



Dept. of Political Science



Faculty of Arts

Course Syllabus

POLI 715.03



Winter 2019

Special Topics in Political Theory

Foundations of Modern Freedom:  
Rousseau, Burke, Kant, Mill

Dr. Joshua D. Goldstein

Wednesdays 3–4 pm



SS 728

CONTACT INFORMATION & OFFICE HOURS:

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Office Hours:

Tues. 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Wed. 4:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Thurs. 1:30 pm – 2:30 pm

Other times by appointment (please email).

COURSE OVERVIEW:

Today, individual freedom is one of our central political values. It is both an aspiration and a political anxiety, for we wish it to be deepened and extended even as we worry that individual freedom might undermine that which we share. A concern for individual freedom can be found throughout the history of the West and the history of Western political thought. Yet, for most of the history of the West, individual freedom has not been taken seriously as a *good in itself*, but merely as a *precondition* for the pursuit of other goods that were themselves of true worth.

For instance, we might say for the Greeks and Romans that in order to practice philosophy or practice politics, I must be a free man and not a slave—i.e., I must not be controlled by another and I must have the space to search for and make the objective good a part of my life. Similarly, for the medieval religious and philosophic traditions, (ideally) my conscience and judgment must not be compelled by another. In this way, I might come to the demands of faith and commitment of my own accord, even as the demands of faith and commitment are not subjectively, but objectively given. Similarly, communities as a whole must be free—not

controlled by another—in order that their conceptions of the philosophic and political good not be lost. Yet, in each of these cases, freedom is only the *instrument* through which the pursuit of those things of ultimate value might be achieved.

However, as the European Enlightenment spread, deepened, and began to transform political, social, and intellectual life in the 18th to early-19th centuries, we witness two unique foundations for modernity emerge: an emphasis on the individual as always already embedded within a world *not of their choosing*; and, an emphasis on the possibility that each individual *as an individual* ought nonetheless be at home in that world. It is this condition of being at home—and seemingly unsolvable problem of how to be so—becomes *the modern problem of freedom*.

In this course we are going to examine four different attempts to think through what this thorough-going freedom—to be at home with oneself and at home with the world—as the highest values of life and community might mean.

In the course, after an orientation to ways of framing the problem of freedom with Isaiah Berlin's "Two Concepts of Liberty", we substantively begin with Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Emile*: a work that is alternatively wondrous and monstrous in its attempt to show us the possibility of living as a free beings at home in the world. *Second*, we turn to Edmund Burke's attempt to locate and secure the conditions of freedom *against* the very possibilities of human agency but with the same deep affinity for being at home in the world. *Third*, we turn to Immanuel Kant as he develops the most famous and profoundly influential but also austere account of individual freedom as a particular way of willing. *Finally*, we look at John Stuart Mill's attempt to understand freedom as a space for diversity in a way that has deeply shaped how we think about the good and limits of freedom.

Each of those thinkers will question what freedom demands of us in relationship to others, whether individuals as our community and our fellow citizens. In this course we will interrogate and attempt to understand the nature of these demands and explore what trajectories of freedom this modern period establishes.

## REQUIRED TEXTS:

It is very strongly recommended that you purchase the following books.

1. Edmund Burke, *The Portable Edmund Burke* (ed. Isaac Kramnick) (New York: Penguin, Viking Portable Library, 1999).
2. Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals: With on a Supposed Right to Lie Because of Philanthropic Concerns* (trans. James W. Ellington) (Indianapolis, IA: Hackett Publishing Company, 1993).
3. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty and Other Essays* (Oxford World's Classics) (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2008).
4. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Emile: Or On Education* (trans. Allan Bloom) (New York: Basic Book, 1979).

**GRADED COURSE COMPONENTS:**

This course has four graded course components: (i) 5 précis assignments; (ii) a final paper proposal; (iii) a final paper; and (iv) participation in seminar-like discussion. A summary of the assignments can be found in the chart below.

Problems with grammar and spelling will harm an assignment's grade only insofar as they substantively interfere with the meaning of your argument and evidence.

**SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS**

When	What	Worth	Re-quire-ments	Instructions (Additional Information To Be Provided)	Late Penalty
<b>Précis Assignments</b>					
Between Weeks 2 & 11	<b>Précis</b>	5 x 5% each for 25% of final grade	approx. 750 words each	An analysis and defence of the most important contribution—e.g., argument, insight, question, etc—of the assigned reading for a chosen week.  <b>Should be electronically distributed to all seminar participants by noon of the day of the seminar.</b>	-2% per day, including weekends
<b>Final Paper Proposal</b>					
Between Weeks 12 & 13	<b>Final Paper Proposal</b>	1% of final grade	approx. 500 words	A sketch of the paper's thesis, structure of the argument, and central evidence to be used. Must include a table of contents (which does not count towards the word limit).	-2% per day, including weekends
<b>Final Paper</b>					
Week 13	<b>Final Paper</b>	50% of final grade	approx. 8000 words	An interpretative essay that integrates Rousseau, Kant, Burke and Mill in some way into a unified argument on some theme or question that arose during the course. You are strongly encouraged to integrate and build upon relevant work done in your précis.	-2% per day, including weekends
<b>Participation</b>					
Weeks 2–13	<b>Seminar-like Discussion</b>	12 x 2% each for 24% of final grade	1 hour per week	A conversation held with the instructor in which the student is expected to show an in-depth knowledge of the readings covered that week.	Not Applicable

**OVERVIEW OF GRADING SCHEME**

A+	95–100	B+	77–79	C+	67–69	D+	57–59
A	85–94	B	73–76	C	63–66	D	50–56
A–	80–84	B–	70–72	C–	60–62	F	0–49

Schedule of Readings				
Week #	BEGINS ON	SUBJECT	REQUIRED READINGS OR SUBJECT MATTER	
1	Jan 9	Introduction	Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty" {25 pages}	
2	Jan 16	Rousseau	<i>Emile</i> {77 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Preface <input type="checkbox"/> Book I <input type="checkbox"/> Book II ( up to p. 113)	
3	Jan 23		<i>Emile</i> {72 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Book II (from p. 113) <input type="checkbox"/> Book III (up to p. 187)	
4	Jan 30		<i>Emile</i> {76 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Book III (from p. 187) <input type="checkbox"/> Book IV (up to p. 266)	
5	Feb 6		<i>Emile</i> {89 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Book IV	
6	Feb 13		<i>Emile</i> {62 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Book V (up to p. 419)	
			<b>READING BREAK</b>	
7	Feb 27		<i>Emile</i> {61 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Book V (from p. 419)	
8	Mar 6	Kant	<i>Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> {30 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Preface <input type="checkbox"/> First Section <input type="checkbox"/> Second Section (pp. 19-<X>)	
9	Mar 13		<i>Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> {30 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Second Section (pp. <X>-48) <input type="checkbox"/> Third Section	
10	Mar 20	Burke	<i>The Portable Edmund Burke</i> {42 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> "Thoughts and Details on Scarcity" <input type="checkbox"/> "An Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs"	
11	Mar 27		<i>The Portable Edmund Burke</i> {57 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> "Reflections on the Revolution in France", pp. 417-474	
12	April 3	Mill	<i>On Liberty</i> {56 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter I <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter II	
13	April 10		<i>On Liberty</i> {66 pages} <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter III <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter IV <input type="checkbox"/> Chapter V	

## IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION

### Supporting Documentation and the Use of a Statutory Declaration

As stated in the University Calendar:

Students may be asked to provide supporting documentation for an exemption/special request. This may include, but is not limited to, a prolonged absence from a course where participation is required, a missed course assessment, a deferred examination, or an appeal. Students are encouraged to submit documentation that will support their situation. Supporting documentation may be dependent on the reason noted in their personal statement/explanation provided to explain their situation. This could be medical certificate/documentation, references, police reports, invitation letter, third party letter of support or a statutory declaration etc. The decision to provide supporting documentation that best suits the situation is at the discretion of the student. Students cannot be required to provide specific supporting documentation, such as a medical note.

Students can make a Statutory Declaration as their supporting documentation (available at [ucalgary.ca/registrar](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar)). This requires students to make a declaration in the presence of a Commissioner for Oaths. It demonstrates the importance of honest and accurate information provided and is a legally binding declaration. Several registered Commissioners for Oaths are available to students at no charge, on campus. For a list of locations to access a Commissioners for Oaths, visit [ucalgary.ca/registrar](https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar)).

