2009
Susan Lee
sslee@gvpt.umd.edu

This class is designed to give students an introductory overview of Government and Politics as it is studied today. Some of the questions that will be explored are: Why is a government necessary? What is its role? What is the role of citizens? How important is freedom in the world of politics? Power? Happiness? Money? What is the best form of government? Such questions are clearly difficult to answer, but through writings from ancient, modern, and contemporary times, this class will begin to address the issues that political thinkers have entertained for years.

Required texts * selections will be handed out in class.

Sophocles	Antigone
Plato	The Republic
Machiavelli	The Prince
Dostoevsky	The Grand Inquisitor
*Hobbes	Leviathan
Rousseau	Social Contract and the Discourses
Marx	Early Writings
*Marx, Engels	The Communist Manifesto
Tocqueville	Democracy in America
*Putnam	Bowling Alone
*Barber	Consumed

Course requirements

Quizzes	20%
Paper 1	20%
Paper 2	20%
Exam	20%
Participation	20%

Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. They will be unannounced, and mainly to make sure you are keeping up with the readings. The highest 4 quiz scores will count.

Paper assignments will be emailed in advance. Papers must be typed, double-spaced, and 4-5 pages. Papers 1 and 2 (hard copies) must be handed in at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Late papers will not be accepted.

The exam will be essay format, given in class on our last day, Jan. 22.

Extra credit

You may earn 3% extra credit points by preparing a 5-10 minute presentation based on that day's reading. There will only be one presentation per day. At the very least, your presentation must include a summary of the main argument, discussion points, and a possible paper topic.

Weather

If class is cancelled due to weather, there will be a short essay assignment (1-2 pages) based on that day's reading. The assignment will be given to you by email, and it will be due the following class day.

If class is cancelled on a day a paper is due, email the paper as an attachment by noon of that day.

Reading Schedule

I What is the purpose of government?

Jan. 5	Sophocles	Antigone
Jan. 6	Plato	The Republic (327a – 367e, 427d – 449a, 514a – 521b)
Jan. 7	Machiavelli	The Prince (Ch. 8, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 21, 25, 26.)
Jan. 8	Dostoevsky	The Grand Inquisitor (Ch. 5 titled The Grand Inquisitor)

II Human nature and politics.

Jan. 12	PAPER 1 DUE Hobbes	Leviathan (Part I ch. 13, 14. Part II ch. 17, 18, 21)
Jan. 13	Rousseau	Discourse on the Arts and Sciences Discourse on the Origin of Inequality
Jan. 14	Marx	Early Writings (Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts: Estranged Labor, Private Property and Communism, Money)
Jan. 15	Marx, Engels	The Communist Manifesto

III Contemporary democracy.

Jan. 19	NO CLASS	
Jan. 20	PAPER 2 DUE Tocqueville	Democracy in America (pp. 3-15, 61-65, 180-186, 391-396, 403-410, 439-443, 479-492, 500-503, 546-553, 587-588, 661-673)
Jan. 21	Putnam	Bowling Alone (ch. 1, 10, 13, 14, 15)
Jan. 22	Barber	Consumed (pp. 3-37, 128-144)

IN-CLASS EXAM