Course Description and Format:
This class seeks to engage an overview of historical perspectives on political and social control, what a society needs to accomplish to function, how it considers to what ends its individual and collective efforts ought to be directed, and how these efforts are best accomplished. Moreover, a persistent theme in the history of political thought has been the idea of freedom. In American political discourse, freedom is often taken for granted, perhaps on account of tradition of social contract thinking in American politics, but also because of the felt experience and advocacy of freedom in America. In a broader sense, however, power may be considered the prior category; in many ways, freedom is a space carved out of and away from power where one may live their lives. In addition to the empirical question of what is and is not freedom and how one may procure said freedom, freedom may be analyzed in a normative context. What is freedom for? What is freedom good for, and what should people do with their freedom once acquired? Broadly speaking, especially given the reality of political power and the possibilities of political coercion, what sort of justifications are there for allowing freedom, and what sort of limits ought it entail? Ultimately, we shall seek to understand how politics functions to understand, engage and pursue human value in its myriad conceptions.

Readings:
I have worked to make the readings mostly stuff in the public domain; you can buy copies of the books if you like or read them on the internet. Beyond the obvious function of keeping costs for you, the student, down, it reflects an emphasis on reading the great texts of history. The fact of the matter is that most of the texts we will be reading literally changed the history of our civilization. As such, they should be recognized as powerful tools--technologies even--that do real work in the world.

There are, however, two books that require purchasing:
- Friedman, Milton, *Capitalism and Freedom*
- Vonnegut, Kurt, *Cat's Cradle*

Evaluation and Grading:
The requirements for this course are participation (which inherently implies attendance), reading, an in-class mid-term exam, and a final examination. The final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Online Participation</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4-5 page papers (2)</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>32%</td>
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Online Participation:
Weekly online participation is required; politics happens between people, so discussion is vital towards understanding the phenomena. I will provide specific instructions about how to approach the participation component each week with respect to the assigned readings.
• **Reading Quizes:** Before accessing the week’s lesson, you will be required to complete a timed reading quiz (10 minutes) concerning the assigned text for that week. The quiz will close at 3pm on Wednesday of the week the reading is posted.

• **Weekly Forum Contributions:** Each week, you will be required to make at least one response to a specific question, and at least one comment on another student’s response. Ideally, we will get extended “threads” of conversation about issues of interest. Discussion will close the following Monday after the reading for that week was posted.

**Short Papers:**
This course stresses a careful and analytical reading of texts emphasizing not only an understanding of the ideas within them, but also the real world ramifications of the ideas within them. The paper assignments will consist of critical discussion of the authors and ideas addressed in this course. This entails eschewing summary and description and engaging how the concepts work to develop a proficiency at understanding and developing political theories critically and building your own well founded positions.

**Final Take-Home Exam:**
The exam will consist of two parts:

• **Part I—Short Answers:** You will give concise answers to specific questions about the course material.

• **Part II-Essay:** You will write a 4-5 page essay on a topic of your choice among options I will give you engaging the course material.

**Accommodation for Students with Disabilities**
Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: [https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form](https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form).

**Academic Integrity Policy**
You should be familiar with Rutgers University’s procedures related to academic integrity. Each student is responsible for knowing the policy and will be held accountable to it. Ignorance of said policies is not considered an excuse should you be found in violation. You can find the policy here: [http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf](http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/files/documents/AI_Policy_9_01_2011.pdf)
I have never taught a semester at Rutgers without catching somebody cheating or plagiarizing. The matter will be sent to the appropriate dean. I take this matter extremely seriously; for what it is worth, I have also in the past served as a member of the Judicial Affairs Hearing Board. People get suspended over this all the time. It bothers me that I even have to worry about it at all. Don’t do it.
Schedule of Readings

Week 2: Plato, *Euthyphro*  
http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/euthyphro.html

Week 3: Sophocles, *Antigone*  
http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/antigone.html

Week 4: Clergy letter to which MLK responds:  
MLK, Letter from a Birmingham Jail:  

Week 5: Hobbes, Passages from *Leviathan* (.pdf)

Week 6: Locke, Passages from *Two Treatises in Government* (.pdf)

Week 7: Marx and Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*  
https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/

Week 8: Plato, *The Apology*  
http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/apology.html

Week 9: *The Federalist*, 10, 51, 47, 48, 1, 2, 6, 9, 14, 15, 37, 39, 68, 70, 78, 85  
http://thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers.html

Week 10: Mill, *On Liberty*  
http://www.bartleby.com/130/

Week 11: *Declaration of Independence*  
http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/declaration_transcript.html  
*Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments*  
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/senecafalls.asp  
Robinson, “We’re losing all our Strong Female Characters to Trinity Syndrome”  
http://thedissolve.com/features/exposition/618-were-losing-all-our-strong-female-characters-to-tr/

Week 12: Friedman, *Capitalism and Freedom*, Intro, ch. 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11, 12, 13

Week 13: Vonnegut, *Cat’s Cradle*

Week 14: Plato, *Crito*