

Brigham Young University
Department of Political Science
PL SC 308 — Theories of Human Freedom, Winter 2008
TTh 8:00 – 9:15, MARB 346

Dr. Owen Yeates
Office hours: TTh 9:20 – 10:30, T 2:55 – 3:35

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Course Goals and Description

What does it mean to be free? What are its metaphysical and practical preconditions? Are there different kinds of freedom and, if so, how are they related? How does freedom relate to our other values, such as equality, security, community, and responsibility? Is freedom something that individuals can enjoy in private, or is it something that demands a vibrant public life, or even the opportunity for political participation? Is freedom America's defining ideal? Does it require an examined life? If political life is inherent to freedom, how do we reconcile our freedom with our contempt for politics? Do we really want to be free, even if we must bear the burdens that come with it? To answer these questions, this course will address the writings of a variety of thinkers. We will look at canonical writers of political philosophy, as well as pieces about the play of power and the political and moral challenges presented by the Nazi Holocaust.

Much of our learning in this course should come through our discussions with one another. Consequently, you should come to each class prepared to contribute actively and thoughtfully to class discussion. In some class sessions, the students will be expected to take the lead in class discussion, proposing questions and giving comments. This will both improve what we all learn from the class and demonstrate the burdens and benefits of particular forms of freedom. At the end of the semester, as a member of a group, each student will have the opportunity to propose a reading and lead a discussion about it. The course readings will demand a lot from you, sometimes requiring that you read them several times to fully understand them, but you should find them thought-provoking and engaging.

For more on the learning outcomes and modes of assessment for political science courses at BYU, see: <http://fhss.byu.edu/polsci/assessment/Default.aspx>

Texts

Plato. *Euthyphro, Apology, Crito*. LLA/Prentice, 1948. ISBN 002322410X
Fyodor Dostoevsky. "Legend of the Grand Inquisitor." Hackett, 1993. ISBN 0-87220-193-7
Sophocles. *Three Tragedies: Oedipus the King, . . .* Chicago, 1991. ISBN 0226307921
Epictetus. *Enchiridion*. Prometheus, 2006. ISBN 0879757035
Martin Luther. *On Christian Liberty*. Augsburg, 2003. ISBN 0800636074
John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*. Hackett, 1983. ISBN 091514560X
Hannah Arendt. *Eichmann in Jerusalem*. Penguin. ISBN 0143039881
Toni Morrison. *Beloved*. Vintage, 2004. ISBN 1400033411
Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*. Chicago, 2002. 0-226-26421-1
PL SC 308 Coursepack, available from the BYU Bookstore

Some readings will be longer than others are. You should be cognizant of the future schedule and start these longer readings well before the day you should have completed them.

Assignments

Attendance and Participation: Your active, thoughtful participation in class is required. I will take attendance and monitor participation each day, and participation will be a component of your final grades. I will request copies of your daily reading summaries on random days, and these will figure into your participation scores as quizzes. These “quizzes,” inasmuch as they are a component of your participation grade, cannot be made up. You should, however, include summaries for any missed days in your compiled summaries at the end of the semester.

Reading Summaries: Analytical summaries of the readings. These should identify fundamental concepts and arguments from the reading material and organize them into a clear and concise summary by first listing the central concepts and then showing how secondary concepts relate to the former in the overall argument in the material. You should also discuss critical assumptions the author makes and how those assumptions limit the claims the author makes. In writing your summaries, be concise and precise. They should be between $\frac{1}{2}$ of a page and $\frac{3}{4}$ of a page long in length, single-spaced. You should use Times New Roman 12-pt. font, and have 1-inch margins on all sides. As noted above, I will call for these on randomly selected days. You should have your summaries completed and printed before each class, and bring them with you to class. I will inspect and grade these, counting them as quizzes in your final grade. Students may be asked to read their summaries at the beginning of class.

The compiled summaries will be due at the beginning of class on the last day of classes. Late summaries will not be accepted, and you must submit a paper copy to the instructor at that time. In compiling the summaries, you should title each summary, place three spaces between summaries, and put page numbers in the upper right corners. Print your summaries on both sides of the page, and put two pages per sheet. You should compile a table of contents at the beginning of the summaries. The table of contents should list, for each reading, the date the reading material was assigned, a title indicating the author and reading, and the page number for the summary. MS Word will automatically generate a table of contents; include the date and title as heading text before each summary and Word will then put them in the table of contents when you generate it. You should also include your name, course number, and teacher. Please staple the summaries at the top left corner with a heavy staple. Points will be deducted for any missing summaries.

