Course Description: In this course, we will examine the most influential political theories about social contract, historically, thematically, comparatively, and critically.


Required Textbook: Joseph Losco and Leonard Williams, eds., Political Theory, St. Martin's.

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction
Reading assignment: Losco and Williams, pp. 1-7

Weeks 2-3 (no class Friday, April 13): Hobbes (1588-1679)
Reading assignment: Losco and Williams, pp. 48-85

Short paper due Friday, April 20

Weeks 4-5: Locke (1632-1704)
Reading assignment: Losco and Williams, pp. 86-139

Weeks 6-7 (no class on May 18): Rousseau (1712-1778)
Reading assignment: Losco and Williams, pp. 140-196

Midterm: Wednesday, May 16

Weeks 8-9 (no class on May 28): Rawls (1921-2002)
Reading assignment: Losco and Williams, pp. 140-196

Week 10: Contemporary theories: Nozick and Gauthier
Reading assignment: Handout

Final paper due on Wednesday, June 13, between 11:30 and 12:00, in our classroom