Social Foundations II

Class code: T03.0102.088
Freshman Programme

Instructor Details
Hagai M. Segal
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Office – Room 203 (in 4/5 Bedford Square)
Office hour – Tuesdays, from 1.05pm.

Class Details
Spring 2013
Tuesday 3pm – 6pm
Classroom – Room 104, Bedford Square.

Prerequisites
None

Class Description
The second semester of Social Foundations spans a thousand years, from the rise of Islam and the reunification of China under the Tang dynasty (in the 7th century C.E.) through the Scientific Revolution and the decline of the Mogul empire in India. This course invites students to consider great ideas that have often helped earlier peoples organize their lives—but which have also set them in conflict, sometimes with other communities, sometimes among themselves. Such ideas have sparked movements for ethical and social reform, for conquest, for the recovery of lost classics, and for religious renewal.

Vast new empires appear during this period, but so do challenges to their rule. Religious conflicts lead to civil war, and modern science emerges as a challenge to traditional beliefs. Throughout, different conceptions of human nature emerge and collide. Oppression gives rise to new movements for greater equality and individual rights, and bitter struggles for power lead to the creation of large new colonial empires, whose effects linger to the present day. In addition, the world’s different civilizations come into increasing contact through exploration and trade. Students are expected to consider these ideas and developments critically, with an eye to their philosophical, political and historical significance; and they are encouraged to explore the ways in which texts that have often been read in exclusively Western contexts yield new meaning when placed in non-Western settings.

Desired Outcomes
1. Introducing students to key thinkers, writers and texts, and schools of philosophical, social and religious thought, in the specified timeframe (see above).

2. Developing student understanding of philosophical thought and enquiry – via an examination of key sources from Western and non-Western figures and traditions – and the role of such philosophy and thought on society, politics, religion and the study of philosophy today.

3. Developing students’ skills of critical analysis and refining students’ language of critical discussion.

Assessment Components

1st essay due on 26/2/2013; Midterm will take place on 12/3/2013; 2nd essay due 16/4/2013; Full details of paper/essay requirements, and the class presentation, will be given in class.

Failure to submit or fulfil any required course component results in failure of the class.
Grade A: A-quality work is based on a range of primary and secondary sources, but it will go beyond those sources to draw its own conclusions. An A-quality essay will also be elegantly structured and very well argued and written.

Grade B: B-quality work is well organized, using a close analysis of its sources to make a useful point, backed up with some secondary material. Conversely, a B-quality paper may be as original, even adventurous, as an A-grade paper, but only merit a B because it is badly-structured or poorly written.

Grade C: C-quality work fulfils the basic conditions of the assignment. It has an argument and demonstrates a basic understanding of the subject, but this is not supported by close or wide reading. A C-quality essay may contain obvious gaps or internal contradictions and it may also be structured in a confusing way or full of grammatical errors.

Grade D: D-quality work lacks an argument and its point is unclear. It may often leap from subject to subject without a smooth transition. A D-quality essay may simply summarise material without analysis. Serious grammatical flaws or unreadability can result in a D being awarded to a paper that would otherwise have earned a C.

Grade F: An F is only awarded to a paper which barely tries to tackle its subject. It will have no argument and show little acquaintance with the relevant texts. Any paper which is plagiarized, incomprehensible or incomplete will earn an F.

NYU in London uses the following scale of numerical equivalents to letter grades:

- A=94-100
- A-=90-93
- B+=87-89
- B=84-86
- B-=80-83
- C+=77-79
- C=74-76
- C-=70-73
- D+=67-69
- D=65-66
- F=below 65

Where no specific numerical equivalent is assigned to a letter grade by the class teacher, the mid point of the range will be used in calculating the final class grade (except in the A range, where 95.5 will be used).

NYU in London aims to have grading standards and results in all its courses similar to those that prevail at Washington Square.

In addition, Stern School of Business classes adhere to the following Stern grading guidelines:

- There should be no more than
  - 25-35% A's - awarded for excellent work
  - 50-70% B's - awarded for good or very good work
  - 5-15% C's or below - awarded for adequate or below work

A guideline is not a curve. A guideline is just that - it gives an ideal benchmark for the distribution of grades towards which we work.
NYUL has a strict policy about course attendance. **No unexcused absences are permitted.** While students should contact their class teachers to catch up on missed work, you should **NOT** approach them for excused absences.

Excused absences will usually only be considered for serious, unavoidable reasons such as personal ill-health or illness in the immediate family. Trivial or non-essential reasons for absence will not be considered.

Excused absences can only be considered if they are reported in accordance with guidelines which follow, and can only be obtained from the appropriate member of NYUL’s staff.

**Please note that you will need to ensure that no make-up classes – or required excursions - have been organised before making any travel plans for the semester.** See also section 11.1 - Make up days.

**Absence reporting for an absence due to illness**

1. On the first day of absence due to illness you should report the details of your symptoms by e-mailing absences@nyu.ac.uk including details of: class(es) missed; professor; class time; and whether any work was due including exams. Or call free (from landline) 0800 316 0469 (option 2) to report your absences on the phone.