Paper: One 6-8 page paper. You should submit your paper using Times New Roman 12-pt. font, double-spaced lines, 1-inch margins on all sides, and single-sided printing. Please bring them to class stapled (points will be deducted for not following this and other requirements). The topic will be announced approximately one week before the paper is due. While you should incorporate your views into the papers, you must explicitly focus on the texts of the course. Papers that fail to adequately address the texts will be returned for rewriting. Feel free to dispute the assumptions of the questions. Provisionally, the paper will be due on February 13.

Reading presentation: Everyone will be assigned to a group of 3-5 students; as a group, you will choose a reading, assign it to the class, and lead a discussion on the reading in class. There will be two readings a day, such that you should prepare a lecture and discussion to last 35 minutes. The reading you choose should address some aspect of freedom, building on the readings previously assigned in the course. The readings may be journal articles or chapters or other selections from a book. You should limit the readings to 20-30 pages (or suffer the wrath of your classmates), but they should not be less than 15 pages. Your grade will include a component for the quality of the reading you choose. Everyone in class is expected to read and study each assigned selection, and everyone should print and

bring the readings to class. You will be assigned into groups around the midterm, and you should have chosen your reading and notified the instructor of it by March 11, 2008. You should submit a pdf copy of the reading to a forum on Blackboard's Discussion Board by March 25, 2008 so that the other students can download, print, and read your selection. Other instructions for the reading presentation assignment will be given later in the semester.

Midterm and Final exam: The exams will cover all the assigned readings and everything discussed in class. Exam questions may call on material discussed in lecture but not found in the texts, and they may also call on material discussed in the texts but not covered in class. You will not do well on the exams if you fail to do the readings or if you fail to come, pay attention, and participate in class. The midterm exam will come later than the midpoint of the semester, so you will not have grade feedback from the exams until later in the semester.

Course requirements

Participation and "quizzes":	5%
Reading summaries:	15%
Paper:	10%
Reading presentation:	10%
Midterm:	25%
Final:	35%

Course Policies

1. Honor code: As a student at Brigham Young University, you have agreed to abide by its Honor code. Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this class. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, cheating on exams, submitting work that is even in part not your own, and submitting work that you have prepared for another class (without the instructor's permission), and attempting to deceive the instructor about the reason why an extension is needed or when an assignment was submitted. You should cite any material that you directly take or paraphrase from another source, and the former material should be placed in quotation marks. For more information on plagiarism, including standards the instructor will use to define plagiarism, see http://honorcode.byu.edu/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=5302&Itemid=5698 and <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/index.html>. Guides for citation are available at: <http://english.byu.edu/writingcenter/handouts/citationstyles/citationresources.htm> and <http://library.duke.edu/research/plagiarism/cite/how.html>. Should the instructor encounter any instance of academic dishonesty, the offending student will receive a failing grade for the assignment, and may possibly receive a failing for the course and be reported to the Honor Code office for possible suspension or dismissal from the university.
2. Laptops: Laptop computers are to be used in classrooms for note taking and other academic purposes as designated by the instructor. Because of the potential and temptation for abuse, the instructor does not allow the use of laptops in any classroom in which wireless internet access is available. Furthermore, the instructor reserves the right to ban the use of laptops in any other classroom should he discover that any student is using them for non-academic purposes.
3. Access: Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance

policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB. Please contact the appropriate office at least two weeks before an assignment or exam for which you will need an accommodation.

4. **Absences:** If you miss class more than **nine (9)** times, for whatever reason, you will receive a **failing grade** for this **course**. For any absence, it is your responsibility to get notes and assignments from other students.

You must take the midterm within the interval it is offered in the Testing Center and the final at its allotted time. To take any exam at another time, you must contact me prior to the exam and receive my approval. Approval requires corroboration of some extreme circumstance, e.g. a death in the family or a note demonstrating hospitalization, or extreme sickness. If you leave town prior to the final exam, you will receive a failing grade.

No quiz can be made up because of an absence. If you miss a quiz due to an absence, it will count toward your dropped quiz. If you miss more than one, you will receive a score of zero for each quiz after the first, dropped quiz.

Since another student will have to switch with you, presentations cannot be made up, and can only be rescheduled with at least two weeks advance notice to the instructor and then only if you or the instructor can obtain the agreement of another student with whom you would switch.

You must turn in your assignments at their scheduled times. In rare circumstances, I will allow you to turn in an assignment late, but it must be submitted before the next class session. To qualify for this extension, you must contact me prior to the due date and receive my approval. Approval requires corroboration of some extreme circumstance, e.g. a death in the family or a note demonstrating hospitalization, or extreme sickness. If you must miss class for any official university function, turn in the assignment prior to your absence. No extensions will be given after the fact.

