

THE MCANULTY COLLEGE & GRADUATE SCHOOL OF LIBERAL ARTS
DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY

FALL 2018

HISTORY OF POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY
PHIL 231-01, T/Th 3:05-4:20 pm

Dr. Daniel Selcer
(selcerd@duq.edu)

While the study of political science is often geared toward the explanation of political processes and phenomenon, work in political philosophy is devoted mainly to conceptual questions. How ought we be organized politically? What is the nature of our civil and political obligations to one another, on what are those obligations founded, and how can they be justified? What constitutes political legitimacy, whether in the form of sovereignty or citizenry? What is the nature of ‘right’ or ‘rights’, what role should they have in our conception of politics, on what basis do they emerge, and in what context are they relevant? These are just a few of the questions the course will tackle. This course will be a text- and discussion-based survey of classical works in the history of western political philosophy from the Renaissance through the end of the nineteenth century. All material treated in the course will be primary source. We will read the following works in excerpt or in their entirety:

- Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince & Discourses*
- Bartolomé de Las Casas, *A Brief Account of the Destruction of the Indies*
- Étienne de La Boétie, *Discourse on Voluntary Servitude*
- Thomas Hobbes, *On the Citizen*
- Marie Le Jars de Gournay, “The Equality of Men and Women”
- John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *On the Social Contract*
- Marie Jean Antoine Nicolas de Caritat Marquis of Condorcet, “On Despotism”
- Olympe de Gouge, “Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen”
- Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?” & “Perpetual Peace”
- Alexander Hamilton & James Madison, *The Federalist Papers*
- John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*
- Frederick Douglass, “Letter to Thomas Auld”
- Henry David Thoreau, *Civil Disobedience*
- Sojourner Truth, “The Akron Speech”
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Capital*
- Mikhail Bakunin, “What is Authority?”

Students will be responsible for active class participation, a reflection journal, and two thesis-driven papers.