

Political Science 120: Introduction to Political Thinking (LinC M3), Spring 2015
Tuesday/Thursday, 10:20 to 11:30 a.m. in Comenius 111

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Office hours:
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)
- Additional texts may be assigned.

Calendar	<input type="checkbox"/>	Reading and commonplace book assignments
Tuesday, January 20		Introductions, discussion of the syllabus, copies for 1/27 reading distributed
Thursday, January 22		Documentary: Philosophy – A Guide To Happiness: Socrates on Self-Confidence Inspired and hosted by Alain de Botton, author of <i>The Consolations of Philosophy</i> .
Tuesday, January 27		Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Book VII, allegory of the Cave (copies)
Thursday, January 29		Continuation of the discussion of Book VII with a focus on the Divided Line (copies, see above)
		We will discuss the commonplace book instructions. Please bring your Moleskine notebook to class. We will also label our books today.
Tuesday, February 3		Plato, <i>Apology</i> , read to Stephanos 28b
	1	For today, you will have completed the reading and notes. Please always bring your notebook to class. Your required prepared entries will serve as a basis for your discussion contributions.
Thursday, February 5		<i>Apology</i> continued and completed
	2	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, February 10		Plato, <i>Crito</i> (entire)
	3	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, February 12		Plato review Bring questions
		Submit commonplace book to instructor in class

Tuesday, February 17		Documentary film: Who's Afraid of Machiavelli? (2013)
		Commonplace book returned in class
Thursday, February 19		Niccolò Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (first published in Italian, 1532), Chronology, Letter to the Magnificent Lorenzo de Medici, Chapters I-VI
	4	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, February 24		<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters VII-XIII
	5	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, February 26		<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters XIV-XX
	6	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, March 3		<i>The Prince</i> , Chapters XXI-XXVI and review of entire text
	8	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, March 5		Machiavelli review Bring questions
Tuesday, March 10		NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS
Thursday, March 12		NO CLASS – SPRING RECESS
Tuesday, March 17		Examination in class
		Submit commonplace book with your examination

Thursday, March 19		NO CLASS Please watch: Episode 02 - Justice with Michael Sandel www.justiceharvard.org/2011/02/episode-two/
Tuesday, March 24		John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> (first half of the text) This and all following reading assignments can be found in <i>Dogmas and Dreams: A Reader in Modern Ideologies</i> edited by Nancy S. Love.
		Commonplace book returned. Please pick your commonplace book up in Comenius 206 between 1 and 4:15 p.m. After that, remaining books will be locked in the instructor's office.
Thursday, March 26		Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> (second half of the text)
	9	Commonplace book notes
Tuesday, March 31		Karl Marx, "Estranged Labor" (first half of the text)
	10	Commonplace book notes, number all pages up to current entry including blank pages
Thursday, April 2		Marx, "Estranged Labor" (second half of the text)
Tuesday, April 7		Mill and Marx Review Bring questions
Thursday, April 9		Examination in class
		Submit commonplace book

Tuesday, April 14		Globalization documentary, TBA
Thursday, April 16		Instructions for creating an index for your commonplace book
		Commonplace book returned Indexing in class
Tuesday, April 21		Benjamin R. Barber, "Jihad vs. McWorld," p. 772
	13	Commonplace book notes
Thursday, April 23		Kwame Anthony Appiah, <i>Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers</i>
	14	Commonplace book notes Submit commonplace book
Tuesday, April 28		Elaboration of a cosmopolitan ethics for the students of POSC 120, spring 2015
Thursday, April 30		Last day of class, final discussion and course evaluations
		Commonplace books returned

Evaluation

Engagement	25%	ongoing	Please see notes below.
Commonplace book notes	25%	ongoing	Checked in class and collected sporadically. Please see instructions below.
Exam 1	25%	Tuesday, March 17, in class	
Exam 2	25%	Thursday, April 9, in class	

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 Entry Instruction

PREPARATION

- Carefully complete your assigned reading before class and before writing notes.
- A simple ballpoint pen is recommended to reduce smearing while writing.
- Scheduling: for the first few entries, you will require more time to become accustomed to the process, approximately one to two hours. Later entries will take less time once you have mastered the format and feel freer about writing your reflection, perhaps 30 minutes to one hour.

FIRST REQUIRED ELEMENT: FORMAL ENTRY

FOR THE FIRST READING OF A TEXT:

- Date all notes in this way: day of week, month and date, year
For example: Wednesday, January 7, 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.
- Look up birth and death dates of each author including cities.
- Look up two 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.

FOR A LATER READING OF A TEXT:

- Date
- Full author name, full title
- Three passages with comments or questions (see above)

Instructions continue on the next page.