5. **Comportment:** Everyone, including the instructor, is expected to treat the others in the class with respect and to act responsibly.
6. **Provisional schedule:** I reserve the right to change, remove, add to, or amend the syllabus, including but not limited to reading assignments and exam dates. Such changes will be announced in class, and occasionally via Blackboard's email. It is your responsibility to be in class and aware of any changes announced there. I strongly urge you to become familiar with another class member early in the semester so that you can use this person as a resource should you miss class for any reason. In addition, you should arrange it so that you regularly check the messages at whichever email address you have affiliated with Blackboard.

Writing Center

The university provides an excellent resource for all students who wish for help in any stage of writing a paper. I encourage you to make use of the center in writing your paper. The Writing Center is located at 4026 JKB, and you may drop in or make an appointment. For more information, go to <http://english.byu.edu/writingcenter/>.

Class and Reading Schedule:

Readings designated with a † are available in the Coursepack. Days with a * indicate dates upon which assignments are due.

Week 1

- Jan. 8: Introduction
 Jan. 10: Plato, *Apology*, pp. 21-49

Week 2

- Jan. 15: Dostoevsky, “The Legend of the Grand Inquisitor”
 Jan. 17: de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, pp. 44-47, 254-256, 433-436, 442-445, 462, 503-517, 520-528, 627-632, 667-674, 690-695 †

*Week 3***Basic Concepts:**

- Jan. 22: Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty,” in *Liberty*, 166-217 †
 Jan. 24: Friedrich A. Hayek, “Liberty and Liberties,” 11-21, in *The Constitution of Liberty*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1960; † Friedrich A. Hayek, “Freedom and the Economic System [1939],” 189-211, in *Collected Works of F.A. Hayek, Volume X: Socialism and War*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997. †

*Week 4***Inner Freedom:**

- Jan. 29: Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, pp. 11-76
 Jan. 31: Epictetus, *Enchiridion*

Week 5

- Feb. 5: Martin Luther, *On Christian Liberty*
 Feb. 7: John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*

Week 6

- Feb. 12: John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, cont.; John Locke, *Second Treatise* (selections) †
 *Feb. 13: paper due; turn in to secretaries in Political Science Department office by 4:30 p.m. Electronic copies will not be accepted.

Political Freedom and the need for society

- Feb. 14: Orlando Patterson. “The Constituent Elements of Slavery.” In *Slavery and Social Death*, 1-14. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982. †

Week 7

- Feb. 19: No class (Monday instruction on Tuesday)
 Feb. 21: Morrison, *Beloved*

Week 8

- Feb. 26: Arendt, “The Revolutionary Tradition and Its Lost Treasure,” *On Revolution*, 217-242, 252-257, 267-269, 272-285 †
 *Feb. 28: **MIDTERM**

*Week 9***Leading the unexamined life, or failing to think**

- Mar. 4: Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem*, 11-12, 14-19, 21-33, 36-55, 83-86, 90-93, 95-97, 108-109, 126-127, 131-134, 135-137, 148-150, 175, 230-233, 247-248, 251-2, 267-269, 272-279, 287-290, 291-298

Power and Freedom

Mar. 6: Benjamin Constant, “The Liberty of Ancients Compared with that of Moderns;” †
 Josiah Ober, *Mass & Elite in Democratic Athens: Rhetoric, Ideology, & the Power of the People* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1989), 2-5, 7-8, 9-10, 76-82, 86-87, 89 †

Week 10

*Mar. 11: Marx, *Communist Manifesto*, 1-32 †; notify instructor of group’s proposed reading
 Mar. 13: Instructor gone: Movie in class (This day may take place anytime in March)

Week 11

Mar. 18: John H. Schaar. “Equality of Opportunity, and Beyond.” In *Legitimacy in the Modern State*, 193-209. New Brunswick: Transaction Books, 1981. †
 Mar. 20: Catharine A. MacKinnon. “Difference and Dominance: On Sex Discrimination.” In *The Moral Foundations of Civil Rights*, ed. Robert K. Fullinwider and Claudia Mills, 144-158. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield, 1986. †

Week 12

*Mar. 25: Milton Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, pp1-36, 108-115, 190-202; submit pdf version of reading to forum on Blackboard’s Discussion Board
 Mar. 27: **Peer readings**

Week 13

Apr. 1: **Peer readings**
 Apr. 3: Instructor gone: Find a movie about freedom, watch it, and write a double summary about it.

Week 14

Apr. 8: **Peer readings**
 Apr. 10: **Peer readings**

Week 15

Apr. 15: **Peer readings**

Final Exam: Friday, April 18, 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.