

Political Science 100: Citizens, Beasts, or Gods?

Marquette University, Fall 2006
9:35 -10:50 T TH; WW 418
Professor Dobbs
421 Wm. Wehr Physics
Office Hours: 10:50-1:15 T TH
<http://www.mu.edu/polisci/Dobbs.htm>

Course Description:

Is human nature best understood as the minimum set of traits all humans equally share, or does it comprehend the highest destinies (including the perfection of happiness) that only some among us will ever achieve? To what degree is the civic or ecclesiastical community -- and civilization itself -- a help or a hindrance to human beings in their pursuit of happiness? Can we even think freely about such matters, or is our very attempt to think about such questions hopelessly incarcerated by our cultural situation, to say nothing of our particular passions and interests? This semester we shall consider these and other questions as they arise in the works of Rousseau, Nietzsche, Chesterton, and Aristotle.

Requirements, Expectations and Grading:

This class will be conducted as a seminar. You must attend every class prepared and expecting to learn. Unpreparedness will adversely influence your final grade. You will be required 1) to write daily essays on the required passages for class discussion (accounting for no less than 40% of your final grade), 2) to discuss your own and your classmates' essays as they shed light on the required reading (accounting for no less than 40%), and, where appropriate, 3) to complete a comprehensive final examination (accounting for no more than 20%).

You should expect to spend at least 6 hours each and every week studying for this class, in addition to your regular attendance. (If you carry a load of fifteen credit hours, and follow this rule of thumb in all your classes, you will still be investing less time developing your own "human capital" than you will spend enlarging your employer's capital after you have graduated! I think you are worth it. Don't you?)

Class Schedule

Date	Assigned Reading
Week 1	Fr. Guido & Justice in Higher Education; J.H. Newman, <i>The Idea of a University</i> , sections on grammar & composition
Week 2	Rousseau, <i>First Discourse</i> , preface and first part; <i>First Discourse</i> , second part;
Week 3	Rousseau, <i>Second Discourse</i> , preface and first part; <i>Second Discourse</i> , second part
Weeks 4-8	Nietzsche, <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> Preface & Part 1; 2; 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; 8; 9 & Aftersong
Weeks 9-10	Chesterton, <i>Orthodoxy</i> I-III; IV-V; VI-VII; VIII-IX
Week 11	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , I
Week 12	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , X
Week 13	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> I
Week 14	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> III
Week 15	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , VII (IV in Simpson's translation); VIII (V in Simpson's translation)