

**POLI 2420:**  
**Political Thought 1789-1900**  
Department of Political Science  
Dalhousie University  
Winter 2021

**Instructor:**

Dr. Larissa Atkison

Email: [larissa.atkison@dal.ca](mailto:larissa.atkison@dal.ca)

Office hours: by appointment on MS Teams



**Course Overview:**

This survey course is an introduction to liberal democratic thought, its promise, and its exclusions. We begin the term with the American founding in ideas of equality, certain unalienable rights and some of the exclusions on which these rights are predicated. The second half of the course traces critical reflections on and challenges to the liberal project, from Tocqueville, J.S. Mill, Harriet Mill, Sojourner Truth, and Marx.

## **Objectives:**

In this course, students will:

- Engage key texts and concepts in the history of modern political thought;
- Reflect on how these ideas have shaped contemporary liberal democracy and the tensions present therein;
- Think, write, and argue logically, critically, and clearly on the topics addressed

## **Assignments and Class Participation Overview:**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Short Critical Reading Reflections x 3 | 30% |
| Midterm Tests x 2                      | 40% |
| Final Exam                             | 30% |

**Short Critical Reading Reflection:** You are expected to contribute a **short 500 word critical reading reflection** at three points over semester (**Weeks 3, 8, and 11**). These should be thoughtful and thorough, written in clear prose, and engage closely with the assigned readings. I expect to see ample page references from our text to support your claims. Please include the word count at the top of your assignment along with your name, the date, and a title.

Note, that a critical reflection is not a summary or description of the reading. Rather, your reflection should examine a theoretical claim, tease out a tension between different arguments, or apply an insight or problem from the readings to a real-world issue.

The overall mark on the assignment will take into account the student's critical engagement with the reading, originality of your questions, and clarity of expression.

**Midterm Exams (40%):** There are two timed open book midterms which will comprise 40% of your total grade. These will be timed exercises that you will be expected to complete within the length of one course period (75 min). If you require extra time, please reach out to me so I can adjust the settings for you. These tests will require you to interpret short passages, answer compare and contrast questions, and answer a short essay question. The first test, scheduled in **week 6**, includes material up to week 5; the second test, scheduled in **week 11**, includes material up to and including week 10.

**Take-home Final (30%):** Students will write a final exam reflecting on course themes, discussions, and core texts. This exam will be scheduled through the registrar's office as a Fixed-Range exam. The exam should take you no more than 3 hours of focussed writing time, however you will be allotted 72 hours to complete the assignment. It is up to you to set aside an uninterrupted 3 hours to write the exam during your fixed range window.

## **Class Logistics and Policies:**

This online class will be hosted through Brightspace and MS Teams. Each Monday I will post one or two short lectures for the week. Otherwise, you are expected to note all important dates in your calendar and schedule your time accordingly.

I strongly encourage all students to book an appointment to meet face to face in office hours at some point in the term.

### **Policy on Academic Integrity**

#### **Statement on Academic Integrity (Source: Dalhousie University):**

“At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.

#### **What does academic integrity mean?**

At university we advance knowledge by building on the work of other people. Academic integrity means that we are honest and accurate in creating and communicating all academic products. Acknowledgement of other people’s work must be done in a way that does not leave the reader in any doubt as to whose work it is. Academic integrity means trustworthy conduct such as not cheating on examinations and not misrepresenting information. It is the student’s responsibility to seek assistance to ensure that these standards are met.

#### **How can you achieve academic integrity?**

[T]he following are some ways that you can achieve academic integrity:

- Do not cheat in examinations or write an exam or test for someone else
- Be sure not to plagiarize, intentionally or unintentionally
- Clearly indicate the sources used in your written or oral work. This includes ideas, figures of speech, graphical representations, diagrams, videos, and images.
- Do not use the work of another from the Internet or any other source and submit it as your own
- When you use the ideas of other people (paraphrasing), make sure to acknowledge the source
- Do not submit work that has been completed...previously [and] submitted for another assignment

#### **What will happen if an allegation of an academic offence is made against you?**

I am required to report every suspected offence. If you are found guilty of an offence, a penalty will be assigned ranging from a warning, to failure of the assignment or failure of the class, to expulsion from the University. Penalties may also include a notation on your transcript that indicates that you have committed an academic offence.

#### **Note that all written submissions in this class will be reviewed by plagiarism detector Urkund.**

For more information, see:

[http://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

**Policy on Virtual Classroom Behavior:** Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate and respectful learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards will be subject to discipline and potentially removal from the class.

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, colour, ethnicity, culture, religion, creed, politics, military status, marital status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, and gender expression, age, disability, and nationality.

**Policy on Late Assignments:** Due dates in an online class are brutally firm because they are pre-set into Brightspace down to the very second. Submit assignments on time! If you anticipate that you will have trouble meeting a deadline due to **significant extenuating circumstances**, please contact me asap to explain your situation. As noted above, if you do not provide adequate notice of an absence (at least 48 hours) you are required to provide medical documentation.