2. Generally a doctor’s note will be required to ensure you have sought treatment for the illness. Contact the Gower Street Health Centre on 0207 636 7628 to make an appointment, or use HTH general practitioners if you cannot get an appointment expediently at Gower Street.

3. At the end of your period of absence, you will need to complete an absence form online at http://bit.ly/NuCl5K. You will need to log in to NYU Home to access the form.

4. Finally you must arrange an appointment to speak to Nigel Freeman or Donna Drummond-Smart on your first day back at class. You must have completed the absence form before making your appointment.

Supporting documentation relating to absences must be submitted within one week of your return to class.

**Absence requests for non-illness reasons**

Absence requests for non-illness reasons must be discussed with the Academic Office prior to the date(s) in question – no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retrospectively. Please come in and see us in Room 308, 6 Bedford Square, or e-mail us at academics@nyu.ac.uk.

**Further information regarding absences**

Each unexcused absence will be penalized by deducting 3% from the student’s final course mark. Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

Unexcused absences from exams are not permitted and will result in failure of the exam. If you are granted an excused absence from an examination (with authorisation, as above), your lecturer will decide how you will make-up the assessment component, if at all (by make-up examination, extra coursework, viva voce (oral examination), or an increased weighting on an alternate assessment component, etc.).

NYUL also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. If timely attendance becomes a problem it is the prerogative of each instructor to deduct a mark or marks from the final grade of each late arrival and each early departure.

Please note that for classes involving a **field trip or other external visit**, transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and timely fashion.

Please refer to the Student Handbook for full details of the policies relating to attendance. A copy is in your apartment and has been shared with you on Google Docs.
Late Submission of Work

Written work due in class must be submitted during the class time to the professor. Late work should be submitted in person to a member of NYU London staff in the Academic Office (Room 308, 6 Bedford Square) during office hours (Mon – Fri, 10:30 – 17:30). Please also send an electronic copy to academics@nyu.ac.uk for submission to Turnitin.

Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

Written work submitted more than 5 weekdays after the submission date without an agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

Please note end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism: the presentation of another piece of work or words, ideas, judgements, images or data, in whole or in part, as though they were originally created by you for the assignment, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

Please refer to the Student Handbook for full details of the plagiarism policy.

All students must submit an electronic copy of each piece of their written work to www.turnitin.com and hand in a printed copy with the digital receipt to their professor. Late submission of work rules apply to both the paper and electronic submission and failure to submit either copy of your work will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the class.

Electronic Submission

The Turnitin database will be searched for the purpose of comparison with other students’ work or with other pre-existing writing or publications, and other academic institutions may also search it.

In order for you to be able to submit your work onto the Turnitin website, you will need to set up an account:

1) Go onto the Turnitin website http://www.turnitin.com
2) Click ‘Create Account’ in the top right hand corner
3) Select user type of ‘student’
4) Enter your class ID & Turnitin class enrolment password (these will be e-mailed to you after the drop/add period, or contact academics@nyu.ac.uk if you have misplaced these).
5) Follow the online instructions to create your profile.

To submit your work for class, you will then need to:

1) Log in to the Turnitin website
2) Enter your class by clicking on the class name
3) Next to the piece of work you are submitting (please confirm the due date), click on the ‘submit’ icon
4) Enter the title of your piece of work
5) Browse for the file to upload from wherever you have saved it (USB drive, etc.), please ensure your work is in Word or PDF format, and click ‘submit’
6) Click ‘yes, submit’ to confirm you have selected the correct paper (or ‘no, go back’ to retry)
7) You will then have submitted your essay onto the Turnitin website.
8) Please print your digital receipt and attach this to the hard copy of your paper before you submit it to your professor (this digital receipt appears on the web site, immediately after you submit your paper and is also sent to your e-mail address). Please also note that when a paper is submitted to Turnitin all formatting, images, graphics, graphs, charts, and drawings are removed from the paper so that the program can read it accurately. Please do not print the paper in this form to submit to your lecturers, as it is obviously pretty difficult to read! You can still access the exact file you uploaded by clicking on the ‘file’ icon in the ‘content’ column.

Please also see the Late Submission of Work policy, above.

Students must retain an electronic copy of their work for one month after their grades are posted online on Albert and must supply an electronic copy of their work if requested to do so by NYU in London. Not submitting a copy of a piece of work upon request will result in automatic failure in the assignment and possible failure in the
class. NYU in London may submit in an electronic form the work of any student to a database for use in the detection of plagiarism, without further prior notification to the student.

Penalties for confirmed cases of plagiarism are set out in the Student Handbook.

Required Text(s)


All the above are easily purchased through NYU-London’s recommended bookshop.

Further Reading (recommended). Copies in NYU-London’s recommended bookshop

You are not required to purchase these texts, but they are also very useful resources if you do wish to consult other sources as you prepare for classes, and for the purpose of reference/quotation for your papers/essays.


