

POLS 3000

Fall 2017
MWF 9:05-9:55 a.m
144 Park Hall

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Office Hours: Th 11-Noon (and MWF by appointment)

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY

“Political theory [is] a kind of meeting ground of . . . philosophers who turned to politics out of despair about the unbearable of certain historical experiences. Such was the case of Plato. . . . And we find the statesmen and great men of action who again out of despair turn to philosophy. . . . Such was the case of Machiavelli. . . . And we find finally the philosopher who out of despair of philosophy turns to politics. This is the case of Marx . . . The result in all cases is political theory.”

—*Hannah Arendt*

This course will examine some of the foundational texts in the Western tradition of political thought. The course begins with the ancient Greeks (Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle) and their accounts of political community, justice, ruling, and citizenship. The course will then engage Christian political thought (in the context of the Roman Empire) through an examination of the political theory of St. Augustine, before turning to the study of Augustine’s neo-pagan counterpart in the c16th Italian Renaissance, Niccolò Machiavelli. The course then moves on to an examination of modern political thought by engaging Karl Marx (on capitalism and communism) and John Stuart Mill (on liberty and the subjection of women). The final part of the course will focus on the contemporary issue of truth and lying in politics through an examination of Hannah Arendt’s analysis of the Pentagon Papers and George Orwell’s novel about totalitarian society. Throughout this course two recurrent questions will be why do we have politics at all? and how do these thinkers teach us to think about politics?

Over the course of the semester students will:

1. Gain knowledge of the key terms, concepts, theories, methods, and principles in the works of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Machiavelli, Marx, Mill, Arendt, and Orwell.
2. Learn how to interpret and comprehend the problems, concepts, and arguments which have shaped the Western tradition of political thought.
3. Consider how the problems, concepts, and arguments treated might be of significance today and challenge our own way of thinking about politics.
4. Develop analytical skills in writing, the capacity to think conceptually, the ability to read carefully and critically, and your own voice as a political theorist.

TEXTS REQUIRED FOR PURCHASE

Rent or buy these books, new or used, at the bookstore or on Amazon.com, but keep in mind that you need to be quite literally on the same page of the text with me and your classmates.

Therefore, you must purchase only these specific editions; no other editions, publishers, or translations will be approved for this course. I also expect you to quote and cite from these editions in your writing assignments.

- Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, 3rd edition, trans. G. M. A. Grube (Hackett)
- Plato, *Republic*, 2nd edition, trans., G. M. A. Grube, rev. C. D. C. Reeve (Hackett)
- Aristotle, *Politics*, a new translation by C. D. C. Reeve (Hackett)
- St. Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Henry Bettenson (Penguin Classics)
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Peter Constantine (Modern Library)
- Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, ed. Jeffrey C. Isaac, Rethinking the Western Tradition (Yale)
- J. S. Mill, *On Liberty and other writings*, ed. Stefan Collini (Cambridge)
- Orwell, *1984* (Signet Classics)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

Course Format: This is a text-based reading, lecture, discussion, and writing course. Class time will be a mixture of lecture and small- and large-group writing and discussion activities. I expect you to come to class on time, regularly, and to have read the assigned material for each session. Apart from the in-class quizzes listed below, none of the in-class writing activities will be graded. There will be no surprise quizzes or assignments either.

Reading: It is essential to keep up with the reading. The reading is to be completed by the date listed on the syllabus. I've tried to keep the reading to a minimum. It should take you about 2 hours to do the assigned reading for each session. **Always bring your assigned reading to class** because we will frequently refer to it in class.

Assignments and Grading: Your final grade will be based on three in-class quizzes, two papers, and my impression of your overall effort and progress. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. I will hand out the paper topics about two weeks before they are due. Well-written papers should reflect what you have learned in class as well as your own independent efforts to understand the readings. All papers must be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, with margins no more than one inch. Remember to give your paper a title, number the pages, and put your name on it. ****I do not accept papers by email. You must turn in a hard copy to me.**** Late papers will be penalized.