SECOND REQUIRED ELEMENT: REFLECTION

- Reflect on your reading. Compose a single thoughtful page.
 - Eight sentences are a minimum for a complete entry. I recommend two paragraphs.
 - This reflection will describe your thought process and the questions, comments, and connections to other texts or ideas that you make while reading.
- Identify unknown words, look up definitions, and record. You need to note the page numbers for the words and also to cite the source of your definitions.
- Identify the thesis or central concern of each reading.
- Deepen your thoughts on the material. This is your personal intellectual reflection. Own your thought.
- Write notes clearly and neatly.

EVALUATION:

- Commonplace books will be checked sporadically in class and also collected according to the calendar above.
- Entries must be completed *before* the day of class when the text on which the entry is based will be discussed.
- Entries are considered in terms of completion and quality.
- Reflections should not be summaries. Find a connection to the text that is personal to you. Interesting reflections are sometimes raw. It's okay to be honest about having trouble understanding or relating to a text, but you need to be willing to think through your own response to a text.
- Incomplete and missing entries do not receive credit.
- Complete entries receive a ✓+ ; ✓ or ✓-. This translates into 3, 2, or 1 points at the end of the semester. Your final grade for the book is based on these numbers: 14 (number of entries this semester) * 3 (full points for an entry)= 42 points. Up to 8 points can be awarded for overall quality, the index, and any original individual efforts. $100\%=50$ points.
- Over the course of the semester, a complete set of notes might easily reach 50 to 70 pages of handwriting. Last semester, an international student submitted a book with well over one hundred pages.
- Better books include consistent and diligent work with vocabulary and thoughtfully honest reflections.

Basics

Rule #1: Silence and put away your phone before you enter the classroom.

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. Engage your fellow students and their thoughts.
Look out for each other. Be inclusive.

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 who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Ms. Elaine Mara, Assistant Director of Academic and Disability Support located in the lower level of Monocacy Hall, or call (610) 861-1401. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

This syllabus is subject to change.

Index Instructions for Your Commonplace Book

These instructions are intended for the second half of the semester. We will discuss indexing in class on Thursday, April 16. You can think about the index, but I advise against working on it too soon. It's best to wait until we speak about this in class. Once you have completed many entries in your commonplace book, you can look back at where you have been intellectually and draw some conclusions regarding what has mattered most to you in your study of our texts. Creating an index is not only a way of finding a particular term on a particular page. Instead, it is an active intellectual process of identifying what is worth looking for, what is worth returning to. To create an index is to give meaning and value to your work by returning to it and organizing it along lines that you choose.

In the late seventeenth century, the political theorist John Locke developed the indexing method we will use. He published it in a work entitled A New Method of Making Common-Place-Books. Below, you will find a three-step process for creating your index in the pages reserved for that purpose at the back of your commonplace book. Please also see the sample index I have created on the back of this page.

- 1) **COUNT LINES AND DRAW THE INDEX STRUCTURE:** You will need to count lines to do this correctly. There are twenty-six letters in the alphabet and five vowels (a, e, i, o, and u). You need to create a structure in the back of your commonplace book to accommodate 130 lines (5 x 26=130). Take time to do this in an orderly way. When in doubt, use extra space and avoid scrunching the index on to the page. When in doubt, continue a new page.
- 2) **REFLECT AND IDENTIFY THEMES AND TERMS OF INTEREST:** What makes this exercise meaningful is your intellectual return to earlier entries to understand the themes that have emerged in your choice of passages, your questions about those passages and your reflections. What have you learned? What are the topics and terms that catch your eye? How can you make the entries accessible? Pick fifteen to twenty themes for indexing. You can do more, of course.
- 3) **FIND THEMES IN YOUR NOTES AND CREATE THE INDEX CONTENT:** Let's say one theme is alienation. Alienation starts with A and the word's first vowel after the first letter is i. (I have bolded the first vowel in each word in the sample index below just to show the principle at work. You do not need to bold them in your entries.) So now you enter the word on the proper line and identify the pages where it occurs in your commonplace book. Complete this process for your choice of fifteen to twenty themes. You certainly can choose political theory terms and themes, but there should also be ones that are particular to your interests. Don't be shy: Softball? Mafia movies? Love? Summer jobs? Family?

SAMPLE INDEX

A	a	
	e	
	i	alienation 45-47, 52
	o	
	u	
B	a	
	e	beauty 32-45; being 1-5
	i	
	o	
	u	
C	a	
	e	
	i	civility 2-7, 10, 21; citizenship 19-22, 34, 40
	o	community 12, 34, 46
	u	
D	a	
	e	death 6, 10, 38
	i	
	o	dogma 10, 21, 33

	u	duty 8,12, 20
E	a	estrangement 45-49
	e	enemy 56
	i	
	o	
	u	equality 4, 7, 17, 26, 39-41
F	a	
	e	
	i	friendship 44-49; fighting 33, 39
	o	
	u	
G	a	
	e	generosity 25, 35, 44
	i	
	o	
	u	
H	a	hate 55-57
	e	
	i	history
	o	
	u	
I	a	Italy 22-30
	e	interlocutor 5-15; idealism 7, 10, 38
	i	
	o	
	u	