(New and quality used editions are also easily and cheaply purchased (often new for below the above stated prices) on online book retailers [including Amazon.com and Amazon.co.uk], though we advise that you do purchase new or nearly-new copies.

Additional Requirement(s)

Readings and Discussion: In each session we will examine and discuss primary documents and secondary works. Active participation is both encouraged and expected, for learning is a collaborative endeavor. Participation is however not about who says the most or who is most forceful, but rather is about dialogue, meaningful questioning and enquiry, developing knowledge, and listening and responding to the comments and opinions of others.

Week to week readings: Each week a list of ‘Topics For Class Discussion’ will be provided for the following week. These should be taken into consideration when undertaking the required reading/preparing for the following class, for these will form the basis of class discussion. It is essential that the required reading is also undertaken as advised.

Communications: You will receive regular important communication regarding the course via your NYU e-mail account. Please ensure you thus check your e-mail on at least a weekly basis.

Session 1
29/1/2013

Introduction to SFII
Islam: Koran and Hadith

Required Reading –
To be provided in class in by the Professor.
Islam (Continued) – Theology and Philosophy: al-Farabi and Averroes

Required Reading –
Europe: A History – Origo: The Birth Of Europe – P. 251 to 258
Plus readings provided in class in Week 1 by the Professor.

Session 3
12/2/2013

VIDEO CONFERENCE 1 – ISLAM

Thomas Aquinas

Required Reading –
Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), Biography
Whether God exists? (Excerpt)
SUMMA THEOLOGIAE (Excerpt)
‘CHESTERSTON, The Runaway Abbot’ article

Session 4
19/2/2013

Chaucer

Required Reading –
Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales - Summoner’s and Friar’s Tales
Summoner’s and Friar’s Tales Summary sheets
Chronology of Geoffrey Chaucer's life and times

Session 5
26/2/2013

Renaissance – Machiavelli

Required Reading –
The Prince - Chapters I to VII, and Chapters XVIII to XX.
Machiavelli – Biography

Session 6
05/3/2013

VIDEO CONFERENCE 2 – AQUINAS

Renaissance – Art, Architecture, Adventure

Required Reading –
Internet Encyclopaedia of Philosophy - The Renaissance
Renaissance – A Christian perspective
PBS - Art of the Renaissance
Renaissance explorers

Session 7
12/3/2013

Midterm Exam

The Reformation – Luther and Calvin

Required Reading –
Calvin, The Necessity of Reforming the Church (1543), selected portions.
Martin Luther (1483-1546): Address To The Nobility of the German Nation, 1520. (Excerpts)
1662 Common Book of prayer: Preface and Concerning the Service of the Church.
Session 8
19/3/2013

Hinduism - The Recognition of Sakuntala

Required Reading –
Text of The Recognition of Sakuntala
The Mahabharata – Introduction
Shakuntala – Introduction
Kalidasa (Indian author) - Britannica Online Encyclopedia

Session 9
09/4/2013

Enlightenment / Age of Reason: Rationalism I – Descartes

Required Reading –
René Descartes, Biography.
Meditations, Descarte - Excerpts
‘Europe and Enlightenment, René Descartes’ article
Theory of Knowledge : Rationalism
Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy - Rationalism vs. Empiricism

Session 10
16/4/2013

VIDEO CONFERENCE 3 – Renaissance

Enlightenment / Age of Reason: Rationalism II – Spinoza

Required Reading (and listening!) –
Baruch Spinoza, Biography.
Spinoza, The Ethics (Selected Readings)
BBC Radio 4: In Our Time – Spinoza: http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0079ps2

Session 11
23/4/2013

Enlightenment / Age of Reason: Absolutism, Empiricism + the Social Contract – Hobbes + Locke

Required Reading –
Hobbes's Moral and Political Philosophy
John Locke, Two Treatises of Government, 1690, extracts

Session 12
30/4/2013

VIDEO CONFERENCE 4  – Hinduism: Sakuntala + Mahabarata

Africa - Sundiata

Required Reading –
Epic of Sundiata, excerpts.
Introduction to Sundiata Keita and the Epic of Sundiata.
Medieval Warfare Between Ghana + Mali Empires - The Mali Empire from Sundiata Keita to Mansa Musa

Session 13
08/5/2013

The Scientific Revolution

Required Reading –
The European Enlightenment –The Scientific Revolution
Nicolaus Copernicus – Bio.
Galileo – Bio.
Sir Isaac Newton – Bio.
Conclusion and Revision session.

Final examination

Classroom Etiquette

Students are expected to remain in class for the duration of the class.

Toilet breaks should be taken before or after class or during class breaks.

Food & drink, including gum, are not to be consumed in class.

Mobile phones should be set on silent and should not be used in class except for emergencies.

Laptops are only to be used with the express permission of the teacher.

Please kindly dispose of rubbish in the bins provided.

Required Co-curricular Activities