1. General Information

   Course Number: PHIL 3900, Section 001  
   Meeting Times: M, W, F 12:30 - 1:20 PM  
   Meeting Place: 112 Adams Hall  
   Instructor: Dr. Zev Trachtenberg  
   Office: 610 Dale Hall Tower  
   Phone: 325-6811  
   E-Mail: ztrachtenberg@ou.edu  
   Office Hours: M, T 10:00-11:00, and by appointment

2. Course website

   The website for this course will include the class schedule, links to electronic versions of  
   the readings, lecture notes, and links to other useful sites. The course website can be  
   accessed via learn.OU (http://learn.ou.edu)—enter your id and password, select this  
   course, and look for the link in the News box. Or, you can access it directly at:  

       http://www.ou.edu/ztclasses/phil3900

3. Goals

   This course will survey the views on the role of religion in political life held by some of  
   the most important political theorists in the modern western tradition. Our main goal is  
   to understand these theories in terms of two broad positions: republicanism and  
   liberalism. In so doing we shall consider the historical context in which each author  
   wrote, in order to understand his polemical purpose and how his views on religion fits  
   into his wider political theory. We will also consider the differences between theories,  
   taking note of how the authors we read responded to each other's views. Thus, in this  
   course you will gain experience at interpreting and evaluating philosophical arguments  
   and comparing philosophical positions.

   An additional goal of the course is to consider how theoretical positions on the role of  
   religion in political life are reflected in political institutions. We shall take as our  
   primary example the First Amendment to the U.S. constitution, which guarantees  
   religious freedom. We shall consider the theory underlying the "Establishment" and  
   "Free Exercise" Clauses by paying particular attention to views on the role of religion  
   held by Jefferson, Madison, and other influential figures from their time.

   Finally, as opportunities arise over the semester, we will consider whether the theories  
   we examine help us understand current controversies regarding religion and politics.

4. Readings

   All readings are available on the internet, via links on the schedule on the course  
   website. You are welcome to use printed versions of the assigned works. The website
has links you can use to order copies for purchase. I will also place copies on reserve at Bizzell.

5. Course Work

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>1) 15 reading responses</td>
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<td>2) 15 group exercises</td>
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<td>3) Short paper</td>
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<td>4) Term paper</td>
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<td>5) 5 term paper writing exercises</td>
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<td>6) Final exam</td>
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1) Each week you will write a short (150 word) response to an assigned passage from the reading. Typically your response will be an answer to an assigned question; other times you will an paraphrase the passage (condense and restate it in your own words), or outline it to show the structure of the argument. I will grade your reading responses P/F, on the basis of my evaluation of your effort: if you make a reasonable effort you will receive credit, even if your reading of the text is not completely accurate.

After the first week of the term your reading responses will be due by 12:15 PM each Monday. They should be submitted as an MS Word file (please use a 12 pt font, 1” margins, and double space—and be sure that your name appears in the file) attached to an e-mail message addressed to zthomework@ou.edu (links to this address can be found on the course website). You should bring a printed copy of your work to class as well. (You may submit a response even if you are not able to attend class—but it must arrive by 12:15 on the due date to receive credit.) I will return your work to you by e-mail. I will also post particularly good responses on the course website.

2) Each week you will work in a group on an exercise based on the reading for the week. After the first week the exercises will be on Mondays. I will assign you to a group early in the semester; you will work with that group for the remainder of the term, and you should sit with your group at each class. Typically, you will work with your group to produce a poster that summarizes and/or interprets the reading for that week. Each student who participates in the group exercise will receive credit for that exercise.

3) Early in the semester you will write a 1,000 word (3-5 pp.) paper on Locke's "Letter Concerning Toleration." In this paper you will summarize and evaluate the argument in a section of that work. The paper is due Friday, Feb. 16.

4) Your main written work for the course will be a 2,000 word (6-8 pp.) term paper. You must submit the term paper to pass the course. In it you will discuss the contrast between the republican and liberal positions on the role of religion in political life, using examples drawn from the readings on the syllabus. The term paper is due Friday, April 20.

