

## POLITICAL THINKING FOR A GLOBAL WORLD

### **Instructor:**

Leigh Jenco  
Leigh\_Jenco@brown.edu  
Office Hours: Thursdays 1:30 – 3:30  
Blistein 103

### **Writing Fellows:**

Ila Tyagi and Alfredo Alguirre  
[Ila\\_Tyagi@brown.edu](mailto:Ila_Tyagi@brown.edu)  
[Alfredo\\_Alguirre@brown.edu](mailto:Alfredo_Alguirre@brown.edu)

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

In this introductory course, we will consider how we should think, and act, in a world increasingly marked by global interconnectedness. We will not be analyzing the globalization phenomenon per se. Rather, we will devote our attention to the intellectual and epistemological issues raised by cross-cultural exchange, and survey how theorists in both “the West” and elsewhere have thought about and formulated responses to those issues. Should we encourage “global citizenship,” or should we celebrate the local and the national? Do universal claims to human rights threaten non-Western cultural values, or are such rights necessary to prevent violence against the most vulnerable members of society—including children? Are there significant and legitimate differences between “the West” and “the rest”?

We will begin by looking at how cross-cultural exchange has been thought about in various academic disciplines, discussing specifically theories of cosmopolitanism, hybridity, colonialism and postcolonialism, and universal human rights. Throughout, we will consider the specific intellectual and political debates raised by action in a global as opposed to local context, including Confucian responses to human rights, Gandhian resistance, “subaltern” studies, global feminism, and Islamic debates over religious fundamentalism and Western imperialism.

Please note: this syllabus is a “living document” and subject to change at any time at the instructor’s discretion.

### **ASSIGNMENTS:**

**Papers:** This class will require two 8-10 page papers which will be evaluated first by the writing fellow, then revised appropriately and handed in to me for a final grade. All papers should make use of assigned readings, but they should not simply unreflectively reproduce what we have already discussed in class.

**Discussion Questions:** Except for those sessions in which in-class activities are scheduled (see syllabus, below), each student will be responsible for articulating at least one discussion question at the beginning of each class. This will be part of the participation grade. I advise you to prepare at least two questions in advance in case others duplicate your question. These questions should speak to the day’s reading in some way. For example: the conceptual challenges or dilemmas the reading poses; the contradictory or puzzling statements it seems to make; or the light it throws on unanswered questions from the previous class, current events, or one’s personal experience.

**Plenary Sessions:** At three points during the semester, we will hold our sessions concurrently with Prof. Sahar Akhtar and her class on Cosmopolitanism. The final session with Prof. Akhtar will be a plenary debate on Asian Values, participation in which will count for your final participation grade.

#### GRADING:

All grading, including papers, will utilize a point system (A range = 90-100 points; B range = 80-89 points, etc.) Points will be deducted if papers egregiously exceed the assigned page limit. A late paper will be penalized five points (1/2 a letter grade) for every 24 hour-period it is late unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor. Late papers will only be excused in cases of well-documented illness or emergency. Plagiarism will result in an unequivocal grade of F for this course.

**First 10 page paper: 30%; second 10 page paper: 40%; attendance and participation (including discussion questions and participation in debates) 30%.**

#### BOOKS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE:

Edward Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage, 1978)

Mahatma Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj*, ed. Parel (Cambridge, 1997)

Roxanne Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore* (Princeton, 2006)

Steve Angle, *Human Rights and Chinese Thought* (Cambridge, 2002)

Daniel A. Bell, *Beyond Liberal Democracy* (Princeton, 2006)

Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays on Politics, History, and Morals* (Hackett, 1983)

Stephen C. Angle and Marina Svensson, *The China Human Rights Reader* (ME Sharpe, 2001)

These books will also be available in hardcopy at the library reserve desk. **Additional readings are available through library e-reserves. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO ACQUIRE THE READINGS IN TIME TO READ THEM FOR CLASS.** If you run into problems finding the readings, please email me ASAP.

#### READINGS

#### PART I: THEORIES OF GLOBALISM

##### **Week 1 (Jan. 29): Introduction**

Why “globalized” thought?

##### **Week 2 (Feb. 5): The world and its problems?**

Francis Fukuyama, “The End of History?” *National Interest* 16 (Summer 1989): 3-18.

