

COURSE SYLLABUS



Crisis of Liberalism

POL 404/ 504

Summer 2016

May 30 – June 17

Monday – Thursday, 9-12:45

Lecturer: Nicholas Dungey

Lecturer contact: nicholas.dungey@aauni.edu

Office hours:

Semester Credits	3	Language of Instruction	English
ECTS	6	Level	Advanced
Length	2 ½ weeks	Pre-requisites	Intro to Politics
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	PP, IRD, HUM Elective PS, IR, HSC, JC Elective

1. Course Description

Indifferent, cynical, uninformed, marginalized, alienated, and sometimes furious, frustrated, fed-up, and even violent—these are the many characteristics of the modern citizen. The militias are in the mountains, the ravers are on X, the ethnic groups are grouping, the market serves the rich, and the politicians are inventing a new ethics. While the rest of us are lost in a trillion dollar pleasure binge.

What happened to the West? Nothing. Liberal democracy did what it promised.

The phrase liberal-democracy is now so commonplace that we simply assume that these terms are inherently compatible. This course takes aim at the myth that Liberalism and democracy are essential to each other. The thesis of this course is that Liberalism itself, as a philosophy of private individualism, perpetual acquisition, and expansive freedom, is largely responsible for many of the problems that “show-up” in the Western economic, social and political arena.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Students should demonstrate increasingly sophisticated skills in reading primary sources critically. Students should be able to research and evaluate the models, methods and analyses of others in the field of Political Science and theory and critically integrate and evaluate others' work.

Your grade will be based on how well you demonstrate your command of the material. **The method of evaluation will be class attendance and PARTICIPATION; a Short Essay (5-7 pages); and a Take-Home final.** Since both exams are written exercises, much depends on your ability to articulate your thoughts and your ability to express them in a cogent, coherent manner. Your grade will be based on **what** you write, and **how well** you convey it. Therefore, grammar and composition will be taken into consideration in the assigning of grades.

3. Course Materials

Thomas Hobbes	<i>Leviathan</i>
John Locke	<i>Second Treatise of Government</i>
Benjamin Barber	<i>Strong Democracy</i>

4. Teaching methodology

We will combine traditional lectures with seminar style discussion. Since we will be discussing the texts in class I ask that you do the readings before each seminar.

5. Course Schedule

Please note that I will be lecturing thematically and will therefore assign specific readings from the text as we make our way through the course. The following schedule of lecture topics and readings is provisional.

Week 1 Lectures and Readings

Monday, May 30:

Opening Remarks and The Ancient-Modern Debate.

Tuesday, May 31: Liberal Political Theory and the Origins of Liberalism

Power and Passions (Hobbes, Chaps. X and XI).

Wednesday, June 1:

No Highest Good and Radical Equality (Hobbes, Chaps. XI and XIII).

Thursday, June 2:

Radical Equality and Absolute (perhaps) Freedom (Hobbes, Chaps. XIII and XXI; Locke, Chap. II).

Week 2: Midterm, date to be announced.

Tuesday, June 7:

Natural Rights and Property (Hobbes, Chaps XIV and XV [pgs. 89-92]; Locke, Chaps. II, III, and V).

Wednesday, June 8:

No Natural Foundation for Politics and the State of Nature (Hobbes, from *DeCive*, pgs. 109-119).

Thursday, June 9:

The Political Solution (Hobbes, Chaps. XVII and XVIII; Locke, Chaps. VIII and IX).

Week 3

Tuesday, June 14:

Barber's Strong Democracy

Wednesday and Friday, June 15, 17:

Barber's Strong Democracy

6. Course Requirements and Assessment

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Student Learning Outcomes
Attendance and ACTIVE	Two hours of	20%	Students are required to come

Participation	preparation for each lecture (20 hours).		prepared to answer questions about the reading and to participate in seminar style discussion.
Short Essay/Midterm 5-7 pages.	Ten hours of preparation and writing for the midterm.	30%	Evaluation is based on the identification and analysis of a political example of the Ancient-Modern debate.
Seminar Paper 8-10 pages.	Twelve hours preparation and writing for the seminar paper.	50%	Evaluation is based on an analysis of the principle themes of modern Liberal political philosophy and the way they lead to Barber's account of "Thin Democracy."
TOTAL	150 hours	100%	

7. General Requirements and School Policies

- All coursework is governed by AAU academic rules, and students are expected to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. All students are expected to be familiar with the AAU academic rules available in the Student Handbook.
- **Communication:** The university and lecturers will use only the student's university email address for communication. Students are responsible for checking their university email accounts regularly.
- **Attendance** is required. Students are allowed two unexcused absences. Absences above this number may result in failure of the course.
- Mobile phones should be on silent; no calling or texting during class meetings (wait until the break).
- **Late work:**
- **Missed exams:**
- **Cheating and plagiarism:** AAU strictly enforces its policy against cheating and plagiarism. Full policy is available in the Student Handbook.

Briefly: Cheating and plagiarism results in the failing grade from the assignment at minimum, it may lead to suspension from the university.

To prevent any misunderstanding, plagiarism is defined:

PLAGIARISM – “the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.”

- Taken from the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities are asked to contact their lecturer as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodation.

8. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage	Description
A	95 – 100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A-	90 – 94	
B+	87 – 89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83 – 86	
B-	80 – 82	
C+	77 – 79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73 – 76	
C-	70 – 72	
D+	65 – 69	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60 – 64	
F	0 - 59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

Approved by: School of Humanities and Social Sciences