

# Power, Identity, Resistance I

## *SOSC 11100*

Autumn 2017

**Time:** Tuesday/Thursday 9:30 am – 10:50 am

**Room:** Rosenwald 329

**Professor:** Austin Carson, Department of Political Science, [acarson@uchicago.edu](mailto:acarson@uchicago.edu)

**Interns:** Agnes Mondragon ([agnesmondragon@uchicago.edu](mailto:agnesmondragon@uchicago.edu)) and Lucas Wehrwein ([lwehrwein@uchicago.edu](mailto:lwehrwein@uchicago.edu))

### **Office Hours:**

Austin Carson: Tues 11am-12pm & Weds 1:00-2:00pm. Pick Hall 428. Sign up for a slot here: <http://acarson.uchicago.edu/page/office-hours>

Agnes Mondragon: Tuesdays from 12:00-2:00 pm in the Ex Libris café. No sign up, drop by.

Lucas Wehrwein: Thursdays from 2:00-4:00 pm at Ex Libris. No sign up, drop by.

### **Course description**

This is the first course in the Power, Identity, and Resistance (PIR) sequence in the Social Sciences Core. The sequence analyzes various aspects of power with a focus on the state, social cooperation and the meaning of freedom. This first course in the sequence covers canonical works of political liberalism. Over the ten weeks, we will read Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmund Burke, Mary Wollstonecraft, and John Stuart Mill. The goal of this course is, most broadly, to improve your ability to read and interpret complex political writing. We will read these texts closely to reflect on specific questions like: Where does authority to rule come from? When does social cooperation emerge? How is it constrained? What is the ideal scope of governmental power? How does society reconcile individuality if shared understanding and values are needed for peaceful coexistence? What is the role of reason, property, and nature for these thinkers? Underlying these questions is a more basic idea: we can and should scientifically study society and politics. We will reflect on what that entails. For reference, the Winter term in this sequence focuses on the politics of economic production and socioeconomic inequality; the Spring term focuses on violence and resistance.

### **Required Texts**

Central to this course is a very close reading of classic works. You will spend lots of time with these books. Find them – in these specific editions – pronto. Books available for purchase from the Seminary Co-Op.

- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Penguin)
- John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (Hackett)
- JJ Rousseau, *The Major Political Writings of Jean-Jacque Rousseau*, (University of Chicago Press)
- Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Oxford World's Classics)

- Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman and A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (Oxford World's Classics)
- JS Mill, *On Liberty* (Hackett)

### **Requirements**

Students are expected to attend every class; I will take attendance. The class grade will be based on the following:

- Regular attendance & discussion participation (20%)
- Four memos (4 x 15% = 60%)
- Final essay (20%)

No collaboration on written work is permitted. Memos will cover individual authors; the final essay covers the whole quarter. More details on these assignments will be provided in class.

### **Professionalism**

Our seminar creates a quarter-long community in which we create our own intellectual culture. A core value I want in our little intellectual community is shared comfort in participation. All students should feel welcome to develop and rigorously test their ideas. To enable this, we all must follow basic norms of respectful exchange. Verbal contributions during seminar should be respectful of other students. Please avoid a confrontational tone; it is critical for each of us to practice the skill of disagreeing via thoughtful suggestion rather than forceful contradiction (e.g. "I wonder if" vs. "I disagree"). Be professional. All emails should be thoughtfully composed with normal punctuation and salutations. Acts of sexual misconduct, which encompass a range from sexual assault to sexual harassment, are unacceptable and incompatible with the purpose of our intellectual community. Other forms of misconduct based on race or other identity categories are equally unacceptable. A useful university resource on sexual misconduct is [here](#). I encourage you to come to me with concerns about anyone's professionalism as defined here.

### **Course content warning**

To my mind, none of the written material in this course features vivid or realistic descriptions or images of violence. All students are welcome to alert me to any concerns about the reaction they may have to material. If any problems can or do arise, I am open to accommodations though this will not include alternative readings.

### **Email warning**

Do not expect immediate email replies at any time, especially nights/weekends.

### **Academic integrity**

Language and ideas that are not your own must be properly cited. We will strictly follow the University's policy on academic integrity: "It is contrary to justice, academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit another's statements or ideas as one's own work." More details on the policy are [here](#).

### **Disability accommodations**

If you need any special accommodations, please provide me with a copy of an Accommodation Determination Letter (provided to you by the Student Disability Services office) as soon as possible so that we may discuss how your accommodations may be implemented.

## Schedule and Readings

### Week I

#### **Sept 26**

Introduction (no readings)

#### **Sept 28**

Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, Chapters 1-11

### Week II

#### **Oct 3**

Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, Chapters 12-16

#### **Oct 5**

Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, Chapters 17-24

### Week III

#### **Oct 10**

Hobbes *The Leviathan*, Chapters 25-30

**Hobbes memo due by email Weds Oct 11, 5 pm  
(remember: send to Prof. Carson and both interns)**

#### **Oct 12**

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 1-6

### Week IV

#### **Oct 17**

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 7-14

#### **Oct 19**

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*, Chapters 14-19

**Locke memo due by email Friday Oct 20, 5 pm  
(remember: send to Prof. Carson and both interns)**

### Week V

#### **Oct 24**

Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Letter to Geneva, Preface, Part 1 (pp. 41-90)

#### **Oct 26**

Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*, Part 2 (pp. 91-117)

Week VI

**Oct 31**

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book 1 (pp. 163-178)

**Nov 2**

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Book 2 (pp. 179-204)

Week VII

**Nov 7**

Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Books 3-4 (pp. 205-248/262-272)

**Rousseau memo due by email Weds Nov 8, 5 pm  
(remember: send to Prof. Carson and both interns)**

**Nov 9**

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 3-97

Week VIII

**Nov 14**

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, pp. 97-142; 160-199

**Nov 16**

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women...*, Intro & Chapters 1-4

Week IX

**Nov 21**

Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Women...*, Chapters 5-13

**Burke/Wollstonecraft memo due by email Weds Nov 22, 5 pm  
(remember: send to Prof. Carson and both interns)**

**Nov 23**

**NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK**

Week X

**Nov 28**

JS Mill, *On Liberty*, Chs 1-5

**Nov 30**

**READING PERIOD. Optional review session at the usual class time and location.**

**Final essay due by email Wednesday Dec 6, 5 pm  
(remember: send to Prof. Carson and both interns)**