Grades will be assigned by points and weighted as follows:

10%: Effort (based on my impression of whether you regularly did the reading, came to class prepared, and made progress over the semester)

15%: in-class quiz on Plato (Sept. 8)

15%: in-class quiz on Aristotle (Sept. 29)

15%: in-class quiz on Mill (Nov. 10)

20%: Midterm paper on Augustine and Machiavelli (4-6 pages, due Oct. 30)

25%: Final paper (5-7 pages, due Dec. 7)

Extra Credit: You can earn up to 10 extra credit points by attending UGA's production of Orwell's *Animal Farm* (Oct. 4-8 at the Seney-Stovall chapel) and writing up a short (2-3 pp.) review of the performance from the perspective of Plato, Aristotle, or Augustine. Due Oct. 11.

Attendance: My attendance policy is that I expect you to come to class regularly. If you know ahead of time that you will be absent from a class I'd appreciate an email in advance explaining your reason. If you choose to skip classes you will struggle to do well on the in-class quizzes which cover material discussed in class. If you miss several classes without a valid excuse you will not get the 10 effort points that are worth 10% of your final grade.

Electronic Etiquette Policy: The classroom is a learning environment first and foremost, and everyone is responsible for making certain that the classroom remains an environment conducive to learning. It must be kept free from distractions and disruptions by laptops, cell phones, and other electronic modes of communication and entertainment. Therefore, laptop use during class is banned and all phones should be put away. Studies show that note-taking pen-and-paper students perform better on quizzes and other assessments of learning than students who take notes on a laptop.

Academic Honesty: The University's Academic Honesty Policy ("A Culture of Honesty," available at <http://honesty.uga.edu/index.html>) defines scholastic honesty as "the performance of all academic work without cheating, lying, stealing, or receiving assistance from any other person or using any source of information not appropriately authorized or attribute." Academic honesty is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, will result in disciplinary action.

Cheating and Plagiarism: If I find out that you cheated on a quiz or plagiarized a piece of written work, you will immediately fail that assignment and your case will be handed on to a university committee.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

Aug. 14 – Syllabus day.

Aug. 16 – Get to know each other day.

Socrates

“...the unexamined life is not worth living for man” (Apology, 38A, p. 39)

Aug. 18 – *Apology* (pp. 21-42)

Aug. 21 – *Republic*, Bk. I (pp. 1-31)

Plato

“Until philosophers rule as kings in cities or those who are now called kings and leading men genuinely and adequately philosophize, that is, until political power and philosophy entirely coincide, while the many natures who at present pursue either one exclusively are forcibly prevented from doing so, cities will have no rest from evils, Glaucon, nor, I think, will the human race” (Republic, 473C-D, p. 148).

Aug. 23 – *Republic*, Bk. II (pp. 32-59)

In-class video: Myles Burnyeat and Bryan Magee on Plato (beginning to 29:12)

Aug. 25 – *Republic*, Bk. III (pp. 60-93)

Aug. 28 – *Republic*, Bk. IV (pp. 94-121)

Aug. 30 – *Republic*, Bk. V (pp. 122-156)

Sept. 1 – *Republic*, Bk. VI (pp. 157-185)

Sept. 4 – Labor Day. No Class.

Sept. 6 – *Republic*, Bk. VII (pp. 186-212)

Sept. 8 – No reading assignment. In-class quiz on Plato.

Aristotle

“...it is evident that a city is among the things that exist by nature, that a human is by nature a political animal, and that anyone who is without a city, not by luck but by nature, is either a wretch or else better than human, and, like the one Homer condemns, he is ‘clanless, lawless, and homeless’” (Politics, 1253a1-5, p. 4).

Sept. 11 – *Politics*, Bk. I (pp. 2-21)

Sept. 13 – *Politics*, Bk. II (pp. 22-51)

Sept. 15 – No reading assignment.

Sept. 18 – *Politics*, Bk. III (pp. 52-82)

Sept. 20 – *Politics*, Bk. IV (pp. 83-110)

Sept. 22 – No reading assignment.

Sept. 25 – *Politics*, Bk. V (pp. 111-143)

Sept. 27 – *Politics*, Bk. VI (pp. 144-157).

Sept. 29 – No reading assignment. In-class quiz on Aristotle.

St. Augustine

*“Remove justice, and what are kingdoms but gangs of criminals on a large scale?
What are criminal gangs but petty kingdoms?” (City of God, IV.4, p. 139).*

Oct. 2 – Start on the reading for Oct. 4

Oct. 4 – *City of God*, Bk. I (*all*, but especially the Preface and chs. 1-2, 5, 7-10, 13, 16-21, 27-28, 30-32, 35)

—MIDTERM OCTOBER 5—

Oct. 6 – *City of God*, Bk. II (chs. 1-3, 7-8, 13-14, 19-21, 29)

Oct. 9 – *City of God*, Bk. III (chs. 9-14, 20); Bk. IV (chs. 1-4, 12, 15, 28); Bk. V (chs. 1-2, 8-19, 22-24)

Oct. 11 – *City of God*, Bk. XI (chs. 1, 9, 13, 22-23, 28); Bk. XII (chs. 1, 6-9, 13, 16, 26, 28); Bk. XIV (chs. 1-2, 7, 9-15, 28); Bk. XV (chs. 1-2, 4, 21); Bk. XXII (ch. 22)

Oct. 13 – *City of God*, Bk. XVIII (chs. 1-2, 13-14); Bk. XIX (*all*, but especially chs. 1-8, 11-17, 21, 24, 26-27)

In-class video: Robert Dodaro, Augustine on the Formation of the Statesman’s Ethical Conscience (26:37-58:38)

Machiavelli

“As my intention is to write something useful for discerning minds, I find it more fitting to seek the truth of the matter rather than imaginary conceptions. Many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or heard of, because how one lives and how one ought to live are so far apart that he who spurns what is actually done for what ought to be done will achieve ruin rather than his own preservation” (*The Prince*, ch. 15, p. 72).

Oct. 16 - *The Prince*, Dedicatory Letter and chs. 1-11 (pp. 3-55).

****Handout Midterm Paper Assignment on St. Augustine and Machiavelli.****

Oct. 18 - *The Prince*, chs. 12-19 (pp. 56-96)

—WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE OCTOBER 19—

Oct. 20 - *The Prince*, chs. 20-26 (pp. 97-123)

In-class video: Maurizio Viroli on the Meaning of *The Prince* (beginning – 22:55)

Karl Marx

“Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another” (*Manifesto of the Communist Party*, p. 92).

Oct. 23 – *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, parts I and II (pp. 73-92)

In-class video: BBC Masters of Money - Karl Marx (beginning to 45:12)

Oct. 25 – *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, parts III and IV (92-102)

Oct. 27 – Fall Break. No Class.

Oct. 30 – ****Midterm Paper due in class****. No reading assignment. Finish up Marx.

J. S. Mill

“If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion, and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind” (*On Liberty*, p. 20).

Nov. 1 – No reading assignment.

Nov. 3 – *On Liberty*, ch. 1 (pp. 5-18)

Nov. 6 – *On Liberty*, ch. 2 (pp. 19-55)

Nov. 8 – *On Liberty*, ch. 3 (pp. 56-74)

Nov. 10 – *On Liberty*, ch. 4 (pp. 75-93). In-class quiz on Mill.

Nov. 13 – *The Subjection of Women*, chs. 1-2 (pp. 119-165)

Nov. 15 – *The Subjection of Women*, ch. 3 (pp. 166-194)

Nov. 17 – *The Subjection of Women*, ch. 4 (pp. 195-217)

Nov. 20-24 – Thanksgiving Break. No Class.

Hannah Arendt

“It may be natural for elected officeholders—who owe so much, or believe they owe so much, to their campaign managers—to think that manipulation is the ruler of the people’s minds and hence the true ruler of the world” (*Lying in Politics*, p. 18).

Nov. 27 – *Lying in Politics*, parts I and II (pp. 1-23)

Nov. 29 – *Lying in Politics*, parts III, IV, and V (pp. 24-47).

Handout Final Paper Assignment.

George Orwell

“We do not merely destroy our enemies; we change them” (*1984*, p. 209).

Dec. 1 – *1984* (start reading)

Dec. 4 – *1984* (continue reading)

Dec. 5 – *1984* (finish)

Classes End

Dec. 6 – Reading Day.

Dec. 7-13 – Final Exams. ****Final Paper due****

Dec. 18 – Grades Due at 5 p.m.