

## *Course Syllabus*

---

### **Course Information**

*Course Number/Section* Political Science 4396.HN1 CV Honors  
*Course Title* Modern Individualism

*Term* Spring 2011  
*Days & Times* MW 2:30-3:45PM  
*Location* GC 1.208b

### **Professor Contact Information**

*Professor* Edward J. Harpham  
*Office Phone* 972-883-6729  
*Email Address* [harpham@utdallas.edu](mailto:harpham@utdallas.edu)  
*Office Location* GC 2.204  
*Office Hours* MW 3:45-4:45PM  
*Other Information* appointments can be arranged through Julia Kacergis at 972-883-4297

### **Course Pre-requisites, Co-requisites, and/or Other Restrictions**

none

### **Course Description**

This course will be a seminar organized to investigate the development and criticism of the modern conception of the individual in political philosophy. Among the issues to be considered are the relationship between the mind and the body in the individual, the nature of reason, passions, and instincts, the origins of morality and justice, the nature of political obligation, and the relationship between the individual and society. The course will begin with a study of Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy* and *Passions of the Soul*. This will be followed by an investigation of Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and Hume's *Treatise on Human Nature*. Each of these works will be read in the context of contemporary political science, psychology and neuroscience as found in Steven Pinker's *The Blank Slate: The Modern Denial of Human Nature*.

### **Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

On completing this course, students will be able to

1. explain the key features of the theory of the modern individual found in Descartes theory of mind/body dualism
2. describe the ways in which this theory is developed in the work of Locke and Hume

3. explain how this theory of the modern individual underlies modern liberal theories of government and politics
4. assess the criticism of this theory of the modern individual found in contemporary political science and neuroscience.

### **Required Textbooks and Materials**

#### *Required Texts*

Rene Descartes: *Meditations on a First Philosophy* (Hackett)  
 Rene Descartes: *Passions of the Soul* (Hackett)  
 John Locke: *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (Oxford. Nidditch editor)  
 David Hume: *Treatise on Human Nature* (Oxford. Norton and Norton editors)  
 Steven Pinker: *The Blank Slate* (Viking Penguin)

#### *Required Materials*

none

### **Suggested Course Materials**

#### *Suggested Readings/Texts*

none

#### *Suggested Materials*

none

### **Assignments & Academic Calendar**

*Topics, Reading Assignments, Due Dates, Exam Dates*

## **Weekly Readings:**

### **(I) January 10: Introduction to Modern Individualism**

### **(II) January 12: Aristotle and Scholasticism**

#### **Readings:**

Russell Shorto *Descartes Bones*. Chapter 1 (handout)

#### **Websites:**

Aristotle's *On the Soul* (De Anima) at <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/soul.html>.

Ancient Theories of the Soul at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/ancient-soul/>.

Aristotle entry in *Philosophy Pages* at [www.philosophypages.com/ph/lock.htm](http://www.philosophypages.com/ph/lock.htm).

**January 17: No class. Martin Luther King Day**

### **(III) January 19-February 7: Rene Descartes and the Discovery of the Modern Individual**



#### **Websites:**

Descartes' Meditations on line at [www.classicallibrary.org/descartes/index.htm](http://www.classicallibrary.org/descartes/index.htm).

Descartes entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/descartes-works/>.

On *Dualism* in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at [www.constitutio.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm](http://www.constitutio.org/jl/2ndtreat.htm).

**Short Paper # 1 due February 2** In 2-3 pages, briefly summarize Descartes position on mind/body dualism. What does he mean by an "embodied mind?" What does Descartes gain or lose conceptually by thinking about the individual in this way?

#### **Topics and Readings:**

January 19 and 24: Meditation 1 and 2

January 26: Meditation 3 and 4:

January 31: Meditation 5 and 6



Locke's *Essay*

Book I. Chapters I, II (pp 43-65).

Book II Chapters I,II,(pp. 104-21)

Book II Chapters VIII-XII (pp. 128-66)

Book II Chapters , XVIII-XXXIII (pp. 328-401)

February 23 and February 28

Readings:

Locke's *Essay*

Book III Chapters I,II,V,VI. (pp. 402-408 and 428-71)

Book IV Chapters I-III (pp. 538-602)

Book IV Chapters IX-XII (pp. 618-650)

Book IV Chapter XX (pp.906-19)

March 2:

Readings: Locke's *Second Treatise* Chapters 2 and 5

---

## **March 7: Roundtable #2. Lockean Politics, Neurobiology and the Modern Individual**

Readings: Pinker Chapters 10,11,12,13 and 15

---

## **March 9: Exam 1 (in-class).**

---

## **Spring Break March 14-19.**

## **(V) March 14 – May 2: David Hume and the Problem of the Self**



### Websites:

Hume entry in *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hume/>.

