

PSC 409G: POLITICS AND LITERATURE

L. J. WILDS, INSTRUCTOR

Office: MSS 236-B (office hours: 2-5 Mondays)

Class: SEM 101, M/W 11:00-11:50 a.m.

682-7773; wilds@unr.edu

Readings:

Emailed to you: Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, Chapter One, “The Dilemma of Obedience”

Ball, *Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal*

Steinbeck, *The Grapes of Wrath*

Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*

Atwood, *The Handmaid’s Tale*

Sheri S. Tepper, *The Gate to Women’s Country*

Movies/Movie Clips: Saving Private Ryan (clip), Lord of the Flies, Animal Farm, 1984, Wall Street, Swing Kids.

Description:

Why do we obey authority? What constitutes “legitimate” authority? What is the proper balance between order and liberty? What is anarchy? What is fascism? What is communism? What is liberalism? What is the difference between liberals and conservatives? To what degree should government be involved in the economy? Should government legislate on moral matters? How much government is too little? How much government is too much? How do we know the difference? How are all these questions reflected in the books and films selected for this class? We will attempt to answer these—and other—questions throughout this course.

Requirements:

Mid-term exam (take-home): 300 points

Final exam (take-home): 300 point

Participation: 200 points (100 points each for each half of the semester)

Class Policies:

I will email you throughout the semester and will assume you are getting those emails.

Please bring the assigned readings with you to class.

All interactions in this class should be courteous and civil. See Academic Standards in the University Catalogue.

Discrimination Policy: The University of Nevada, Reno, does not discriminate against faculty, students, and staff on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, age, creed, national origin, veteran status, physical or mental disability, or sexual orientation.

If you experience discrimination on campus or in this course, please let me know immediately. You are encouraged to contact the Affirmative Action Office, Room 209, CA, 784-1547 or 784-4300.

Disabilities: If you have a disability that needs accommodation, please let me know at the beginning of class, so that arrangements can be made for you to receive the accommodation you need. If you have not already done so, you should contact the Disability Resource Center, about possible accommodations from the Center (784-6000).

Academic Dishonesty of any type will not be tolerated in this class. Academic dishonesty is against university as well as community standards. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following:

Plagiarism: defined as submitting the language, ideas, thoughts or work of another as one's own; or assisting in the act of plagiarism by allowing one's work to be used in this fashion.

Cheating: defined as (1) obtaining or providing unauthorized information during an examination through verbal, visual or unauthorized use of books, notes, text and other materials; (2) obtaining or providing information concerning all or part of an examination prior to that examination; (3) taking an examination for another student, or arranging for another person to take an exam for you; (4) altering or changing test answers after submittal for grading, grades after grades have been awarded, or other academic records once these are official.

Sanctions for violations of university academic standards may include the following: (1) canceling the student's enrollment in the class without a grade; (2) filing a final grade of "F"; (3) awarding a failing mark on the test or paper in question; (4) requiring the student to retake the test or resubmit the paper. A student may also be subject to discipline for academic dishonesty pursuant to the provisions of the Board of Regents Code, Title 2, Chapter 6.

Course Schedule:

1. Introduction and Overview of the Course Authority and Obedience

Readings: Stanley Milgram, *Obedience to Authority*, Chapter One, “The Dilemma of Obedience” (emailed to you)

Film clip: Saving Private Ryan

2. Ideologies, Anarchy, the Democratic Ideal

Readings: Bell, 1-41

Lord of the Flies

3. Liberalism and Conservatism

Readings: Bell, 45-122

4. Capitalism and the Great Depression

Readings: *The Grapes of Wrath*

5. Socialism, Communism, Fascism

Readings: Bell, 125-217

Swing Kids

6. Capitalism and Socialism: A Clash of Ideals

Readings: Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*

7. Capitalism Run Amok

Wall Street

8. In Search of the Perfect Society: Revolution and Religion

Readings: *The Handmaid's Tale*

9. In Search of the Perfect Society: Revolution and Equality

Animal Farm

10. In Search of the Perfect Society: Beyond Apocalypse

Readings: *The Gate to Women's Country*