

**SPECIAL TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS:
TOTALITARIANISM**

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Office Hours: 9:30-11am, Wednesday and Friday, and by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW AND OBJECTIVES

The objective of this course is to achieve an understanding of the nature of totalitarianism, its origins, conceptualization, and attraction, and of resistance to totalitarian claims. In this endeavor, we draw on works of political philosophy and theory, history, literature, film, and experience.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Journal Entries = 20%	**10-12 journal entries**
Midterm Exam = 25%	**In class, Wednesday, October 1**
Analytical Essay = 25%	**Due at the start of class, Friday, November 21**
Final Exam = 30%	**Take-home, due to Stubbs 216 by 5pm, Wednesday, December 10**

Grading Scale
A = 90-100%
B = 80-89.9%
C = 70-79.9
D = 60-69.9
F = <60%

Your course grade is based on journal entries (20%), a midterm exam (25%), an 8-10 page analytic essay (25%), and a final exam (30%). You will be provided with review questions in advance of the exams. You will need a Blue Book *and* a Scantron for your midterm exam (available at the LSU bookstore). Your final exam will be a take-home exam, due in my office no later than **5pm, Wednesday, December 10, 2014**. You are encouraged to organize your own group study, as it facilitates your understanding of the material and challenges you to think critically about the major questions and arguments of each text. *All* late material will be penalized. Announcements and readings for **bonus opportunities** will be posted on Moodle or distributed in class. I reserve the right to administer unannounced bonus quizzes.

The analytical essay will consist of an 8-10 page exegetical and critical analysis. A list of suggested topics, as well as a detailed description of the nature of this assignment, will be provided for you. If you depart from the suggested list, you must have your topic approved. The essay will be due on **Friday, November 21, 2014**. Important dates for the essay:

Topic approved by: Friday, September 26, 2014 (hard copy, in class)

Abstract approved by: Friday, October 24, 2014 (hard copy, in class)

Final submission: Friday, November 21, 2014 (hard copy, in class)

Reading, Attendance, and Academic Integrity

Your success in this class depends upon your consistent attendance and participation. Before each class period, you should read the assigned materials and thoughtfully consider their significance for our study. Our task is to read sympathetically in order to read critically – that is, to understand what each author is asking and arguing, and then to thoughtfully evaluate his work. Of course, in order to facilitate analysis and ease of reference, you should **bring your copy of the text** to class. **At the end of each class period, I will announce the readings for the next class period.**

Etiquette and Electronics in Class

Classroom etiquette acknowledges that class time is set apart for a special purpose and requires students to respect others in word and in deed. Make sure you are ready to begin when our class starts and wait until it is over to pack your notes and belongings. Be attentive to what others say, and make an effort to contribute to class discussions. Know that, unless there is an emergency, leaving before class is over is unacceptable. **The use of laptops, tablets, and smart phones is *not* allowed in class**, except for official note-takers. Using pen and paper instead limits the distractions your laptop presents to you and your neighbor. Importantly, studies show, using pen and paper also contributes to better understanding and more effective learning overall. Audio recorders are allowed, but strictly for your personal use.

Moodle

Login to Moodle through your myLSU account to access readings (posted as PDF files or Internet links) and your grades.

Required Texts

*Students should purchase the books marked with a single asterisk (available at the LSU bookstore and through online retailers).

**Students should print the selections marked below with a double asterisk from Moodle.

F. Flagg Taylor IV, editor, *The Great Lie: Classical and Recent Appraisals of Ideology and Totalitarianism* (ISI Books, 2011) [ISBN 9-781935-191360] *

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (Penguin Books, 1989) [ISBN 0-14-012671-6] *

George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" **

Josef Pieper, *Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power* (Ignatius Press, 1992) [ISBN 978-0-89870-362-7] *

Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism* (Harcourt Brace, 1973) [ISBN 9-780156701532] *

Hannah Arendt, "Authority in the Twentieth Century" **

Eric Voegelin, *Hitler and the Germans* (University of Missouri Press, 1999) [ISBN 9-780826214669] *

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* (HarperPerennial, 1932, 2006) [ISBN 978-0-06-085052-4] *

Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, "Harvard Address" **

INTRODUCTION: TOTALITARIANISM

Alain Resnais, *Night and Fog* (film)

PART I: CONCEPT

Waldemar Gurian, "Totalitarian Religions" #

Carl J. Friedrich, "The Unique Character of Totalitarian Society" #

Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" #

Alain Besançon, "On the Difficulty of Defining the Soviet Regime" #

Pierre Hassner, "Communist Totalitarianism: The Transatlantic Vagaries of a Concept" #

Martin Malia, "From Under the Rubble, What?" #

PART II: NATURE

George Orwell, *Nineteen Eighty-Four* *

Josef Pieper, *Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power* *

George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" **

Raymond Aron, "The Future of Secular Religions" #

Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "Our Muzzled Freedom" #

Claude Lefort, "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism" #

PART III: ORIGINS

Hannah Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*, Part III: Totalitarianism *

Leo Strauss, "German Nihilism" #

Eric Voegelin, "The Origins of Totalitarianism" #

Jan Patočka, "Is Technological Civilization Decadent, and Why?" #

Václav Havel, "Politics and Conscience" #

PART IV: SEDUCTION

Leni Riefenstahl, *Triumph of the Will* (film)

Czesław Miłosz, "The Pill of Murti-Bing" #

Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "The Smatterers" #

PART V: DISSENT

Sophie Scholl: The Final Days (film)

Czeslaw Milosz, "Man, This Enemy" #

Jan Patočka, "What Charter 77 Is and What It Is Not" #

Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" #

PART VI: LESSONS

Eric Voegelin, *Hitler and the Germans* *

Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "We have ceased to see the Purpose" #

CONCLUSIONS

Aldous Huxley, *Brave New World* *

Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "Harvard Address" **

POLI 4060-4 READING AND EXAM SCHEDULE

The following schedule is a tentative plan for weekly readings, and is subject to change.

Date	Reading Assignment
Monday, Aug. 25	Introduction to the course
Wednesday, Aug. 27	APSA—NO CLASS
Friday, Aug. 29	APSA—NO CLASS
Monday, Sept. 1	LABOR DAY—NO CLASS. Rest well!
Wednesday, Sept. 3	Night and Fog (film, 32 min.) >>> Distribute Journal Entry prompt (Also: Final date for dropping courses without receiving a grade of "W," 4:30pm deadline.)
Friday, Sept. 5	Discussion/Intro concept of totalitarianism TGL, Concepts Totalitarian Religions, Waldemar Gurian (pp. 3-15) The Unique Character of Totalitarian Society, Carl J. Friedrich (pp. 16-30) * Journal Entry 1*
Monday, Sept. 8	TGL, Concepts The Power of the Powerless, Václav Havel (pp. 26-30) On the Difficulty of Defining the Soviet Regime, Alain Besançon (pp. 31-50)
Wednesday, Sept. 10	TGL, Concepts Communist Totalitarianism: The Transatlantic Vagaries of a Concept, Pierre Hassner (pp. 51-68) From Under the Rubble, What?, Martin Malia (pp. 69-94)
Friday, Sept. 12	Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (pp. 3-66) * Journal Entry 2*
Monday, Sept. 15	Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (pp. 66-107) >>>Distribute analytical essay topics
Wednesday, Sept. 17	Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (pp. 111-234)
Friday, Sept. 19	Orwell, <i>Nineteen Eighty-Four</i> (pp. 237-326) * Journal Entry 3*
Monday, Sept. 22	Piper, <i>Abuse of Language, Abuse of Power</i> (pp. 7-54)

Wednesday, Sept. 24	Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" (pp. 954-970) Class discussion: Totalitarianism and language
Friday, Sept. 26	TGL, Nature Raymond Aron, "The Future of Secular Religions" (pp. 97-123) Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "Our Muzzled Freedom" (pp. 148-155) Claude Lefort, "The Image of the Body and Totalitarianism" (pp. 177-191) * Journal Entry 4* *Analytical essay: Submit approved topic, start of class*
Monday, Sept. 29	Review for Midterm
Wednesday, Oct. 1	**Midterm, in class**
Friday, Oct. 3	FALL HOLIDAY—NO CLASS. Enjoy!
Monday, Oct. 6	Arendt, <i>Origins of Totalitarianism</i> (pp. 305-388)
Wednesday, Oct. 8	Arendt, <i>Origins of Totalitarianism</i> (pp. 389-459)
Friday, Oct. 10	Arendt, <i>Origins of Totalitarianism</i> (pp. 460-479) * Journal Entry 5*
Monday, Oct. 13	Return Midterm Exam Discuss paper
Wednesday, Oct. 15	TGL, Origins Leo Strauss, "German Nihilism" (pp. 219-240) Eric Voegelin, "The Origins of Totalitarianism" (pp. 260-268) Jan Patočka, "Is Technological Civilization Decadent, and Why?" (pp. 269-289) Václav Havel, "Politics and Conscience" (pp. 290-308)
Friday, Oct. 17	Triumph of the Will (film, excerpts) * Journal Entry 6*
Monday, Oct. 20	TGL, Seduction Czeslaw Milosz, "The Pill of Murti-Bing" (pp. 329-345) Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "The Smatterers" (pp. 346-365) Class discussion: Seduction of Totalitarianism
Wednesday, Oct. 22	<i>Sophie Scholl: The Final Days</i> (film, 120 min.)
Friday, Oct. 24	<i>Sophie Scholl: The Final Days</i> (film) *Analytical essay: Submit abstract, start of class* * Journal Entry 7*
Monday, Oct. 27	<i>Sophie Scholl: The Final Days</i> (film)
Wednesday, Oct. 29	NO CLASS
Friday, Oct. 31	NO CLASS

Monday, Nov. 3	TGL, Dissent Czeslaw Milosz, "Man, This Enemy" (pp. 433-455) Jan Patočka, "What Charter 77 Is and What It Is Not" (pp. 456-459) Václav Havel, "The Power of the Powerless" (pp. 477-508) * Journal Entry 8*
Wednesday, Nov. 5	TGL and EV, Lessons Aleksandr I. Solzhenitsyn, "We have ceased to see the Purpose" (pp. 541-552) Eric Voegelin, <i>Hitler and the Germans</i> (pp. 1-69)
Friday, Nov. 7	Eric Voegelin, <i>Hitler and the Germans</i> (pp. 70-154) (Also: Final date for dropping courses, 4:30pm deadline.)
Monday, Nov. 10	Eric Voegelin, <i>Hitler and the Germans</i> (pp. 155-212)
Wednesday, Nov. 12	Eric Voegelin, <i>Hitler and the Germans</i> (pp. 213-273) * Journal Entry 9*
Friday, Nov. 14	Catch up day
Monday, Nov. 17	Huxley, <i>Brave New World</i> (Ch. 1-5)
Wednesday, Nov. 19	Huxley, <i>Brave New World</i> (Ch. 6-13)
Friday, Nov. 21	Huxley, <i>Brave New World</i> (Ch. 14-18) **ANALYTICAL ESSAY DUE, START OF CLASS**
Monday, Nov. 24	Solzhenitsyn, "Harvard Address" (pp. 561-575) * Journal Entry 10*
Wednesday, Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING!—NO CLASS
Friday, Nov. 28	THANKSGIVING!—NO CLASS
Monday, Dec. 1	Class discussion: What is totalitarianism? * Journal Entry 11*
Wednesday, Dec. 3	Conclusions
Friday, Dec. 5	Review for Final
5pm, Wednesday, December 10	**FINAL EXAM DUE in Stubbs 216**