

Introduction to Political Thought
PLSC 213, Section 2
Fall 2013
Tuesday-Thursday 9:30-10:45am
306 Pray-Harrold Hall

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REQUIRED TEXTS:

Aristotle, *The Politics*, translated by Carnes Lord, Second Edition, University of Chicago Press

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated by Harvey Mansfield, Second Edition, University of Chicago Press

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, edited by Edwin Curley, Hackett

John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government*, edited by Peter Laslett, Cambridge

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, translated by Victor Gourevitch, Cambridge

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract and Other Later Political Writings*, translated by Victor Gourevitch, Cambridge

OVERVIEW: This course is designed to introduce students to political philosophy through a reading of classic works in the Western tradition of political thought. We will address questions such as: What is politics? What is a constitution? What makes a political order just? Is there a best regime? What is the place of the individual in society?

CLASS STRUCTURE: This class will have a lecture format. Primarily, we will spend class time discussing the readings. It is therefore imperative that you come to class having done the reading. If you have not done the reading, the lecture will be less useful for you. Doing the reading is necessary for another reason: classes like this are better if students come to them with questions and concerns about the material. Political philosophy is about principled discussion and debate. We will all get more out of the class if everyone comes prepared to engage in the discussion.

Be sure to give yourself enough time to complete the readings. These are difficult, complicated books and what an author means will not always be immediately clear. It is important that you take time to read these works carefully, since you will be evaluated primarily on your understanding of these texts.

ASSIGNMENTS: Grades in this class will be determined based on the following:

- (1) **Ten short, in-class quizzes** testing your understanding of the reading. These will be given randomly throughout the semester to encourage attendance and continued reading throughout the semester. Together, these quizzes are worth **10% of your final grade**.
- (2) **Two midterm exams** consisting of both short answer and longer essay questions. These exams will be given in class on **Thursday 10/17 and Tuesday 11/19**. Together, these exams are worth **50% of your final grade**.
- (3) **One final exam** consisting of short answer and longer essay questions to be given on **Tuesday 12/17 from 9:00-10:30am**. This exam will be worth **40% of your final grade**.

GRADING SCALE:

A	96-100	4
A-	91-95	3.7
B+	85-90	3.3
B	80-84	3
B-	76-79	2.7
C+	72-75	2.3
C	68-71	2
C-	64-68	1.7
D+	60-63	1.3
D	55-59	1
D-	50-54	0.7
F	<50	0

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY: Plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated. This includes using direct quotes or close paraphrases without attribution. Use of Wikipedia is unacceptable, even if cited. Failure to comply with the academic honesty policy will result in a failing grade on the assignment in question as well as referral to appropriate university authorities for disciplinary action.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: Students with disabilities should contact the Disability Resource Center to establish reasonable accommodations. For an appointment with a disability specialist, visit <http://www.emich.edu/drc/>.

SCHEDULE:

Th 9/5	Introduction
Tu 9/10	Aristotle, Politics I
Th 9/12	Aristotle, Politics I (cont.)
Tu 9/17	Aristotle, Politics III
Th 9/19	Aristotle, Politics III (cont.)
Tu 9/24	Aristotle, Politics VII
Th 9/26	Aristotle, Politics VIII
Tu 10/1	Machiavelli, Prince I-V
Th 10/3	Machiavelli, Prince VI-XI
Tu 10/8	Machiavelli, Prince XII-XV
Th 10/10	Machiavelli, Prince XV-XIX
Tu 10/15	Machiavelli, Prince XX-XXVI
Th 10/17	Exam 1
Tu 10/22	Hobbes, Leviathan X-XIII
Th 10/24	Hobbes, Leviathan XIV-XVII
Tu 10/29	Hobbes, Leviathan XVIII-XXI, XXIV, XXIX
Th 10/31	Locke, Second Treatise I-V
Tu 11/5	Locke, Second Treatise VI-IX
Th 11/7	Locke, Second Treatise X-XIII
Tu 11/12	Locke, Second Treatise XIV-XVI
Th 11/14	Locke, Second Treatise, XVII-XIX
Tu 11/19	Exam 2
Th 11/21	Rousseau, Second Discourse
Tu 11/26	Rousseau, Second Discourse (cont.)
Th 11/28	Thanksgiving

Tu 12/3	Rousseau, Social Contract I
Th 12/5	Rousseau, Social Contract II
Tu 12/10	Rousseau, Social Contract III
Th 12/12	Rousseau, Social Contract IV
Tu 12/17	Final Exam 9-10:30am