Samuel Huntington, “The Clash of Civilizations?” in *Foreign Affairs* 72:3 (1993): 22-49.

Recommended: Francis Fukuyama, “Reply to My Critics,” *National Interest* 18 (Winter 1989-90): 21-28.

##### **Weeks 3 (Feb. 12) Colonialism and Postcolonialism**

Said, *Orientalism*, pp. 1-110

**Week 4 (Feb. 19): Long weekend break (No class)**

**Week 5 (Feb. 26): Colonialism and Postcolonialism, cont'd.**

John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*, sections I, III and IV  
Immanuel Kant, "What is Enlightenment?" in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*

Recommended: Leela Gandhi, *Postcolonial Theory: A Critical Introduction*

**Week 6 (Mar. 4): Globalization and Hybridity**

\*\*\*please note! Take your time with these readings. Do not let their short length deceive you.\*\*\*

Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, Intro and chapter one (pp. 3-46)  
Jan Pieterse, "Globalization as Hybridization," *International Sociology* 9.2 (June 1994): 161-184.  
Homi K. Bhabha, "Culture's In-between," in David Bennett, *Multicultural States: Rethinking Difference and Identity* (London: Routledge, 1998): 31-36 (on reserve, but also available as e-book through Josiah)

**Paper 1: First draft due to Writing Fellow by March 7**

**Final draft due to ME in my office Friday, March 21 at noon**

**Week 7 (Mar. 11): Gandhi, *Hind Swaraj* (entire)**

**Week 8 (Mar. 18): Cosmopolitanism (plenary session led by Prof. Sahar Akhtar)**

Immanuel Kant, "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Intent," in *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*

Roxanne Euben, *Journeys to the Other Shore*, ch. 6

Beitz, Charles R. "Cosmopolitan Ideals and National Sentiment." *Journal of Philosophy* 80 (1983): 591-600.

"Cosmopolitanism," Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy online, available:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/cosmopolitanism/>

**Week 9: Spring Break (no class)**

**PART II. GLOBAL DEBATES**

**Week 10 (April 1): Making judgments across cultures**

Henry Rosemont, Jr. "Against Relativism," in Larson and Deutsch, eds. *Interpreting Across Boundaries* (Princeton University Press, 1988).

Roxanne Euben, *Journeys*, chs. 1 and 2.

American Anthropological Association Executive Board, 1947, "Statement on Human Rights," *American Anthropologist* 49: 539-43

Recommended: Alisdair MacIntyre, "Is a Science of Comparative Politics Possible?" in *Against the Self-Images of the Age* (New York: Schocken Books, 1971): 260-279.

**Week 11 (April 8): Universal Human Rights (plenary session, led by me)**

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 1948. Available online:

<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>

James Nickel, "Human Rights," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available:

<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/rights-human/>

Stephen C. Angle, *Human Rights and Chinese Thought*, pp. 101-139

Stephen C. Angle and Marina Svensson, *The China Human Rights Reader*, Part I secs. 2-3; Part II, sec 18.

**Week 12 (April 15): Global feminism**

Martha Nussbaum, *Women and Human Development*, Introduction

Uma Narayan, "Essence of Culture and a Sense of History," *Hypatia*, Spring 1998, Vol. 13.2.

Recommended: Roxanne Euben, *Journeys*, ch. 5

**Week 13 (April 22): Asian Values (plenary session debate, with Prof. Sahar Akhtar)**

Fareed Zakaria, "Culture is Destiny: An Interview with Lee Kwan Yew," *Foreign Affairs* (March/April 1994): 109-26.

Amartya Sen, "Culture and Human Rights," in *Development as Freedom*, ch. 10.

Ann Frechette, "Democracy and Democratization Among Tibetans in Exile," *Journal of Asian Studies* 66.1 (Feb. 2007): 97-127.

Daniel A. Bell, *Beyond Liberal Democracy*, chs. 2, 3 and 6

Recommended: Angle, *Human Rights in Chinese Thought*, pp. 140-204

In-Class Debate: Can "culture" explain or justify authoritarianism? (To prepare for this debate, you may want to look at additional primary sources translated in Angle and Svensson's *HR Reader*).

**April 25-May 6: Reading Period**

**Paper 2: First draft due to Writing Fellow by Friday, April 25**

**Final draft due to ME in my office by Friday, May 9 at noon**