Hume entries at *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* at

[www.iep.utm.edu/h/humelife.htm](http://www.iep.utm.edu/h/humelife.htm), <http://www.iep.utm.edu/h/humeepis.htm>, and <http://www.iep.utm.edu/h/humemora.htm>.

**Short Paper # due April 6.** In a 2-3 page essay, critically examine the following quote from David Hume: “The identity, which we ascribe to the mind of man, is only a fictitious one, and of a like kind with that which we ascribe to vegetables and animal bodies.” (P. 169). How does Hume’s understanding of personal identity differ from or resemble that of John Locke?

### Topics and Readings:

March 21, 23, 28, and March 30:

Readings: Hume *Treatise*.

Abstract pp. 405-17.

Book I “Of the Understanding”

Part 1 Sections 1-7 (pp. 3-22)

Part 3 Sections 1, 4-10, 16 (pp. 50-2, 58-85, 118-20)

Part 4 Sections 1, 6, 7 (pp. 121-25, 164-78)

Book III “Of Morals”

Part 1 Sections 1-2 (pp. 293-06)

Part 2 Sections 1-5, 7-11 (pp. 307-37, 342-66)

Part 3 Sections 1, 6 (pp. 367-78, 393-5)

April 4, 6, 11:

Readings: Hume *Treatise*.

Book II “Of the Passions”

Part 1 Sections 1-12 (pp. 181-213).

Part 2 Sections 1, 3-12 (pp. 312-16, 225-56)

Part 3 Sections 1-10 (pp. 257-90)

April: 13, 18 and 20.

Readings: Hume *Treatise*.

Book III “Of Morals”

Part 1 Sections 1-2 (pp. 293-06)

Part 2 Sections 1-5, 7-11 (pp. 307-37, 342-66)

Part 3 Sections 1, 6 (pp. 367-78, 393-5)

## **April 25: Roundtable #3. Politics and Society after the Modern Individual**

Readings: Pinker Chapters 16, 17, 19

April 27 and May 2: Take Home Exam Seminar

May 6: Take Home Exam due at 10:00 in Dr Harpham’s office.

### **Grading Policy**

- There will be two exams, each worth 30% of the final grade. The first exam will be in-class. Exam questions (worth 60% of the exam grade) will be handed out 5-7 days before the exam date. IDs and short answer question provided on the exam day will comprise the remaining 40% of the exam grade. The second exam will be a take-home exam. This second exam is not a research paper, but a thought paper. Students are expected to draw upon the readings and classroom discussion in preparing their answers. Students may not share their work with one another for the take-home assignment. Students are not expected to consult additional secondary readings when writing these essays. Plagiarism will result in an F for the assignment and the undying enmity of Dr. Harpham.

- Three short papers (3-4 pages) will comprise 30% of the final grade (10% each).
- Quizzes will comprise 5% of the grade.
- The remaining 5% of the grade will be comprised of a participation grade. This will include student contributions to the roundtables and to normal class discussion. This is a seminar where discussion will move the class forward from one topic to another. Your participation will be based upon your attendance, the quality of your contribution to this discussion. To receive an A in participation, excellence must be demonstrated.

## **Course Policies**

### *Make-up exams*

none

### *Extra Credit*

none

### *Late Work*

None

### *Special Assignments*

Selected readings assigned in class

### *Class Attendance*

Mandatory

### *Classroom Citizenship*

Active participation is 10% of grade. Students must demonstrate excellence to receive an A in class participation and must attend all roundtable sessions

## **Field Trip Policies / Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities**

none



## Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD publication, *A to Z Guide*, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the *Rules and Regulations, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, Part 1, Chapter VI, Section 3*, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391).

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents' Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.

## Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, statements, acts or omissions related to applications for enrollment or the award of a degree, and/or the submission as one's own work or material that is not one's own. As a general rule, scholastic dishonesty involves one of the following acts: cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic records. Students suspected of academic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary proceedings.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university's policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

## Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student's U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

### **Withdrawal from Class**

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of "F" in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

### **Student Grievance Procedures**

Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university's *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called "the respondent"). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent's School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean's decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the dean will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester's end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

### **Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:  
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22  
PO Box 830688  
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688  
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)

Essentially, the law requires that colleges and universities make those reasonable adjustments necessary to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability. For example, it may be necessary to remove classroom prohibitions against tape recorders or animals (in the case of dog guides) for students who are blind. Occasionally an assignment requirement may be substituted (for example,

a research paper versus an oral presentation for a student who is hearing impaired). Classes enrolled students with mobility impairments may have to be rescheduled in accessible facilities. The college or university may need to provide special services such as registration, note-taking, or mobility assistance.

It is the student's responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

### **Religious Holy Days**

The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

### **Off-Campus Instruction and Course Activities**

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address given below. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. ([http://www.utdallas.edu/Business\\_Affairs/Travel\\_Risk\\_Activities.htm](http://www.utdallas.edu/Business_Affairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm))

***These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.***