

## Political Science 120 A and B: Introduction to Political Thinking (LinC M3), Fall 2014

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This course has two sections:  
POSC 120 A: Tuesday, Thursday 10:20 to 11:30 a.m. (3b) in Comenius 111  
POSC 120 B: Tuesday, Thursday 1:10 to 2:20 p.m. (5b) in Comenius 111

Office hours for both sections:  
Wednesdays, 3:30 to 4:30 p.m.;  
Thursdays, 2:45 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
- 8) To acquire note taking skills and to create a commonplace book

Books for sale at the Moravian College Bookstore:

- 1) Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (University of Chicago Press)
- 2) Plato, *Trial and Death of Socrates* (Hackett). This anthology contains *Apology* and also *Crito*.
- 3) Nancy S. Love, editor, *Dogmas and Dreams: A Reader in Modern Ideologies*. Fourth Edition. (CQ Press)

Calendar	✓	Assignments for readings and commonplace book notes
Tuesday, August 26		Introductions and discussions of the syllabus, copies for 9/2 reading distributed.
Thursday, August 28		<p>No class today</p> <p>Dr. Reynolds and I will be interviewing job candidates in Washington D.C. at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association (APSA). APSA is our national professional association.</p>
Tuesday, September 2		<p>Plato: <i>The Republic</i>, Book VII, allegory of the Cave (copies)</p> <p>We will discuss the commonplace book instructions. Please bring your Moleskine notebook to class. We will also label our books today.</p>
Thursday, September 4		<p><i>The Republic</i>, Book VII</p> <p>For today, you will have completed the reading and notes. Please always bring your notebook to class. You will need to take notes during class. Your required prepared entries will serve as a basis for your discussion contributions.</p>
	1	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, September 9		Plato, <i>Apology</i> , Stephanos 28b
	2	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, September 11		<p>No class today</p> <p>10:00 Convocation: Attendance at the convocation is highly recommended for this group given the themes of our course. All FYS students will attend convocation in Johnston Hall with their instructors and classmates.</p>

Tuesday, September 16		Plato, <i>Apology</i> , Stephanos 42
	3	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, September 18		Plato, <i>Crito</i> (entire)
	4	Commonplace book notes Submit commonplace book to instructor in class
Tuesday, September 23		Plato review Bring questions
Thursday, September 25		Documentary film: Who's Afraid of Machiavelli? (2013)
		Commonplace book returned
Tuesday, September 30		Niccolò Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> Chronology, Letter to the Magnificent Lorenzo de Medici, Chapters I-VI
	5	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, October 2		<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters VII-XIII
	6	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, October 7		<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters XIV-XX
	7	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, October 9		<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters XXI-XXVI
	8	Commonplace book notes

Tuesday, October 14		Fall recess
Thursday, October 16		Examination in class Submit commonplace book with your examination
<p>From this point on, all reading assignments are drawn from Nancy S. Love, <i>Dogmas and Dreams: A Reader in Modern Political Ideologies</i>. Page numbers refer to this anthology.</p>		
Tuesday, October 21		No class today  Please watch: Episode 02 - Justice with Michael Sandel <a href="http://www.justiceharvard.org/2011/02/episode-two/">www.justiceharvard.org/2011/02/episode-two/</a>
		Commonplace book returned. Please pick your commonplace book up in Comenius 206 between 1 and 4:30 p.m. After 4:30 p.m., remaining books will be locked in the instructor's office.
Thursday, October 23		John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> , p.50
	9	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, October 28		Mill, <i>On Liberty</i>
	10	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, October 30		Karl Marx, "Estranged Labor," p. 278
	11	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, November 4		Marx, "Estranged Labor"
	12	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, November 6		Mill and Marx Review Bring questions
Tuesday, November 11		Examination in class

Thursday, November 13		Creating an index for your common book, instructions
		Indexing in class
Tuesday, November 18		Samuel P. Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations?" p. 755
	13	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, November 20		Benjamin R. Barber, "Jihad vs. McWorld," p. 772
	14	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, November 25		No class today Complete all commonplace book entries and the index Submit commonplace book to Mrs. Deitch in Comenius 206 by noon Special office hours by appointment
<b>Thursday, November 27</b>		<b>Thanksgiving recess</b>
Tuesday, December 2		No class today Special office hours by appointment
Thursday, December 4		Final discussion, course evaluations
		Commonplace book returned

<b>Evaluation</b>			
Engagement	25%	ongoing	Please see notes below.
Commonplace book notes	25%	ongoing	Collected sporadically. Please see instructions below.
Exam 1	25%	Thursday, October 16	
Exam 2	25%	Tuesday, November 11	

**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.

## Commonplace Book Notes: Learning by Writing

### Preparation:

- Carefully complete your assigned reading ahead of writing notes.
- A simple ballpoint pen is recommended to reduce smearing while writing.
- Scheduling: it should take between one and two hours for the first few entries to become accustomed to the process. Later entries will take between 30 and 45 minutes (possibly less) to complete.

### Required elements, standard formal entry:

- Date all notes by writing out the day, the month, and the year. Your first date will be Tuesday, 2nd September 2014.
- Include full bibliographic information for notes that begin discussion on a new text. For example:  
Michael Pollan, *The Omnivore's Dilemma: A Natural History of Four Meals*. New York: Penguin, 2006.  
Please consult the Chicago manual of style website or similar sources for citation rules  
[www.chicagomanualofstyle.org](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org).
- Include in each new set of notes the full name of the author(s)
  - Look up birth and death dates of each author including cities and countries.
  - Identify unknown words, look up definitions, and record.
  - Identify the thesis or central concern of each reading.
  - Look up two contextual historical events during the lifetime of the author and note them.
- Write out three passages of your choice. Passages should consist of three to five lines of text. Identify the page number and follow each passage with a question or a comment for discussion in class.

### Required elements, reflection page:

- Reflect on your reading. Compose a single thoughtful page.
  - This reflection will describe your thought process and the questions, comments, and connections to other texts or ideas that you make while reading. Own your thought.

**Write notes clearly and neatly.**

### Evaluation:

- Commonplace books will be collected sporadically throughout the semester.
- Individual entries will receive a ✓+ ; ✓ ; or a zero. A final grade will be given for the book.
- Over the course of the semester, a complete set of notes might easily reach 50 to 70 pages of handwriting.

## Basics

Your phone does not exist in our classroom. Let's speak with each other or concentrate.  
If you are a parent or a caretaker (I am) and thus need to be accessible at all times, please let me know.

Protect the classroom as a space of dialogue and learning.  
Value our texts. Develop your own thinking in class and in your commonplace book.

Come and talk. You are always welcome to come to office hours. No appointments needed.

Be diligent. Be prepared. Show up.  
An undocumented absence will harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% of your total course grade.

Drink now. Eat somewhere else at some other time.

Expect to spend 140 minutes preparing for each 70-minute class meeting.

Submit your commonplace book on time.  
For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment.  
Late work is penalized: 5% of final commonplace book grade per day.

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 with Special Needs:

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 in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or by calling [610-861-1401](tel:610-861-1401). Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

This syllabus is subject to change.