How shall we get along? There are many identities, structures, and issues dividing us. Can a shared citizenship and the experience of politics bring us together? This course examines some important 20th-century theories of politics. Major issues include the role of reason and emotion in grounding the basic principles of our political lives, the conceptual foundations of liberal and civic republican democracy, and critiques of liberalism from communitarian, critical theory, and postmodern perspectives. We will explore what political theory can be today. This course is part of our three-course unit, Govt. 337, 338 and 339, on Classical, Modern, and Contemporary Political Theory.

Required Texts: Books are available in paperback to buy or rent, new or used, at the Wesleyan RJ Julia bookstore.

Camus, Albert. The Rebel, trans. Anthony Bower (Vintage, 1992)
Foucault, Michel. Foucault Reader, ed. Paul Rabinow (Pantheon, 1984)
Freud, Sigmund. The Ego and the Id (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2010), OR (Norton, 1990)
Friedman, Milton. Capitalism and Freedom, 40th anniv. ed. (Univ. of Chicago, 2002)
Jouvenel, Bertrand de. The Pure Theory of Politics (Liberty Fund, 2000)
MacIntyre, Alasdair. After Virtue, 3rd ed. (University of Notre Dame Press, 2007)
Oakeshott, Michael. Rationalism and Politics, expanded ed. (Liberty Fund, 1991)

Readings on Reserve:

All books are available on 4-hour and overnight reserve at Olin Library Reserve Desk. Direct links to journal articles and scanned articles may be available on-line through Electronic Reserve (ERes). Reserve reading is available from “Tools” on the Wesleyan home page, scroll down to Library, and then scroll down to “Course Reserves.” The password for the course is govt339.

Course Structure and Expectations:

I will lecture for background and setting frameworks -- presenting themes and posing questions. Readings should be completed by the date for which they are assigned, in order to follow the lectures and so we can have good discussions. All readings are required (except for those in parentheses, which are optional.) Passages marked passim, can be skimmed. Please
bring a copy of the reading to class. Some current issues will be evoked in the theoretical works.

Written work: One essay, one paper, class presentation and paper, and final exam. A five-page class presentation due one of the days of the course, addressing a key theme in the reading for that session, to be worked out with me beforehand. Essay (3-5 pp.) due Friday, Feb. 16. Paper (5-7 pp.) due Monday, Apr. 16. Paper topics to be announced in class. Final exam during the Registrar-scheduled exam period.

We hope to have a high level of discussion and the close analysis of texts. We live in interesting times and any opinion is welcome, so long as it is related to the readings. The class is a cooperative endeavor in which we work together to enhance our understanding. Each of us brings a unique background and perspective, and contributes by engaging with each other and the readings. We need to listen sympathetically and respectfully in order to understand each other’s concerns and points of view. At the same time, we need to engage critically, raising questions that deepen discussion. This will only work if everyone comes to class prepared to listen and having thought about the reading. This means being prepared to state and explain the key concepts used by an author, outline the main thesis or theses in two or three concise sentences, and present your own assessment of the argument’s persuasiveness.

Laptop computers and iPads can be used in class to access some readings. Electronic devices can be distracting, however, to oneself and others. In order to maintain our focus, any other use of laptops, smartphones, iPads, and smartpens is not allowed in class, unless granted special permission. Students found texting, e-mailing, or browsing the web and social media during class time will be penalized with a lower class participation grade. If you definitely need to take notes on your laptop, you may do so with permission; any use of your computer for non-class purposes will result in suspension of the privilege.

Please let me know early in the semester if you need ADA accommodations. Students with documented learning, physical, sensory, or psychiatric disabilities are entitled to reasonable academic accommodations to ensure equal access to educational, housing, and recreational opportunities at Wesleyan. Please visit the Disability Resources website and follow the instructions for requesting accommodations. Laura Patey, Associate Dean for Student Academic Resources, has an office in 021 on the lower level of North College. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 with Amendments of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Resources for students with disabilities: http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/index.html
North College, 237 High Street, 860.685.5581

Madeleine Sargent will serve as Course Assistant. Madeleine is available to help with the assignments, as am I. (msargent@wesleyan.edu; nschwartz@wesleyan.edu)

Syllabus on next page
Jan. 29 Introduction: Party polarization and disagreeing about the good
Jan. 31 Alasdair MacIntyre, After Virtue, Chs. 1-2, (3-6)
   A. Critique of Enlightenment: reason, politics, and tradition
      The public and private spheres
Feb.  5 Hannah Arendt, The Human Condition, Parts I and II
Feb.  7 Arendt, Parts III and IV
Feb. 12 Arendt, Parts V, and secs. 41-45 in VI
      Unconscious mental life
Feb. 14 Sigmund Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents
Feb. 16 ESSAY DUE
Feb. 19 Freud, The Ego and the Id [omit Appendices]
      The virtues and tradition: community
Feb. 21 Michael Oakeshott, “Rationalism in Politics,” and “Political Education”
Feb. 26 MacIntyre, Chs. (9), 10-12, and 14-16
   B. Transcending traditions
      Gender
Mar.  5 Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, Author’s Intro., Parts I and II
Mar.  7 Beauvoir, Vol (or Bk.) 1: Part III, Chs. 1 and 3
      Vol. 2: pick one chapter each in Parts I, II and III (IV, V, VI in older ed.)
      Vol. 2, Part IV (VII in older ed.)
   SPRING BREAK
      Rebellion: existentialism
Mar. 26 Albert Camus, The Rebel, Foreward, Author’s Intro., Part I, and Part II, pp. 23-25 (26-35), and 101-4
Camus, Part III, esp. 105-32, 149-78, and 246-52, (and 188-245 passim.) [omit
133- 48, & 179-187]; Part IV, pp. 253-58, 276-77; and Part V

Desire and power: post-modernism

Michel Foucault, The Foucault Reader, “Truth and Power,” pp. 51-75; “Disciplines
and Sciences of the Individual,” pp. 169-238 [omit 239-256]

Foucault, “Bio-Power” and “Sex and Truth,” pp. 257-329

C. Citizens and Statesmen: political action and decisions

Emergent and established authority

Bertrand de Jouvenel, The Pure Theory of Politics, Parts IV and III

Jouvenel, Parts II and V

Jouvenel, Parts VI and Addendum

PAPER DUE

The value of liberty: classical liberalism

Milton Friedman, Capitalism and Freedom, Intro., Chs. 1-2, 6-9

Friedman, Chs. 10-13

Principles of right: egalitarian liberalism

John Rawls, Justice as Fairness: A Restatement, Part I

Rawls, Part II

Rawls, Part III

Rawls, Parts IV and V

Epilogue: Search for a narrative -- values or virtue?

Robert M. Cover, “The Supreme Court, 1982 Term – Foreward: Nomos and
Faculty Scholarship Series. Paper 2705. Read p. 4 to top 40, & 60-68
http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss_papers/2705/