5) To help you with your term paper, you will do a series of writing exercises. They will focus on particular aspects of the process of writing the term paper, from understanding the topic, to identifying and analyzing relevant passages in the texts,
to developing a structure for your work. In some cases you will work on your own, in others you will work with other students in your group. In some cases you will write in class, in others I will ask you to bring material to class to review with other students. I will review 5 of your exercises, but, like the micro-essays you will receive P/F credit, based on your effort. The writing exercises will take place on several Fridays in the middle of the semester.

6) The final exam will be held Tuesday, May 8, at 1:30 PM. You must take the final to pass the course. In the exam you will explain how the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution institutionalizes the liberal position on the role of religion in political life, by discussing arguments offered for it by Jefferson and Madison. The exam will be closed-book, but you will be permitted to bring one page of notes, which you must hand in.

6. Various Policies

Attendance. Full attendance is expected, and you will be unable to do well without attending class. Attendance here includes paying attention. Your mere physical presence is not enough—I expect you to arrive on time, and to take part in the activities of the class. I will use my evaluation of attendance to decide whether or not to round up your final grade if your average is on a borderline.

Cell phones. You must set your cell phone to ring silently during class. If you must take a call, you may excuse yourself to the hallway.

Late work. I will not accept late reading responses or writing exercises. I will accept other work late only at my discretion, and with a substantial grade penalty. Exceptions to this policy will be granted only if arranged in advance (except in case of emergency) on the basis of a substantial and verified hardship (e.g. conflict due to a medical, family, or job-related problem).

Re-writes. I will not accept re-writes of any of your work.

Religious observances. It is the policy of the University to excuse the absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required classwork that may fall on religious holidays. If any assignment in this class conflicts with your religious observance, or if you have any questions on this matter, please contact me.

Reasonable accommodation. Any student who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her understanding of the material in this course should contact me personally as soon as possible so we can discuss accommodations necessary to ensure your full participation and to facilitate your educational opportunities.
7. Academic honesty

I will rigorously enforce the University’s policies on academic honesty. In written work you must cite all the sources you consult. But academic honesty does not mean you should not make use of ideas you receive from other students—in or out of class. Indeed I urge you to discuss the issues of the course outside of class—but you must do your written work on your own, and must cite any assistance you receive from others. Please ask me if you have any questions about academic honesty in general, or about specific situations that might arise during this course.

I anticipate requiring students to submit their papers (not their micro-essays) via TurnItIn.com; I will provide further information closer to the due dates.

8. Note to Philosophy majors

In order to aid in the assessment of its program, the Philosophy Department has a specific requirement for majors in Philosophy and in Ethics and Religion. Majors will be required to assemble a portfolio of written philosophical work--typically papers or exams written for philosophy classes--produced over several semesters. Majors will NOT be graded on their portfolios. Instead, portfolios will be sent, anonymously, to outside readers, to help them evaluate the quality of the Philosophy Department’s teaching. Majors will discuss the progress of their portfolios with their advisors.

You should submit the term paper for this course for your portfolio. To do so, simply turn in two copies of your paper, one of which must include a title page that lists: the paper title; the course name and number; this semester and year; and the date the paper is turned in. This portfolio copy must not show your name anywhere except on the title page.
9. Schedule

After the first week of term, each week will be organized as follows:

Monday: Reading response due; group exercise on reading; discussion of content of reading

Wednesday: Lecture on author covered that week

Friday: Completion of lecture; general discussion

The schedule below shows the authors we will read each week, and due dates for written work. See the course website for specific reading assignments.

Week of

January 22:  Filmer, Locke
January 29:  Locke
February 5:  Locke
February 12:  Machiavelli; short paper due Friday, Feb. 16
February 19:  Hobbes
February 26:  Hobbes
March 5:  Spinoza
March 19:  Rousseau
March 26:  Burke
April 2:  Constant
April 9:  Mill
April 16:  de Tocqueville; term paper due Friday, Apr. 20
April 23:  Jefferson
April 30:  Madison