

Syllabus for HIST 481: Seminar in History, Intellectual History

TR 12:45 to 2:00, Glasscock 205
Spring 2010, Dr. Ada Palmer
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office: Glasscock 214
office hours TR 2:30-4
other times by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Does history shape thought or does thought shape history? This introduction to the techniques of intellectual history explores the ways ideas are influenced by the historical experiences of their authors, and how those ideas in turn affect historical events. Readings include major works of Western thought, from Plato's *Republic* and Machiavelli's *Prince* to the American *Declaration of Independence* and Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents*, each examined with accompanying material covering the life, political experiences and intellectual background of the authors. For the research paper, students will select an important historical thinker of their choice and write an intellectual history exploring the relationship between that thinker's ideas and historical circumstances.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

There are two options all students must choose one. You may either write three short papers (5-6 pages) and one medium-length paper (7-9 pages) OR one short paper (5-6 pages) and one long paper (15 pages). The first option, more short papers, is recommended for students whose primary goal is to practice historical analysis and improve writing skills. The second option is for students who want to produce a 15-page research paper for use as a writing sample when applying to graduate programs. **You must decide between these options on February 16th – you may not switch afterwards.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS for option ONE:

1. Informed participation in all class sessions including peer review sessions; demonstration that you have done the reading; timely completion of smaller assignments (15% of final grade).
2. Three short papers, 5-6 pages each (60%; 20% each). Papers must be analytical (i.e., question-oriented), not mere summary. There are four assigned papers, one for each unit. All students are required to write the paper for the first unit (**Machiavelli, due Feb. 9th**). Students must write papers for TWO of the remaining three units, but may skip one paper of their choice (**Plato due Feb. 23rd, Declaration March 23rd, Freud April 13th**). For the paper you skip you must still do the reading and participate in discussion. You may, if you wish, choose to write all four papers, in which case I will drop the lowest grade out of the four.
3. Final paper, 7-9 pages (25%; **first draft due April 20th, final draft due May 7th**), the grade for the final paper will be based on the rough draft, in-class presentation and final draft.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS for option TWO:

1. Informed participation in all class sessions including peer review sessions; demonstration that you have done the reading; timely completion of smaller assignments (15% of final grade).
2. One short paper, 5-6 page each (20%). Must be analytical (i.e., question-oriented), not mere summary. Paper will be on **Machiavelli, due Feb. 9th**.
3. Final paper, 15 pages **first draft due April 20th, worth 30%; final draft due May 7th, worth 35%**. The grade for the final draft will reflect both the in-class presentation and the degree of improvement over the first draft.

- 11 (R) Plato II: The Socratic Method – Aporia
Reading: Hadot, *What is Ancient Philosophy*, chapters 1-5 (pp. 9-55).
Plato, *Republic*, Books I-II in *Portable Plato*.
- Week 5 16 (T) Plato II: Isomorphism of Man and State
Reading: Plato, *Republic*, III-VI
- 18 (R) Plato III: The Nature of the Soul
Reading: Plato, *Republic*, VI-X
e-reserve: *Phaedo*, *Meno* and *Phaedrus* brief selections.
Paper Preparation Assignment Due
- Week 6 23 (T) Library Visit and Research Overview
Plato Paper or Final Paper Topic Write-up due in class
- 25 (R) Rare Books Excursion
- Week 7 Mar 2 (T) Declaration of Independence I: The Specter of Leviathan
Reading: e-reserve: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch. 13-14 and 17-21 (e-reserve)
Paper Preparation Assignment Due
- 4 (R) Declaration of Independence II:
Reading: e-reserve: Locke, *Second Treatise*, I-V, VII, VIII, XVIII, XIX.
- Week 8 9 (T) Declaration of Independence III:
Reading: e-reserve: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I complete, Book II 1-6; *The Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen* (Optional: Montesquieu, *Spirit of the Laws*, Books 1-3).
- 11 (R) Declaration of Independence IV:
Reading: e-reserve: Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (selections); Samuel Adams, *A List of Infringements and Violations of Rights; The Declaration of Independence*.
Paper Preparation Assignment Due
- Week 9 16 & 18 SPRING BREAK
- Week 10 23 (T) Freud I: Advent of Psychoanalysis
Declaration of Independence Paper or Annotated Bibliography due in class
Reading: Chronology, *Anna O*, in *The Freud Reader*.
- 25 (R) Freud II: A New Model of the Mind
Reading: *The Ego and the Id*, pp. 630-645, in *The Freud Reader*
(Be warned: this is only 15 pages long but it is VERY DIFFICULT!)
- Week 11 30 (T) Freud III: Enlightened yet Discontent
Reading: *Civilization and its Discontent* in *The Freud Reader*.
(Yes, you do need to read all of it.)
- April 1 (R) Freud IV: Why Hasn't Civilization Made Us Happy?
Reading: *An Autobiographical study* pp. 3-8 & 30-41 in *Freud Reader*
(We will not discuss this reading in class, it is only for your papers; if you want to wait to read this until the next week you may do so.)
Paper Preparation Assignment Due
- Week 12 6 (T) Research Week – No Class
Reading: none. (I recommend that you finish the Freud Paper at this date.)
- 8 (R) Research Week – No Class

Grading Scale:

90-100 A
80-89 B
70-79 C
60-69 D
59 and below F

Attendance and Late Assignments:

Attendance is mandatory. Students will be penalized after more than three absences, except in the case of university-excused absences or absences arranged with permission of the instructor. Attendance and informed participation in discussion is 15% of your grade, enough to knock a B down to a C or boost a B up to an A. If you attend all classes and participate actively in discussion it will boost your grade; if you are frequently absent and fail to do enough reading to participate in discussion it will lower your grade.

Please see <http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm> for current policy on university-excused absences. For illness- or injury-related absences of fewer than three days, a note from a health care professional confirming date and time of visit will be required in order to count the absence as university-excused; for absences of three days or more, the note must also contain the medical professional's confirmation that absence from class was necessary (see Rule 7.1.6.1).

If you know in advance that you will miss a class, for any reason (athletics event, arts retreat, family reunion, out-of-town music festival), let the instructor know in advance; a pre-arranged absence will ALWAYS lower your grade less than an unexcused absence.

Assignments that are submitted late will receive a penalty (determined case-by-case) except in the case of medical absences with doctor's note, university-excused absences or by prior arrangement with the instructor (these receive no penalty).

Standard late paper penalties (may be lighter or heavier depending on circumstances):

One day late = 1 grade deduction; A becomes B
Two days late = 2 grade deduction; A becomes C
Three days late = 3 grade deduction; A becomes D
Four days late = 4 grade deduction; A becomes F

If you will be unable to turn in an assignment on time, contact the instructor in advance. A pre-arranged late paper will ALWAYS lower your grade less than an unannounced late paper (usually no penalty or half penalty is given, depending on circumstances and length of delay).

ADA:

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Office of Support Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B-118 Cain Hall (845-1637).

Plagiarism:

Academic Integrity: "An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do." You are expected to be aware of the Aggie Honor Code and the Honor Council Rules and Procedures, stated at <http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor>