



## *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

### *Syllabus*

## *The Liberal Predicament - 56893*

*Last update 25-10-2017*

*HU Credits: 2*

*Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)*

*Responsible Department: political science*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: Yearly*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Prof David Ricci*

*Coordinator Email: [msricci@mscc.huji.ac.il](mailto:msricci@mscc.huji.ac.il)*

*Coordinator Office Hours: By appointment – via 02-5337578*

*Teaching Staff:*

---

Prof David Ricci

Course/Module description:

*This is a tutorial course of guided readings. The requirements are as follows: The class will meet every two weeks (first and second semesters) to conduct a discussion centered on the bibliography items assigned for that meeting. Everyone will read all of the required materials in order to participate actively in those discussions. There will be no examinations. There will be no papers. There will be no numerical grades, but students will receive either "pass" or "fail" based on active participation.*

Course/Module aims:

*General education about the history of political thought*

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Upon completing this course, students will understand how telling or not telling stories is linked to vital political realities such as elections and governing.*

Attendance requirements(%):

*Attendance is absolutely required. Failure to attend and participate in discussions will result in failure to receive credit for the course.*

*Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: This course will consist of group discussions, every two weeks, based on required readings for each discussion.*

Course/Module Content:

*Topics and Readings*

*I. The power of stories.*

- 1. Alfred Bester, "Disappearing Act" (1964), pp. 13-31.*
- 2. The Oresteian Trilogy (458 B.C.), part 3, "The Eumenides," 38 pages.*

*II. The story of the divine right of kings.*

- 1. Jacques-Benigne Bossuet (1670s), "The Divine Right of Kings," 2 pages.*
- 2. Robert Filmer, Patriarcha (1680), 43 pages.*
- 3. Locke, Second Treatise on Government (1689), pp. 1-41.*

*III. The first political science approach to stories.*

- 1. Rogers Smith, Stories of Peoplehood (2003), pp. 19-71.*

*IV. The second political science approach to stories.*

- 
2. Frederick Mayer, *Narrative Politics* (2014), pp. 1-49.
- V. The concept of “alpha” stories.
1. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories: The Liberal Predicament* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. iii-29.
- VI. American stories of natural rights and humanism.
1. “The Declaration of Independence” (1776)
2. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), pp. 3-31.
3. *The Federalist*, selections (1788)
4. Abraham Lincoln, “The Gettysburg Address” (1863)
5. William Jennings Bryan, “The Cross of Gold” speech (1896)
- VII. Early pragmatism.
1. Charles Peirce, “The Fixation of Belief” (1886), pp. 7-25.
2. William James, “What is Pragmatism?” (1907), pp. 93-111.
- VIII. Later pragmatism.
1. E. Purcell, *The Crisis of Democratic Theory*, pp. 15-30, 179-196.
2. John Dewey, *Individualism Old and New* (1930), pp. 26-49.
3. Seymour Martin Lipset, “The End of Ideology” (1960), pp. 69-86.
- IX. Pragmatic liberalism.
1. Wolff, *The Future of Liberalism* (2010), pp. 250-288.
2. Shklar, “The Liberalism of Fear (1989),” pp. 21-38.
- X. Obama as a “philosophical pragmatist.”
1. James Kloppenberg, *Reading Obama*, (2011), pp. 151-193.
2. Charles Kesler, *I am the Change: Barack Obama and the Crisis of Liberalism* (2012), pp. 177-207, 227-237.
- XI. The list syndrome.
1. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, pp. 132-154.
- XII. The Great Retreat.
1. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, pp. 155-185.
2. Lorenzo Fioramonti, *Gross Domestic Problem*, pp. 1-16 (required); pp. 17-49 (optional).
3. Manfred Steger and Ravi Roy, *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*, pp. 1-20.
- XIII. What should liberals do about the story-telling gap?
1. Wolfe, *The Future of Liberalism*, pp. 3-29.
2. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, pp. 186-208.
- XIV. What the Democrats did in 2016.
1. “Bernie Sanders on Democratic Socialism in the United States” (speech by Sanders at Georgetown University, November 19, 2015), 16 pages. [http://inthesetimes.com/article/18623/bernie\\_sanders\\_democratic\\_socialism\\_georgetown\\_speech](http://inthesetimes.com/article/18623/bernie_sanders_democratic_socialism_georgetown_speech)
2. Paul Starr, “What Is Hillary Clinton’s Agenda?” (*The American Prospect*, June 20, 2016), 15 pages. <http://prospect.org/article/what-hillary-clinton%E2%80%99s-agenda>

---

3. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, "Postscript," pp. 209-216.

Required Reading:

Topics and Readings

I. The power of stories.

1. Alfred Bester, "Disappearing Act" (1964), pp. 13-31.
2. The Oresteian Trilogy (458 B.C.), part 3, "The Eumenides," 38 pages.

II. The story of the divine right of kings.

1. Jacques-Benigne Bossuet (1670s), "The Divine Right of Kings," 2 pages.
2. Robert Filmer, *Patriarcha* (1680), 43 pages.
3. Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (1689), pp. 1-41.

III. The first political science approach to stories.

1. Rogers Smith, *Stories of Peoplehood* (2003), pp. 19-71.

IV. The second political science approach to stories.

2. Frederick Mayer, *Narrative Politics* (2014), pp. 1-49.

V. The concept of "alpha" stories.

1. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories: The Liberal Predicament* (Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. iii-29.

VI. American stories of natural rights and humanism.

1. "The Declaration of Independence" (1776)
2. Thomas Paine, *Common Sense* (1776), pp. 3-31.
3. *The Federalist*, selections (1788)
4. Abraham Lincoln, "The Gettysburg Address" (1863)
5. William Jennings Bryan, "The Cross of Gold" speech (1896)

VII. Early pragmatism.

1. Charles Peirce, "The Fixation of Belief" (1886), pp. 7-25.
2. William James, "What is Pragmatism?" (1907), pp. 93-111.

VIII. Later pragmatism.

1. E. Purcell, *The Crisis of Democratic Theory*, pp. 15-30, 179-196.
2. John Dewey, *Individualism Old and New* (1930), pp. 26-49.
3. Seymour Martin Lipset, "The End of Ideology" (1960), pp. 69-86.

IX. Pragmatic liberalism.

1. Wolff, *The Future of Liberalism* (2010), pp. 250-288.
2. Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear (1989)," pp. 21-38.

X. Obama as a "philosophical pragmatist."

1. James Kloppenberg, *Reading Obama*, (2011), pp. 151-193.
2. Charles Kesler, *I am the Change: Barack Obama and the Crisis of Liberalism* (2012), pp. 177-207, 227-237.

XI. The list syndrome.

1. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, pp. 132-154.

---

*XII. The Great Retreat.*

1. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, pp. 155-185.
2. Lorenzo Fioramonti, *Gross Domestic Problem*, pp. 1-16 (required); pp. 17-49 (optional).
3. Manfred Steger and Ravi Roy, *Neoliberalism: A Very Short Introduction*, pp. 1-20.

*XIII. What should liberals do about the story-telling gap?*

1. Wolfe, *The Future of Liberalism*, pp. 3-29.
2. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, pp. 186-208.

*XIV. What the Democrats did in 2016.*

1. "Bernie Sanders on Democratic Socialism in the United States" (speech by Sanders at Georgetown University, November 19, 2015), 16 pages. [http://inthesetimes.com/article/18623/bernie\\_sanders\\_democratic\\_socialism\\_georgetown\\_speech](http://inthesetimes.com/article/18623/bernie_sanders_democratic_socialism_georgetown_speech)
2. Paul Starr, "What Is Hillary Clinton's Agenda?" (*The American Prospect*, June 20, 2016), 15 pages. <http://prospect.org/article/what-hillary-clinton%E2%80%99s-agenda>
3. Ricci, *Politics Without Stories*, "Postscript," pp. 209-216.

*Additional Reading Material:*

None

*Course/Module evaluation:*

End of year written/oral examination 0 %  
Presentation 0 %  
Participation in Tutorials 100 %  
Project work 0 %  
Assignments 0 %  
Reports 0 %  
Research project 0 %  
Quizzes 0 %  
Other 0 %

*Additional information:*

Teacher will speak Hebrew or English when necessary. Students will chose to speak during discussions in English or Hebrew