

DePaul University
Legitimacy and Crisis Syllabus
Political Science 236
Spring Quarter 2016

Dr. Catherine May
990 W. Fullerton, Room 2106
Office Hours: MW 8-9 or by appointment
Phone and email:
Office phone: 773-325-4755
E-mail: cmay1@depaul.edu

Course Description:

A crisis is a time when leadership and ideologies falter. It is a time when established standards fall and customary procedures yield unexpected results. It is a time when alternatives, including no choice at all, become calculated risks.

Theodore Lowi
End of Liberalism

The aim of this course is to explore the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of political legitimacy through traditional and contemporary approaches to this topic. To think about questions of legitimacy is to question the very essence of what constitutes the state and challenges us to think about what lies outside of its parameters. In this way, a discussion of legitimacy inevitably will lead to a discussion of political conflict and crisis and related concepts of power, authority, freedom, rebellion, and transformation. In the first part of the course, we will set forth the major tenants of Liberal Discourse and political legitimacy and investigate questions such as: what constitutes political legitimacy, what are the problems associated with the construction of political legitimacy, and under what conditions is political legitimacy eroded? The second part of the course will examine the crisis of legitimacy in modern society and will employ contemporary theories that challenge the so-called *Liberal Project*.

Required Texts:

George Orwell, *1984*
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
Murray Edelman, *The Symbolic Uses of Politics*
Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*
Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*

There will also be required reading for the course posted on D2L. Students are responsible for downloading the material from the site and come prepared to discuss

the readings in class.

Course Policies and Requirements:

Class Participation

Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings of the day. The reading load for this course is quite extensive; therefore, students must keep up with the readings if they are to successfully pass this course. The examinations and paper assignment will be closely linked with the material discussed in class.

Class participation inherently means that students regularly attend class sessions. For those students who miss class frequently, they will receive an F for class participation. Class participation is worth 10% of the student's final grade and the following rubric will help clarify the meaning of participation:

A=Excellent preparation and attendance. Students, who are always prepared for class, demonstrate their knowledge of the reading assignments, ask provocative questions and apply the reading material in a meaningful ways.

B=Good preparation and attendance. Students who are frequently prepared for class and who frequently demonstrate their understanding of the reading material.

C=Average participation and attendance. Students who occasionally participate and who indicate they have read the assignments but occasionally have misread the text or demonstrate a superficial understanding of the readings.

D=Poor participation. Students who rarely participate in class discussions and who often miss the essential meaning of the assigned readings.

F=No participation. A student who never participates in class discussions.

Final Paper Assignment

Students are expected to one final paper, approximately 5-8 pages in length, double-spaced and typed. The writing assignment will comprise 20% of the student's final grade. The nature of the writing assignment may be found on the last page of the syllabus.

Late papers will be penalized one letter grade for each day late, regardless of the circumstances.

Examinations

Students will be expected to take an in class Midterm Examination scheduled for Wednesday, May 4, 2016. The final examination is scheduled for Wednesday, June 8, 2016 from 8:30-10:45. Both the midterm and final examinations will take the form of essay questions. Details as to the structure and nature of the exams will be discussed in class. The final exam will be cumulative. Make up exams will only be given in the case of an extreme emergency or unusual circumstance; documentation and verification will be necessary.

Learning Disabilities

Students with special learning needs should contact the CSD program for additional assistance. Students are encouraged to discuss any learning issues with the instructor early in the quarter so that appropriate accommodations can be made.

Grading Criteria

The final grade will be assessed in the following manner:

Class Participation:	10%
Midterm Examination:	30%
Final Paper Assignment:	20%
Final Examination:	40%

Plagiarism

The University's **Academic Integrity Policy** in your student handbook defines plagiarism and the sanctions against those students who plagiarize. Plagiarism is a serious offense and could result in possible expulsion from the University. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. *Any student who hands in an assignment in which all or part of the words or ideas have been copied from a source--quoted, paraphrased, or summarized--without proper documentation or which have been borrowed from another student will receive a failing grade for the course.*

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

- Week 1** **Introduction**
Monday, March 28
Introduction to the course
Wednesday, March 30
Read Sophocles, *Antigone* (D2L)
- Week 2** **Principles of Legitimacy**
Monday, April 4
Max Weber, *The Types of Legitimate Domination* (D2L)

Wednesday, April 6
Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (D2L)
Jean Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality* (D2L)
- Week 3** **Political Legitimacy and State Power**
Monday, April 11
George Orwell, 1984
Wednesday, April 13
Orwell, 1984
- Week 4** **Problems with Political Legitimacy, Liberalism and the Modern State**
Monday, April 18
Michael Sandel, *Democracy's Discontent*, (D2L)

Wednesday, April 20
Herbert Marcuse, *Repressive Tolerance*, (D2L)

- Week 5** **Modern Formulations of Power and Authority**
Monday, April 25
Symbols and Political Quiescence
Murray Edelman, *Symbolic Uses of Politics*, pp. 1-72
- Wednesday, April 27**
Political Leadership and Settings
Edelman, pp. 73-151
- Week 6** **Midterm Examination**
Monday, May 2
Political Language and Mass Responses
Edelman, pp. 152-194
- Wednesday, May 4**
Midterm Examination
- Week 7** **Post-Modern Formulations of Political Legitimacy**
Monday, May 9
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, Part One and Two
- Wednesday, May 11**
Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, Part Three
(Note: Part Four is optional but will discuss in class)
- Week 8** **Freedom, Politics and the Self**
Monday, May 16
Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, chapters 1-3
Wednesday, May 18
Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, chapters 4-6
- Week 9** **Political Crisis and Legitimacy**
Monday, May 23
Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*
Wednesday, May 25
Octavia Butler, *Parable of the Sower*
- Week 10** **Political Crisis and Legitimacy**
Monday, May 30
Edelman, *The Political Spectacle as Tactic and as Mystification* (posted D2L)
- Wednesday, June 1**
Final Papers Due

FINAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Students are expected to write a final paper for this course, approximately 5-8 pages in length, doubled spaced and typed; these papers will comprise 20% of the student's final grade. The major goal of the writing assignment is to get students to critically think and evaluate the material presented in the course. I will read drafts of papers in advance of the due date, provided you submit your drafts within a reasonable time frame for me to submit feedback. All papers must have a well-defined thesis. The papers will be graded on the **accuracy**, **clarity** and **depth** of the ideas presented. The following rubric will help define what I mean by accuracy, clarity and depth.

Accuracy of Ideas Presented

How well does the paper answer the question that is raised? How well does the paper present the author's major ideas? Are the statements of fact presented accurately and supported with evidence? Does the paper avoid oversimplification of the author's main ideas?

Clarity of Ideas Presented

How well does the paper explain the meaning of information in the text? Does the student provide examples and illustrations to clarify the author's ideas? Does the student expand upon the author's ideas and present those ideas in his or her own way?

Depth of Ideas Presented

How well does the paper address the complexity of the problem or issue? How well does the paper consider alternative points of view? How well does the paper offer alternative interpretations and goes beyond the author's thesis?

The content of your Final Paper should include the following:

1. First, you must select a concept or theme related to political legitimacy such as: power, authority, freedom, dissent, political change and transformation, political crisis, etc.
2. Second, you need to compare and contrast two political theorists that we have read this quarter and what they have to say about your chosen theme or concept. For example, how does Sandel understand political freedom and compare and contrast his ideas with that of Foucault's ideas on political freedom?
3. Thirdly, how does your concept/theme relate the larger question of political legitimacy?