

Political Science 120: Introduction to Political Thinking (LinC M3)
Fall 2013

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This course meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 1:10 to 2:20 p.m. in Comenius Hall 111.

Office Hours:
Tuesdays, 2:45 to 3:45 p.m.;
Wednesdays, 3:15 to 3:45 p.m.;
and also by appointment.

We will begin our study of political thinking in the depths of Plato's cave. Our concern will be to sort out the consequences of how we think about politics.

How should I think about the world?
What should I do? What should we do?
How should we encounter one another?
How should we arrange our lives together?
Who should rule?
What are the legitimate limits of political or state power?

These questions share a concern for norms. The emphasis falls on one recurring word: should. This means that normative political theory investigates situations in which knowing the facts will not suffice. Normative theory must address unclear, conflictual, or otherwise complex situations. This means that students of political theory must engage obligations and values as explicit sites of inquiry. To do this, we must attend to our texts with care. I invite you to find the connections between texts that have held the attention of political theorists over time and your present day experience of the personal and the political. True to the liberal arts tradition, our group will engage in close readings of the text as well as argumentative discussion. This course satisfies the Ultimate Questions (M3) requirements of the Learning in Common Curriculum (LinC) and is required for all Political Science majors.

Course objectives:

- 1) To reflect on the conditions and practices of consciousness
- 2) To gain critical distance from naïve realism
- 3) To expand and deepen an account of the political
- 4) To reflect on language usage inside and outside of the classroom
- 5) To acquire canonical and contemporary literacy in political theory
- 6) To ask critical questions regarding political matters
- 7) To improve verbal and written expression with reference to textual evidence

Books for sale at the Moravian College Bookstore:

- 1) Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (University of Chicago Press)
- 3) Christine de Pizan, *Book of the Body Politic* (Cambridge University Press)
- 4) Plato, *Trial and Death of Socrates* (Hackett). This anthology contains *Apology* and also *Crito*.
- 5) Nancy S. Love, editor, *Dogmas and Dreams: A Reader in Modern Ideologies*. Fourth Edition. (CQ Press)

Assignments and Evaluation

Calendar	Project	% Final Grade
Ongoing	Engagement	25%
September 24	Examination (Plato)	25%
October 29	Examination (Mirrors)	25%
December 13	Final examination at 1:30 p.m.	25%

	Introduction
Tuesday, August 27	Introduction
Thursday, August 29	What is political theory?
	Epistemology
Tuesday, September 3	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Book VII, parable of the cave
Thursday, September 5	Book VII, divided line
	Socratic Method
Tuesday, September 10	Plato, <i>Apology</i>
Thursday, September 12	<i>Apology</i>
Tuesday, September 17	Plato, <i>Crito</i>
Thursday, September 19	<i>Crito</i>
Tuesday, September 24	Examination
	First Mirror for Princes: Virtue and Power
Thursday, September 26	Christine de Pizan, <i>Book of the Body Politic</i> , Part I: On Princes
Tuesday, October 1	Book 2: On Nobles and Knights

Thursday, October 3	Book 3: On the Common People
	Second Mirror for Princes: Performance of Power and Economy of Violence
Tuesday, October 8	Niccolò Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (first published in Italian, 1532), Chronology, Letter to the Magnificent Lorenzo de Medici, Chapters I-VI
Thursday, October 10	<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters VII-XIII
Saturday, October 12 to Tuesday, October 15	Fall recess
Thursday, October 17	<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters XIV-XX
Tuesday, October 22	<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters XXI-XVI
Thursday, October 24	Comparison of the political implications of the two respective mirrors for princes
Tuesday, October 29	Examination
	Liberalism
Thursday, October 31	John Locke, <i>Treatise of Civil Government</i>
Tuesday, November 5	James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Jay, <i>The Federalist Papers</i> , nos. 10 & 51
Thursday, November 7	John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>
	Nationalism and Globalization
	The following texts can be found in <i>Dogmas and Dreams</i> .
Tuesday, November 12	Benedict Anderson, <i>Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism</i>
Thursday, November 14	Edward W. Said, "Origins of Terrorism"
Tuesday, November 19	Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?"
Thursday, November 21	Benjamin R. Barber, "Jihad Vs. McWorld"
Saturday, November 23 to Sunday, November 24	Thanksgiving Recess

Tuesday, December 3	Closing discussion
Thursday, December 5	Review for final examination and course evaluations
Friday, December 13	Final examination at 1:30 p.m.

What does an engagement grade represent?

A. Critical, innovative and careful reading of all assignments; substantial notes or written preparation for discussion; frequent text-based contributions; contribution of discussion-shaping questions; careful engagement of the arguments of others; support of positive discussion dynamics.

B. Complete and careful readings; consistent notes or written preparation for discussion; lively, substantial, and argumentative text-based contributions; contribution of independent questions; engagement of the arguments of others.

C. Incomplete or superficial readings; minimal notes or written preparation for discussion; regular (at least once per meeting) discussion participation.

D. Incomplete or missing readings; lack of notes or written preparation for discussion; mostly passive presence.

F Persistent, vegetative state; low-level trance; slightly elevated body temperature.

General Course Information

PLEASE PUT AWAY YOUR SILENCED PHONE
BEFORE YOU ENTER THE CLASSROOM.
YOUR PHONE SHOULD NEVER BE VISIBLE IN THE CLASSROOM.

Our purpose is concentration and dialogue. Please protect the classroom as a space of learning. If you are a parent or a caretaker and thus need to be accessible at all times, please let me know.

I invite you to visit my office hours. Please be in touch with any questions and thoughts you may have about our work together. I am happy to help you with difficulties relating to your reading of our texts as well as challenges that may arise with regard to assignments. It is my pleasure to help you improve your enjoyment of and performance in this course.

Be diligent in your studies and attend class. Undocumented absences beyond the first will harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% of your total course grade (per absence).

Drinks are fine, but food or gum impedes your ability to participate in our discussion. No food in the classroom, please.

Expect to work five hours on average outside of class per week. The workload varies, and the texts can be challenging. Give yourself plenty of time to read, reread, review, and take notes on texts. Our interest is in deep readings and in gaining a solid toolkit of political theory questions, concepts, and arguments. Don't skim or rush. Avoid online resources in favor of a direct experience with the text.

I strongly discourage late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations. For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment. Late work is penalized at 30 % of the assignment grade on the four-point scale.

Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment or the course. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm>

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling (610) 861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

This syllabus is subject to change.