

# **POLSCI-255 (Online) Great Issues of Politics: Liberty**

**Fall 2014**

**Department of Political Science  
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**

Instructor: Peng Yu

Email: pengyu@uwm.edu

Bolton 650

Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 2-3pm, and by appointment

## **Online Course Information**

Online Access and Textbook Information: This course is conducted entirely online. Please make sure you have a computer and reliable Internet access. All required assignments must be completed and submitted online at the D2L course site. All textbooks are available at the People's Bookstore at (804 E Center St/414-962-0575). The rest readings will be uploaded on D2L course site under "Content." If you choose to buy the textbooks elsewhere, please make sure you get the books from the same publishers.

John Locke, *The Second Treatise of Government* (Dover)

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Oxford)

Chuang Tzu, *The Book of Chuang Tzu* (Penguin)

Michael Sandel (editor), *Liberalism and Its Critics* (NYU)

Confucius, *The Analects* (Dover)

Contacting Me: The best way to reach is via email. If you have any questions during the semester regarding the course, please do not hesitate to contact me by email. I can be reached at [pengyu@uwm.edu](mailto:pengyu@uwm.edu). Please be sure to also include your name and the course number (POLSCI 255) in your email so that I can refer to them easily.

Computer Skills: You will need some basic computer skills to complete this online course. You need to have the ability to check and write emails, the ability to browse websites and follow the instruction to access the D2L site. You will need a basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word to type your paper. Please make sure your computer and Internet are reliable, especially during the time when you take the quizzes and the exam.

Keeping Up with the Course: It is very important that you have the ability to organize your time appropriately when you are taking online courses. Since we will not meet in regular classrooms, it is your responsibility to follow the course schedule and deadlines and catch up with the readings and assignments. Please do not wait until the last minute to finish the assignments. Otherwise, the quality of this course will be greatly reduced. If possible, you can go ahead and finish the course faster. But again, please organize your time properly so that you will not fall too far behind the schedule.

University Policies: You can find relevant university policies on participations of students with disabilities, accommodation for religious observances, complaint procedure, academic misconduct, grade appeal procedures and other academic issues from the following link: <http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/resources/upload/Syllabus-Links.pdf>

### **Course Description**

Freedom, an idea that has long been concerned in the history of human politics, is perhaps one of the most fundamental and yet contradictory concepts in the tradition of political theory. States are formed in the name of freedom; power is justified in the name of freedom; and rebels are led in the name of freedom. Liberty has become such an invaluable and disputable ideal that countless wars have been fought and innumerable blood has been spilled over it. "I fight for freedom" has already turned out to be a truism in solving many issues of politics. However, to engage the complexity of this concept, there are more questions to be answered. What is freedom? What is the origin of freedom? What are the conditions that freedom is based upon? What types of freedom do we possibly have? How is freedom understood in the relationship between social individual and state? How might liberty be differently conceptualized, culturally speaking? What if liberty is achieved at the expense of something else? How should we weigh against one another?

To answer these questions, we will spend a semester reading and discussing. The readings are structured into three sections. The first section deals with various conceptualizations of liberty. It explores different ways in which and on what ground liberty is defined. This section emphasizes the western tradition in understanding liberty. The second section is about how freedom is approached from the perspective of Eastern philosophy. The third section concerns the critics of classical liberalism and its implication.

### **Grade**

Your grade depends on the following:

Discussion	20%
Response papers	20%
Research Paper	20%
Final exam	40%

For the requirements of each specific assignment, please refer to the welcome letter at the homepage of the D2L course site for more detailed information. Feel free to contact me by email if you have any questions about grade.

### **Course Schedule**

#### Part I Concept of Freedom

Week 1: September 2 to September 7

Introduction

Locke, *The Second Treatise*, Chapters I-III, pages 1-10

\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 2: September 8 to September 14  
Locke, *The Second Treatise*, Chapters IV-VI, pages 10-35  
Locke, *The Second Treatise*, Chapters VII-IX, pages 35-59  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 3: September 15 to September 21  
Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters I and II, pages 5-61  
Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapters III and IV, pages 62-103  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 4: September 22 to September 28  
Mill, *On Liberty*, Chapter V, pages 104-128  
Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty," in Sandel eds.  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L  
\*Response paper 1 due by 11:59pm September 28 Sunday

Week 5: September 29 to October 5  
Rawls, "The Right and the Good Contrasted," in Sandel eds.  
Hayek, "Equality, Value and Merit," in Sandel eds.  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 6: October 6 to October 12  
Hayek, "Coercion and the State"  
Nozick, "Moral Constraints and Distributive Justice," in Sandel eds.  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

## Part II Liberty under Different Cultural Context

Week 7: October 13 to October 19  
Confucius, Chapters I-XX, pages 1-31  
Confucius, Chapters XXI-XVIII, pages 31-57  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 8: October 20 to October 26  
Chuang Tzu, *The Book of Chuang Tzu*, Chapters I and II, pages 1-20  
Chuang Tzu, *The Book of Chuang Tzu*, Chapters XI and XII, pages 82-104  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L  
\*Response paper 2 due by 11:59pm October 26 Sunday

Week 9: October 27 to November 2  
Chuang Tzu, *The Book of Chuang Tzu*, Chapters IV and XVI, pages 26-36 and 133-135  
Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, selected chapters

## Part III The Critique of Liberty

Week 10: November 3 to November 9

Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, “The Crisis in Liberalism”  
Dewey, *Liberalism and Social Action*, “Renascent Liberalism”  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 11: November 10 to November 16  
Marx, *Capital Volume 1*, “Fetishism of Commodity”  
Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L  
\*Response paper 3 due by 11:59pm November 30 Sunday

Week 12: November 17 to November 23  
MacIntyre, “The Virtues, the Unity of a Human Life, and the Concept of a Tradition,” in Sandel eds.  
Sandel, “Justice and Good,” in Sandel eds.  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 13: November 24 to November 30 Thanksgiving recess  
No Reading.  
\*Research paper due by 11:59pm November 30 Sunday

Week 14: December 1 to December 7  
Arendt, “The Revolutionary Tradition and its Lost Treasure,” in Sandel eds.  
Gutmann, “Communitarian Critics of Liberalism”  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 15: December 8 to December 11  
Walzer, “Welfare, Membership and Need,” in Sandel eds.  
\*Weekly Discussions on D2L

Week 16: December 15 to December 20  
Final Exam due by 11:59pm December 20 Saturday