Description
This course introduces students to early modern European political philosophy and political thought from the 17th to the 18th century. Early modern political philosophy develops in some of the most turbulent and contentious epochs of European history, in a period shaped by religious warfare, by the rise of the individual as a political subject and as an object of governance, by the emergence of the modern state and capitalism, by the rise and fall of absolutism, and by the expansion of European power through the colonization of the new world and the explosion of maritime commerce. The debates in this period shaped many of our contemporary political concepts. We will discuss the crises and transformation of political authority as well as the emergence of new political forms and orders and technologies of power. We will examine theories of political justification, including social contract theory, limited government, and popular consent. And we will be able to trace concepts of individual rights, property, resistance, and revolution to the debates during this period. Among the authors we will read are Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmund Burke, and Mary Wollstonecraft.

Prerequisites
This is a 400-level course, and as per departmental regulations, this means that students must have taken at least one (preferably more) political theory courses.

Learning Outcomes
The pedagogical objective is that by the end of this course students will be able to (or will have improved their ability to):

• define, identify, and discuss the themes, preoccupations, and limitations of early modern political theory
• contextualize the terms and concerns of political theories
• interpret and explain challenging theoretical and philosophical texts
• recognize, distinguish, analyze, and evaluate theoretical arguments
• construct coherent and sound arguments about philosophical questions
Required Texts
All other readings (starred *) will be available on myCourses.
Students are encouraged to read French texts in the original.

Assignments and Grades
Written assignments for this course will consist of **THREE** 5-page papers.

All writing assignments are due on the dates indicated in the syllabus. They are to be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class. Late assignments will be docked one third of a letter grade for every day late, including weekends. Do not send assignments via email unless otherwise instructed.

Writing assignments should be double-spaced with 1-inch margins and 12pt font. Please number your pages and staple or fasten them together. All assignments should be spell-checked and proof-read for syntax, grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Your written work will be graded on originality, reasoning, organization, clarity of exposition, and style.

**Class participation** will be graded in accordance with the policies laid out below.

Final grades are calculated according to the following schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td>Second paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third paper</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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Classroom Policies

**Attendance** is mandatory. Students are expected to attend all class meetings and be in class on time. This course has the following attendance policy: (1) there are no excused absences; (2) every student gets two absences without penalty; (3) starting with the third absence, your participation grade will be lowered by a full grade for every absence; (4) more than five absences will lead to automatic failure in this course. Exceptions to this policy will only be made for serious and documented medical conditions or disabilities.

**Participation** is essential for active and collaborative learning. Research shows that people learn more when they actively engage the material and the learning process, rather than passively listen to the instructor. Class meetings will involve various forms of active learning, including writing exercises. You are responsible for having read the assigned texts prior to the class
meeting and having digested it. Prepare for class by taking notes and by thinking about questions, ideas, or problems that arise in your reading. Be sure to bring books and hard copy printouts of readings to class. Your participation grade will reflect your attendance, preparedness, and active participation in class.

McGill University values **academic integrity**. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see [www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/](http://www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/) for more information). Please note that I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty seriously, and your work will be reviewed for potential plagiarism issues by means of text-matching software.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant-e a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

**Mobile computing devices** (but not cell phones) are permitted in class for note-taking only and only insofar as their use does not disrupt the teaching and learning process. Any other use of electronic equipment (including e-mail, web surfing, social networks, games, chat, messaging, and so on) is distracting and disruptive to fellow students and is not permitted during class time.

As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](tel:514)398-6009.

**Class Schedule**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sept 4</td>
<td>Course Introduction</td>
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<td>Sept 9</td>
<td>The English Revolution</td>
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<td></td>
<td>James VI and I, “The Trew Law of Free Monarchies”*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>James VI and I, “A Speech to the Lords and Commons of the Parliament”*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>John Lilburne, “The Young Men’s and Apprentices’ Outcry”*</td>
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<td>Gerrard Winstanley, “The True Levellers Standard Advanced”*</td>
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<td>Sept 11</td>
<td>Nature and Artifice</td>
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<td>Sept 16</td>
<td>Reason, Passions, Science</td>
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<td>Thomas Hobbes, <em>Leviathan</em>, chs. 7-12</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 18</td>
<td>The State of Nature</td>
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<td>Thomas Hobbes, <em>Leviathan</em>, chs. 13-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept 23</td>
<td>The Commonwealth</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thomas Hobbes, <em>Leviathan</em>, chs. 18-23</td>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>QUIZ</strong></td>
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**YW/2013-09-02**

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Sept 25  The Sovereign  
Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chs. 24-30

Sept 30  The Kingdom of God  

Oct 2  The Christian Commonwealth  

Oct 7  Property and the State of Nature  
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chs. 1-5

Oct 9  From the Family to Political Society  
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chs. 6-7

Oct 14  No Class (Thanksgiving)

Oct 16  The Limits of Power  
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chs. 8-13  
**FIRST PAPER DUE**

Oct 21  Conquest and Resistance  
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*, chs. 14-19

Oct 23  The State of Nature Reexamined  

Oct 28  A Critique of Modernity  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Part I (including notes to Part I)

Oct 30  A Critique of Modernity  
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Part II (including notes)  
**QUIZ**

Nov 4  No Class

Nov 6  The General Will  

Nov 11  Democratic Institutions & Civil Religion  
**SECOND PAPER DUE**

Nov 13  Revolutionary Politics (1)  
Emmanuel-Joseph Sieyes, *What Is the Third Estate?* (selections)*  
Decrees of the National Assembly (10-11 Aug 1789)*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
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| Nov 18 | Revolutionary Politics (2)  
Olympe de Gouges, “Declaration of the Rights of Women”*  
Kidsout:  
Revolutionary Politics (2)  
Speeches at the Trial of Louis XVI*  
“The Revolutionary Calendar”* |
| Nov 20 | Revolutionary Politics (3)  
Louis Antoine de Saint-Just, “Report to the Convention on Behalf of the Committee of Public Safety” (10 Oct 1793)*  
The Festival of the Supreme Being (8 June 1794)* |
| Nov 25 | Foundations of Conservatism  
Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolutions in France*, pp. 3-99  
QUIZ |
| Nov 27 | No Class |
| Dec 2 | Foundations of Conservatism  
| Dec 3 | Early Feminism  
Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, chapters 1-3, 7-8*  
THIRD PAPER DUE |