I. COURSE GOALS, STRUCTURE AND THEMES:

Contemporary political discourse very frequently makes use of such terms as Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism, Republicanism, Federalism, and Postmodernism, among several others. Yet, as one attends to the manner in which these –isms are employed both in spoken and written language, one is left with the impression that they do not connote the same thing to different authors and speakers, not to mention the audience to whom these terms are addressed. Not only does there appear to be a disjunction between usage and meaning, but also, and perhaps more significantly, it seems to be the case that contemporary understanding of these terms may not accurately reflect the ideas of those who initially developed the underlying concepts and positions which are represented by these –isms. In other words, when we make use of a term such as Socialism, are we using it in a manner which is in accord with what Socialism was understood to mean when it was established by Karl Marx in the 19th century?

To answer this question, and to arrive at an understanding of the differences and similarities in contemporary usage, this course will examine a selection of the texts that form the basis of six perspectives through which the modern world and contemporary politics is viewed: Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism, Republicanism, Federalism, and Postmodernism. The class will study the works of Burke (Conservatism), Kant, Locke and Mill (Liberalism), Marx (Socialism), the authors of the Federalist Papers, Hamilton, Madison, and Jay (Republicanism and Federalism), and Nietzsche (Postmodernism).

The fundamental theme running throughout the course, as well as the course structure itself, will address the issue of whether or not the ideas set down by the seminal authors of Conservatism, Liberalism, Socialism, Republicanism, Federalism, and Postmodernism are understood today in the same manner as was originally intended. Through the reading, reflection, and discussion of the texts selected for the course, the student should reach an understanding of these writings in order to be able to determine the extent to which current expressions of these six perspectives conform to or deviate from what their authors initially conceived.
II. TEXTS

Conservatism
ISBN: 978-0199539024 ($12.95)

Liberalism
ISBN: 978-0521398374 ($27.99)
ISBN: 978-0915144860 ($8.50)
ISBN: 978-0199535736 ($9.95)

Socialism
ISBN: 978-0393090406 ($26.00)

Republicanism and Federalism
ISBN: 9780865972896 ($14.50)

Postmodernism
ISBN: 978-0521779135 ($23.99)

Note on the texts: It is strongly urged that all students purchase the same editions. In the case of Kant, Marx, and Nietzsche, while there are many fine translations of these works, the ones that have been selected most accurately reflect their originals. Additionally, these editions contain very useful introductory essays and notes to aid in understanding what are quite often difficult arguments. Furthermore, it is far easier to refer to a particular passage on a particular page if we are all using the same text.

III. EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

A. Attendance: regular attendance is required and expected. The best way to reach an understanding of the texts, their content, and the way in which their ideas have been employed in contemporary political discourse is to attend class.

B. Participation: the course will be conducted as a lecture-seminar. Questions, discussions, and disagreements are both welcome and are an excellent way of engaging with the texts.

C. Assignments:
(1) Take home essays:
There will be four take-home essay exams of 3-4 pages each. The essays will be spaced throughout the course and will cover one of the principle –isms you are studying. You will write a interpretive/reflective essay on your choice of assigned questions. The purpose of these essays is to ensure your understanding of the material as we proceed through the course.
(2) Final paper:
A final paper of 10-12 pages in which you will analyze the use of one (or more) –isms in contemporary political discourse in respect to the primary source material you have studied during the semester.

D. Grading:
Your grade for the course will be computed as follows:
Participation – 10%
Take home essays – 40% (10% each)
Final paper – 50%

IV. SCHEDULE OF READINGS

Week 1
Sept. 3 Introduction to the course

Week 2  Conservatism I
Sept. 10 Burke: Selections from Reflections on the Revolution in France, Part 1

Week 3  Conservatism II
Sept. 17 Burke: Selections from Reflections on the Revolution in France, Part 2

Week 4  Conservatism III
Sept. 24 Burke: Selections from Reflections on the Revolution in France, Part 3
First Essay Assigned

Week 5  Liberalism I
Oct. 1 Kant: What Is Enlightenment?
Kant: Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose
First Essay Due

Week 6  Liberalism II
Oct. 8 Locke: Second Treatise of Government

Week 7  Liberalism III
Oct. 15 Mill: On Liberty
Second Essay Assigned

Week 8  Socialism I
Oct. 22 Marx: Selections from the 1844 Philosophical Manuscripts
Second Essay Due

Week 9  Socialism II
Oct. 29 Marx: Manifesto of the Communist Party
Third Essay Assigned

Week 10 Republicanism
Nov. 5 Articles on "Republicanism" from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
The Federalist, Essays 1, 9, 10, 14, 39
Third Essay Due
Week 11  Federalism  
Nov. 12  Article on "Federalism" from the Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy  
*The Federalist*, Essays 15-20, 47-51  
Fourth Essay Assigned

Week 12  Postmodernism I  
Nov. 19  Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part 1  
Fourth Essay Due

Week 13  Postmodernism II  
Dec. 3  Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, Part 2

Thursday, December 19 – Final Papers Due
MALS and DLS students are responsible for upholding the Georgetown University Honor System and adhering to the academic standards included in the Honor Code Pledge stated below:

**Honor Code:**
In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown University Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor; and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

**Disabilities Statement:** If you believe you have a disability, then you should contact the Academic Resource Center (arc@georgetown.edu) for further information. The Center is located in the Leavey Center, Suite 335. The Academic Resource Center is the campus office responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students with disabilities and for determining reasonable accommodations in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and University policies.