

Introduction to Political Theory

POLI 2060
Classroom: 23 Allen
Class Days: Monday-Wednesday-Friday
Class Time: 3:30 – 4:20

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Office hours: 9-12 TH & F
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Course Description and Objectives

The purpose of this course is to introduce undergraduates to Western political thought. The intent is not only to satisfy certain historical curiosities, but to investigate the timeless and enduring questions of political philosophy from antiquity to the present. The thinkers we study are participants in the timeless quest to distinguish truth and error and to become lovers of wisdom. With their insights, we hope to participate in this quest as well.

This course exposes students to great texts in Western political philosophy. We will raise questions concerning justice; the role of virtue, ethics, and piety in political order; the best regime; and many other issues. We will have class discussions and disagreement. In arguing for one's position or against another's, students must rely on philosophical argumentation, not obvious fallacies (e.g., *ad hominem* and *tu quoque* fallacies). Respecting one another is a basic duty in the academic context.

As a social science general education elective, this course is designed to acquaint you with various views of human nature, as well as how human beings organize themselves into political societies, real and imagined. You will be expected to achieve an understanding of factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference. All general education courses are designed to enhance the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that facilitate the improvement of the civic life of communities.

Required Books

The following books are available at the LSU bookstore. You must obtain a copy of these books.

Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, trans. Allan Bloom, 2nd Edition [ISBN-13: 978-0465094080]

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins [ISBN: 978-0226026756]

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield, 2nd Edition [ISBN: 978-0226500447]

Richard Hooker, *Divine Law and Human Nature* [ISBN: 978-0692901007]

John Locke, *Two Treatises on Government*, ed. Peter Laslett [ISBN: 978-0521357302]**

Hamilton, Jay, and Madison, *The Federalist*, ed. Carey and McClellan [ISBN-13: 978-0865972896]

Marx, *Communist Manifesto*, [ISBN-13: 978-1844678761]

Patrick Deneen, *Why Liberalism Failed* [ISBN-13: 978-0300223446]

****Plutarch's *Lives* and Marx's "Estranged Labor" are available on Moodle****

Grading and Class Requirements

Quizzes:	40%
Mid-Term Exam:	30%
Final Exam:	30%

Quizzes: Expect a quiz for each class session and be prepared to receive the quiz at the beginning of class (3:30) in the Moodle course page. These quizzes are designed to check whether the student has completed the reading. They are not designed to test an understanding of the text. Hence, the questions typically require only short and incontrovertible answers. Examples will be given in the first week of class. There will be no quiz make-ups. I will drop the lowest three quiz grades.

Mid-Term Examination: The mid-term contains a combination of objective and essay questions. It is a take-home exam.

Final Examination: This test will cover all assigned material.

There will be no make-ups for the mid-term and final examinations, unless by prior approval from the instructor or in cases of severe emergency.

Attendance: All students are allowed to miss three classes in the semester. Each missed class after the third results in a subtraction of five percentage points off one's final course grade. Attendance is taken at the beginning of class. Students must bring the assigned book to class.

Special lectures: There may be opportunities throughout the semester to earn bonus points to improve your quiz score.

Grading Scale:

A+	= 97 – 100
A	= 93 – 96
A-	= 90 – 92
B+	= 87 – 89
B	= 83 – 86
B-	= 80 – 82
C+	= 77 – 79
C	= 73 – 76
C-	= 70 – 72
D+	= 67 – 69
D	= 63 – 66
D-	= 60 – 62
F	= 0 – 59

Fundamental Points

Cheating and Collusion: Students suspected of cheating, plagiarism, or colluding on quizzes or exams will immediately be brought to the Dean for disciplinary action. Students, of course, are free to study with each other.

Classroom Conduct: Disruptive actions, including talking out of turn, texting, passing notes, not paying attention, etc. will not be tolerated. Be attentive and courteous to your instructor and your fellow students.

Electronics: Laptops, phones, I-Pads, e-readers, and other electronic devices may not be used, unless they are either for the purpose of taking notes and quizzes or reading assigned material.

Food: Eating food in the classroom is not permitted. Drinks are permitted.

Moodle: To access the course's Moodle page, please sign into your My LSU account. Contact the instructor immediately, if you cannot access it.

Reading Assignments:

Week 1:

Monday, August 20 Introduction to the course

Wednesday, August 22 Plutarch, *Solon*

Friday, August 24 Plutarch, *Pericles*

Week 2:

Monday, August 27 Plutarch, *Alcibiades*

Wednesday, August 29 Plutarch, *Caesar*

Friday, August 31 Plutarch, *Cato the Younger*

Week 3:

Monday, September 3 **NO CLASS** – Labor Day

Wednesday, September 5 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. I

Friday, September 7 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. II

Week 4:

Monday, September 10 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. III

Wednesday, September 12 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. IV

Friday, September 14 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. V

Week 5:

Monday, September 17 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. VI

Wednesday, September 19 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. VII

Friday, September 21 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. VIII

Week 6:

Monday, September 24 Plato, *Republic*, Bk. IX

Wednesday, September 26 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 1-25 (Book I)

Friday, September 28 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 26-66 (Book II & III)

Week 7:

Monday, October 1 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 67-89 (Book IV)

Wednesday, October 3 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 90-134 (Book V & VI)

Friday, October 5 NO Class – Fall Holiday

Week 8:

Monday, October 8 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 135-162 (Book VII)

Wednesday, October 10 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 163-187 (Book VIII)

Friday, October 12 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, p. 188-235 (Book IX&X)

Students given take-home Mid-Term Exam (10/12)

Week 9:

Monday, October 15 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 3-33 (Ch. 1-7)

Wednesday, October 17 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p. 34-71 (Ch. 8-18)

Friday, October 19 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, p.71-105 (Ch. 19-26)

Mid-term due at beginning of class (10/19)

Week 10:

Monday, October 22 Hooker, *Divine Law and Human Nature*, p. 1 - 32

Wednesday, October 24 Hooker, *Divine Law and Human Nature*, p. 33 - 63

Friday, October 26 Locke, *Second Treatise*, p. 267-302 (Ch. 1-5)

Week 11:

Monday, October 29 Locke, *Second Treatise*, p. 303-330 (Ch. 6 & 7)

Wednesday, October 31 Locke, *Second Treatise*, p. 330-363 (Ch. 8-11)

Friday, November 2 Locke, *Second Treatise*, p. 364-397 (Ch. 12-19)

Week 12:

Monday, November 5 Marx, *Communist Manifesto*

Wednesday, November 7 Marx, *Communist Manifesto*

Friday, November 9 Marx, “Estranged Labor”

Week 13:

Monday, November 12 Federalist Papers, TBD

Wednesday, November 14 Federalist Papers, TBD

Friday, November 16 Federalist Papers, TBD

Week 14:

Monday, November 19 Deneen, *Why Liberalism Failed*, p. 1 – 42.

Wednesday, November 21 NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday

Friday, November 23 NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday,

Week 15:

Monday, November 26 Deneen, *Why Liberalism Failed*, p. 43 – 90.

Wednesday, November 28 Deneen, *Why Liberalism Failed*, p. 91 – 130.

Friday, November 30 Deneen, *Why Liberalism Failed*, 131 – 178.

Final Exam:

Thursday, December 6 FINAL EXAM (5:30 – 7:30pm)