Falsification of any supporting documentation will be taken very seriously and may result in disciplinary action through the Academic Discipline regulations or the Student Non-Academic Misconduct policy.

This statement is accessible at: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/n-1.html>

*Please note that while the form of supporting documentation provided is at the discretion of the student, the instructor has the discretion not to accept the supporting documentation if it does not corroborate the reason(s) given for the exemption/special request.*

### Absence From a Mid-term Examination:

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test or quiz for legitimate reasons are responsible for contacting the instructor via email within 48 hours of the missed test to discuss alternative arrangements. A copy of this email may be requested as proof of the attempt to contact the instructor. Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.

### Deferral of a Final Examination:

Deferral of a final examination can be granted for reasons of illness, domestic affliction, and unforeseen circumstances, as well as to those with three (3) final exams scheduled within a 24-hour period. Deferred final exams will not be granted to those who sit the exam, who have made travel arrangements that conflict with their exam, or who have misread the examination timetable. The decision to allow a deferred final exam rests not with the instructor but with Enrolment Services. Instructors should, however, be notified if you will be absent during the examination. The Application for Deferred Final Exam, deadlines, requirements and submission instructions can be found on the Enrolment Services website at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

### Appeals:

If a student has a concern about the course or a grade they have been assigned, they must first discuss their concerns with the instructor. If this does not resolve the matter, the student then proceed with an academic appeal. The first step in an academic appeal is to set up a meeting with the Department Head. Appeals must be requested within 15 days of receipt of the graded assignment.

### Student Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services; SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. For additional information on support services and accommodations for students with disabilities, visit [www.ucalgary.ca/access/](https://www.ucalgary.ca/access/).

Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their Instructor.

The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/student-accommodation-policy.pdf>.

### University Regulations:

Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the University policies found in the Academic Regulations sections of the Calendar at [www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html](https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-regs.html).

**Plagiarism And Other Forms Of Academic Misconduct:**

Academic misconduct in any form (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) is a serious academic offence that can lead to disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be familiar with the standards surrounding academic honesty; these can be found in the University of Calgary calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-5.html>. Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.

**Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP):**

FOIP legislation requires that instructors maintain the confidentiality of student information. In practice, this means that student assignment and tests cannot be left for collection in any public place without the consent of the student. It also means that grades cannot be distributed via email. Final exams are kept by instructors but can be viewed by contacting them or the main office in the Department of Political Science. Any uncollected assignments and tests meant to be returned will be destroyed after six months from the end of term; final examinations are destroyed after one year.

**Evacuation Assembly Points:**

In the event of an emergency evacuation from class, students are required to gather in designated assembly points. Please check the list found at [www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints](http://www.ucalgary.ca/emergencyplan/assemblypoints) and note the assembly point nearest to your classroom.

**Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources:**

For program planning and advice, visit the Arts Students' Centre in Social Sciences 102, call

403-220-3580 or email [artsads@ucalgary.ca](mailto:artsads@ucalgary.ca). You can also visit [arts.ucalgary.ca/advising](http://arts.ucalgary.ca/advising) for program assistance.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrollment Services at (403) 210-ROCK [7625] or visit their office in the MacKimmie Library Block.

**Important Contact Information:**

Campus Security and Safewalk (24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year)

Phone: 403-220-5333

Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Students' Union Representatives

Phone: 403-220-6551

Email: [arts1@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts1@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts2@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts2@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts3@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts3@su.ucalgary.ca), [arts4@su.ucalgary.ca](mailto:arts4@su.ucalgary.ca)

Students' Union URL: [www.su.ucalgary.ca](http://www.su.ucalgary.ca)

Graduate Students' Association

Phone: 403-220-5997

Email: [ask@gsa.ucalgary.ca](mailto:ask@gsa.ucalgary.ca)

URL: [www.ucalgary.ca/gsa](http://www.ucalgary.ca/gsa)

Student Ombudsman

Phone: 403-220-6420

Email: [ombuds@ucalgary.ca](mailto:ombuds@ucalgary.ca)

**Campus Mental Health Resources:**

SU Wellness Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-centre/>

Campus Mental Health Strategy: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>