

**Pol Sci 405 Topics in Political Thought:
The Politics of Religious and Cultural Pluralism**

Ian MacMullen, Fall 2012

Tuesdays, 2.30 – 5pm

Seigle Hall 205

Office Hours: Mondays, 2.30 – 4pm, in Seigle Hall 244

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How does religious and cultural pluralism impact our reasoning about the legitimate use of political power? Does pluralism strengthen the case for political institutions that defend the liberty and promote the autonomy of individual citizens? How can liberal states and their citizens justify using coercive power against a background of pluralism and in ways that systematically disadvantage certain religious and cultural groups in society? Should special rights, exemptions from generally applicable laws, or other accommodations be granted to the members of particular religious or cultural groups? Readings are taken from contemporary political philosophy. Prerequisite: at least two courses in political theory/philosophy, graduate standing, or permission of the instructor.

Assignments [and percentages of final grade]

Students are expected to:

- i) complete each session's assigned readings before coming to class
- ii) contribute substantively and thoughtfully to class discussions [30%]
- iii) prepare and give two 5-min oral presentations, in each case identifying the central arguments in one of the week's readings, posing critical questions for your peers, and subsequently helping to lead the class in discussion of those questions [20%]
- iv) meet individually with the instructor for 15 minutes during week 6, 7, or 8 to discuss your in-class performance to date
- v) write two 7-page papers, each on a topic chosen from a list provided by the instructor
 - Paper 1 is due at the start of class on Oct 30 [25%]
 - Paper 2 is due at 2.30pm on Dec 11 [25%]

Graduate students are expected, in lieu of these two papers, to write one 15-page paper on a topic agreed between student and instructor. This paper is due at 2.30pm on Dec 11. Graduate students are also expected to prepare and give a 10-min oral presentation in week 14's class outlining the topic and approach chosen for the paper. The paper counts for 45% of your grade, the presentation for 5%.

Required Texts (also available on 24-hr reserve in Olin Library)

Brian Barry, Culture and Equality

William Galston, Liberal Pluralism (out of print but widely available used and for Kindle)

Will Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship

John Locke, A Letter Concerning Toleration

John Rawls, Political Liberalism

All **other readings** are available through WU Libraries' *Ares* system. Password is "pluralism"

Topics and Readings

Week 1 (Aug 28): Introduction

Week 2 (Sep 4): What is Pluralism?

Joseph Raz, The Morality of Freedom, ch. 13 (pp. 321-366)
John Kekes, The Morality of Pluralism, ch. 4 (pp. 53-75)
John Rawls, Political Liberalism, I:6, II:2-3 (pp. 35-40, 54-66)

Week 3 (Sep 11): Isaiah Berlin

Isaiah Berlin, “Two Concepts of Liberty” in his Four Essays on Liberty
(pp. 166-217)
John Gray, Isaiah Berlin, ch. 2 (pp. 38-75)

Week 4 (Sep 18): Value Pluralism and Liberalism

George Crowder, “Pluralism and Liberalism” in Political Studies (1994)
(pp. 293-305) and the “Reply” by Isaiah Berlin and Bernard Williams
(pp. 306-309)
John Gray, Isaiah Berlin, ch. 6 (pp. 141-168)
William Galston, “Value Pluralism and Liberal Political Theory” in American
Political Science Review 93/4 (1999) (pp. 769-778)

Week 5 (Sep 25): Historical Background to the Liberal Response to Pluralism

John Locke, A Letter Concerning Toleration (complete, pp. 21-58)
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, On the Social Contract, Book IV, ch. VIII (pp. 220-227)

Week 6 (Oct 2): Political Liberalism

John Rawls, Political Liberalism, I, II (pp. 3-88)

Week 7 (Oct 9): Public Reason

John Rawls, Political Liberalism, IV:1-5, VI (pp. 133-158, 212-254)

Week 8 (Oct 16): Epistemological Restraint

Thomas Nagel, “Moral Conflict and Political Legitimacy” in Philosophy and
Public Affairs, 16/3 (1987) (pp. 300-324)
Christopher Eberle, Religious Conviction in Liberal Politics (pp. 104-151)
[Paper 1 topics distributed]

Week 9 (Oct 23): Liberal Pluralism

William Galston, Liberal Pluralism (complete, pp. 3-132; N.B., we read the text from pp. 30-35 & 48-64 in week 4)

Week 10 (Oct 30): Exceptions and Accommodations

Brian Barry, Culture and Equality, ch. 2 (pp. 19 - 62)
Peter Jones, "Bearing the Consequences of Belief" in Journal of Political Philosophy 2 (1994): pp. 24 - 43
[Paper 1 due at start of class]

Week 11 (Nov 6): Multiculturalism

Will Kymlicka, Multicultural Citizenship, chs. 3, 5, 6, 8
(pp. 34-48, 75-130, 152-172)

Week 12 (Nov 13): Rights of Minority Groups

Chandran Kukathas, "Are there any cultural rights?" in Political Theory, 20/1 (1992) (pp. 105 – 139)
Brian Barry, Culture and Equality, ch. 4 (pp. 112-154)

Week 13 (Nov 20 OR Nov 27, TBD): Women and Children

Susan Moller Okin, Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women? (pp. 9-24) and replies by Bonnie Honig (pp. 35-40), Robert Post (pp. 65-68), and Bhikhu Parekh (pp. 69-75)
Brian Barry, Culture and Equality, ch. 6 (pp. 194-249)
[Paper 2 topics distributed]

Week 14 (Nov 27 OR Dec 4, TBD): Recognition

Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition" in his Multiculturalism (pp. 25-73)

[Paper 2 due in Prof. MacMullen's Seigle Hall mailbox by 2.30pm on Tuesday, Dec 11]

Grading Options

Students who elect to take this course under the credit/no-credit or pass/fail grading options will be graded throughout the semester in the normal fashion. At the end of the semester, students whose performance would have earned them a course grade of C+ or above will receive a pass (or credit); students who would have earned a course grade of C or below will receive a fail (or no credit).

Students who elect to audit this course do not write the papers; auditors may, but are not required to, give the oral presentations. Auditors are expected to complete all assigned readings, to participate in class discussion, and to miss no more than two class meetings.

Deadlines, Late Papers, Extensions, Incompletes

Papers must be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class on the day indicated for the topic chosen. There will be a penalty of 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours or part thereof that a paper is late without an extension having been granted. Late papers must be delivered in hard copy to Prof. MacMullen's mailbox (Seigle Hall 207) and must be marked with the exact time and date of submission. No email submissions will be accepted.

Deadline extensions will be granted only in exceptional circumstances. Requests for an extension must be emailed to Prof. MacMullen by 12 noon on the day before the deadline. Graduate students who wish to request a grade of "incomplete" in order to devote more time to their single paper must discuss their intentions with Prof. MacMullen by Dec 4.

Policies

Academic Integrity All work presented as original must, in fact, be original, and the ideas and contributions of others must always be appropriately acknowledged. As you prepare your paper, remember that you must acknowledge not only quotations but also any other use of the ideas of others, including summaries and paraphrases. Any violations of these principles of academic integrity will be referred to the College of Arts and Sciences' Academic Integrity Officer, Dean Dirk Killen. Penalties for such violations can be severe and enduring.

Attendance This class is a discussion seminar whose success depends upon your active contributions to the conversation: therefore, near-perfect attendance is expected in the absence of medical or family emergencies. Students who miss more than two classes without such extenuating circumstances can expect a precipitous decline in their participation grade. Unexcused absence from more than four classes will be grounds for failure of the course.