Late assignments will lose one half letter grade for every 24-hour period that they are late.

Also note: while Brightspace is usually on the reliable side of things, when a large number of people try to access it all at once, it might prove slow and/or unpredictable. For that reason, try not to leave things to the last second! In most cases, Brightspace submission folders will be open for several days before the assignment is due so feel free to hand in assignments before the due dates. Master your own schedule!

### **Course Texts**

The Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought, Andrew Bailey et al., eds.

All readings are from the textbook unless otherwise indicated.

### **Dalhousie Grading Scheme:**

Each assignment will receive a numerical grade. Final grades will be translated into letter grades using the following scale:

| Grade | Grade Point Value |                | Definition |   |
|-------|-------------------|----------------|------------|---|
| A+    | 4.30              | 90-            | Excellent  | Considerable evidence of original thinking; demonstrated outstanding capacity to analyze and synthesize; outstanding grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base. |
| A     | 4.00              | 100            |            |   |
| A-    | 3.70              | 85-89<br>80-84 |            |   |
| B+    | 3.30              | 77-            | Good       | Evidence of grasp of subject matter, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues;  |
| B     | 3.00              | 79             |            |   |
| B-    | 2.70              | 73-76          |            |   |

|               |                      |                         |               |   |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|---|
|               |                      | 70-72                   |               | evidence of familiarity with the literature.  |
| C+<br>C<br>C- | 2.30<br>2.00<br>1.70 | 65-69<br>60-64<br>55-59 | Satisfactory  | Evidence of some understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems; benefitting from his/her university experience.          |
| D             | 1.00                 | 50-54                   | Marginal Pass | Evidence of minimally acceptable familiarity with subject matter, critical and analytical skills (except in programs where a minimum grade of 'C' is required). |
| F             | 0.00                 | 0-49                    | Inadequate    | Insufficient evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature.          |

### **Course Schedule**

**Week 1 (Jan 6 - 8):** Course welcome and overview of syllabus. Mini-lecture on major course themes and overview of class expectations.

This week will consist of a very short introductory online lesson module that will take approximately **30 minutes to complete**. As part of completing the module you will be asked to: Watch

- Introductory lecture
- Due by Friday 5 pm:
- **Introductory Post** to the Module 1 forum, including your name, preferred pronoun, major, and a brief description of the aspects of liberal democracy you find most compelling and worrisome.

### **UNIT I: THE PROMISE AND PERILS OF LIBERAL DEMOCRACY**

**Week 2 (Jan 11- 15):** This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **3 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to: Read:

- Thomas Jefferson, *The Declaration of Independence* [as amended and adopted in Congress], July 4, 1776

- Jefferson's Query XIV from Excerpts from Notes on Virginia (on Brightspace)

Watch:

- Mini lecture

**Week 3 (Jan 18 -22):** This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Read:

- Alexander Hamilton and James Madison:
  - *The Federalist* No. 9
  - *The Federalist* No. 10
  - *The Federalist* No. 51
  - *The Federalist* No. 78

Watch

- Mini lecture

Due by Friday 11:59 pm

- **First Reading Reflection (on the American Founding)**

**Week 4 (Jan 25-29)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **3 hrs to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to

Read:

- Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790)

Watch:

- Mini lecture

**Week 5 (Feb 1-5)** This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **3 hrs to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to

Read:

- Benjamin Constant, "On the Liberty of the Ancients vs the Moderns" (1819)

Watch

- Mini lecture

**Week 6 (Feb 8 -12)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Watch

- Review lecture

Due by Friday 11:59 pm:

- **First Midterm**

**UNIT II: REFLECTIONS ON AND CHALLENGES TO MODERN LIBERALISM: ENLIGHTENED SELF-INTEREST, EMANCIPATION, EXPLOITATION**

**Week 7 (Feb 22-26)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Read:

- Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1840), selections
- **Book Two, Section 2**
  - Chapter 5: On the Use that Americans Make of Public Associations in Civil Life
  - Chapter 6: Of the Relation between Associations and Newspapers
  - Chapter 7: The Relationship between Civil and Political Associations
  - Chapter 8: How Americans Combat Individualism with the Principle of Self-Interest Rightly Understood

Watch:

- Mini-lecture

### **Week 8 (March 1-5)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Read:

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859), selections:

- from Chapter 1: Introductory
- from Chapter 2: Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion
- from Chapter 3: On Individuality, as One of the Elements of Well-Being
- from Chapter 4: Of the Limits of the Authority of Society over the Individual
- from Chapter 5: Applications

Watch:

- Mini Lecture

Due by Friday 11:59 pm

- **Second Reading Reflection (on Mill and Tocqueville)**

### **Week 9 (March 8-12)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Read:

- Harriet (Hardy) Taylor Mill, *The Enfranchisement of Women* (1851)
- J.S. Mill from *The Subjection of Women* (1869)
- 

Watch:

- Mini lecture

### **Week 10 (March 15-19)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Read:

- Sojourner Truth:
  - Speech Delivered at the Akron, Ohio Convention on Women's Rights, 1851

- As Reported by the *Anti-Slavery Bugle*, 21 June 1851
- As Reported by F.D. Gage for the *National Anti-Slavery Standard*, 2 May 1863

Watch:

- Mini-lecture

**Week 11 (March 22-26)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Watch:

- Review lecture

Due by Friday 11:59 pm

- **Second Online Midterm**

**Week 12 (March 29-April 2)**

This week will consist of an online lesson module that will take approximately **4 hours to complete**. As part of completing the module, you will be asked to:

Read:

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels

- On Bruno Bauer's *On the Jewish Question* (1843)

Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848)

1. Bourgeois and Proletarians
2. Proletarians and Communists
3. Socialist and Communist Literature
4. Position of the Communists in Relation to the Various Existing Opposition Parties

Watch:

- Mini lecture

Due by Friday 11:59 pm

- **Third Reading Reflection (on Marx)**

**WEEK 13 (REVIEW)**

**ADDITIONAL CLASS POLICIES**

**SECTION B: UNIVERSITY POLICIES, STATEMENTS, GUIDELINES and RESOURCES for SUPPORT**

"This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Senate.

**University Statements**

Academic Integrity [http://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/academic-integrity.html](http://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/academic-integrity.html)

At Dalhousie University, we are guided in all of our work by the values of academic integrity: honesty, trust, fairness, responsibility and respect (The Center for Academic

Integrity, Duke University, 1999). As a student, you are required to demonstrate these values in all of the work you do. The University provides policies and procedures that every member of the university community is required to follow to ensure academic integrity.

Accessibility [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/accessibility.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/accessibility.html)

The Advising and Access Services Centre is Dalhousie's centre of expertise for student accessibility and accommodation. The advising team works with students who request accommodation as a result of: a disability, religious obligation, or any barrier related to any other characteristic protected under Human Rights legislation (NS, NB, PEI, NFLD).

Student Code of Conduct

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-life-policies/code-of-student-conduct.html)

Everyone at Dalhousie is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. The Code of Student Conduct allows Dalhousie to take disciplinary action if students don't follow this community expectation. When appropriate, violations of the code can be resolved in a reasonable and informal manner—perhaps through a restorative justice process. If an informal resolution can't be reached, or would be inappropriate, procedures exist for formal dispute resolution.

Diversity and Inclusion – Culture of Respect

Every person at Dalhousie has a right to be respected and safe. We believe inclusiveness is fundamental to education. We stand for equality. Dalhousie is strengthened in our diversity. We are a respectful and inclusive community. We are committed to being a place where everyone feels welcome and supported, which is why our Strategic Direction prioritizes fostering a culture of diversity and inclusiveness (Strategic Priority 5.2).

(read more: <http://www.dal.ca/cultureofrespect.html>)

Recognition of Mi'kmaq Territory

Dalhousie University would like to acknowledge that the University is on Traditional Mi'kmaq Territory. The Elders in Residence program provides students with access to First Nations elders for guidance, counsel and support. Contact the program at [elders@dal.ca](mailto:elders@dal.ca).

## **University Policies and Programs**

Important Dates in the Academic Year (including add/drop dates)

[http://www.dal.ca/academics/important\\_dates.html](http://www.dal.ca/academics/important_dates.html)

University Grading Practices: Statement of Principles and Procedures

[https://www.dal.ca/dept/university\\_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html](https://www.dal.ca/dept/university_secretariat/policies/academic/grading-practices-policy.html)

Scent-Free Program

<http://www.dal.ca/dept/safety/programs-services/occupational-safety/scent-free.html>

## **Learning and Support Resources**

General Academic Support – Advising

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/advising.html)

(Halifax)

<https://www.dal.ca/about-dal/agricultural-campus/student-success-centre/academic-support.html>

(Truro)

Fair Dealing Guidelines

<https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office/guidelines/fair-dealing-guidelines.html>

Dalhousie University Library <http://libraries.dal.ca>

Indigenous Students

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/indigenous.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/indigenous.html)

Black Students

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/communities/black-student-advising.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/communities/black-student-advising.html)

International Students

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/international-centre.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/international-centre.html)

Student Health Services

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/health-and-wellness.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness.html)

Counselling

[https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/health-and-wellness/frequently-asked-questions-august-2017.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/health-and-wellness/frequently-asked-questions-august-2017.html)

Copyright Office

<https://libraries.dal.ca/services/copyright-office.html>

E-Learning website

<http://www.dal.ca/dept/elearning.html>

Dalhousie Student Advocacy Services

<http://dsu.ca/dsas>

Dalhousie Ombudsperson [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/safety-respect/student-rights-and-responsibilities/where-to-get-help/ombudsperson.html)

Writing Centre [https://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html](https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/writing-and-study-skills.html)

Faculty or Departmental Advising Support: Studying for Success

Program: [http://www.dal.ca/campus\\_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html](http://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html)