HISTORY OF WESTERN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course surveys selected texts in the pre-modern history of Western political philosophy. Attention is paid to the range of responses to some of the fundamental moral and practical themes of political philosophy, such as authority, justice, obligation, liberty, equality, property, revolution, order, progress, and rights. Both the themes and the responses are evaluated philosophically and viewed historically.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES
This course is intended to improve the student's:
- understanding of the subfield of political philosophy/political theory.
- familiarity with the range of explanatory and ethical theories of politics in the Western canon of political theory.
- ability to reflect philosophically on contemporary political life.
- appreciation for the temporal dimension of human existence (MOI: TH).

PEDAGOGY
"Let the tutor make his charge pass everything through a sieve and lodge nothing in his head on mere authority and trust: let not Aristotle’s principles be principles to him any more than those of the Stoics or Epicureans. Let this variety of ideas be set before him: he will choose if he can; if not he will remain in doubt."
Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), Essays, 'Of the education of children.'
GRADING
This course is organized around the readings and lectures. Consequently, the student is expected to read, attend, and reflect. The grade is composed of four components:

(25%) Exam 1: on introductory materials, Plato, and Aristotle.
(25%) Exam 2: on introductory materials, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Locke.
(40%) Exam 3: on Rousseau, Mill, and comparative analysis of entire course.
(10%) Participation: regular attendance, completion of incidental assignments.

Exams focus on key concepts, arguments, images, and comparative analysis of historiographical approaches. The student must receive a passing grade in each component to pass the course. Willamette's Credit Hour Policy holds that for every hour of class time there will be 2-3 hours work outside of class. Thus, the student should anticipate 6-9 hours of work each week. I will accommodate any disabilities likely to affect participation if identified and authorized in advance by the Office of Disability Services, Phone: (503) 370-6471, (TT) (503) 375-5383. Likewise, I will also attempt to accommodate days of special religious observance if identified within the first two weeks of class. In keeping with university policies, I will NOT tolerate plagiarism or other forms of cheating.

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS
Student should complete the assigned reading and take the time to reflect on the meaning of the reading before each class. All required readings are available at the WU Bookstore. Books can be purchased elsewhere; however, it is important that the same publication edition be obtained.


Aristotle. *Politics.*

Niccolo Machiavelli. *Selected Political Writings.*


Locke, John. *Political Writings.*

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *The Basic Political Writings.*

### SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>CLASS</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon 1/18</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 1/20</td>
<td>Political Philosophy; Assignment 1 (upload to WISE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 1/22</td>
<td>Political Philosophy continued</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 1/25</td>
<td>History and Historiography; Assignment 2 (upload to WISE)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 1/27</td>
<td>Author, Text, Context</td>
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**No Afternoon Classes: Martin Luther King Jr. Day Celebration**

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**Republic**

- **Fri 1/29**
  - *Plato*, what is justice?: 2 tests,
    - [Last Day to Add/Drop Full Semester Semester Classes]
    - [I-III; 327-417]

- **Mon 2/1**
  - ordering, the just, and ungendered *polis*:
    - [Willamette Day College of Liberal Arts 174 Years]
  - *Republic*, pp.94-111, 119-146.
    - [IV...; IV-V...; 419-435, 443-470]

- **Wed 2/3**
  - philosophy, the philosopher-king and the cave:
    - [...V-VII, ...VII; 471-522, 537-541]

- **Fri 2/5**
  - philosophy etc continued

- **Mon 2/8**
  - regimes, democratic decadence, and the soul:
    - [VIII-X; 544-621]

- **Wed 2/10**
  - thinking historically about Plato

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**PLATO**

(428-348BC)

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**Ancient Athens**

  - [I-III; 327-417]

- *Republic*, pp.94-111, 119-146.
  - [IV...; IV-V...; 419-435, 443-470]

  - [...V-VII, ...VII; 471-522, 537-541]

  - [VIII-X; 544-621]
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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
<th>References</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fri 2/12</td>
<td>Aristotle, <em>causation</em>, man is a political animal:</td>
<td><em>Politics</em>, pp.1-41, 49-51.</td>
<td>[I.1-II.7..., II.9...] [1252a-1266a, 1269a-b]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 2/17</td>
<td>regime types, and making the most of real politics:</td>
<td><em>Politics</em>, pp.70-121.</td>
<td>[III.4-IV.11] [1276b-1296b]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fri 2/19</td>
<td>preventing worse:</td>
<td><em>Politics</em>, pp.134-145, 152-8, 176-184.</td>
<td>[V.1-V.5, V.8-9, VI.2-5] [1301a-1305a, 1307b-1310a, 1315b-320b]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 2/22</td>
<td>thinking historically about Aristotle [Ancient Greek and Medieval Thought Review]</td>
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<td>Wed 2/24</td>
<td>EXAM 1 Grade Dist</td>
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*Politics*
Fri 2/26  
*Machiavelli* and *Life*.
political virtuosity:  
[Last Day to choose Credit/No Credit for Full Sem Classes]

Mon 2/29  
political ethics: cruel to be kind:

Wed 3/2  
republican domestic politics:

Fri 3/4  
republican foreign politics:

why learn not to be good?  e.g. Caterina Sforza
thinking historically about Machiavelli

*The Prince* and the *Discourses*

**Renaissance Italy**
THOMAS HOBBES
(1588-1679)

Leviathan

Mon 3/7  Hobbes, commonwealth, frontispiece, method,

Leviathan, pp.31-45, 321-2,
[Dedic., intro., I.1, Concl.]

Wed 3/9  men and madness:

Leviathan, pp.51-90, 94, 102-21
[I.ch4-8, 10 ..., 1.11-12]

Fri 3/11  natural condition, natural right, and natural laws:

Leviathan, pp.121-153, 155-88
[I.13-16, II.17-20]

Mon 3/14  liberty, law, order, and monsters:

Leviathan, pp.188-99, 209-20,
[II.21, end of 22-24, 26-first ½ of 27,
29-30, Rev & Con]

thinking historically about Hobbes
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 3/16</td>
<td>Locke, patriarchy:</td>
<td>1st Treatise, pp.242-259. [5, 9 selections]</td>
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<td>3/21-25</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 3/28</td>
<td>consent, common-wealth, change:</td>
<td>2nd Treatise, pp. 300-348. [7-14, sections 77-168]</td>
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<td>Fri 4/1</td>
<td>thinking historically about Locke review</td>
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<td>Mon 4/4</td>
<td>EXAM 2 (grade dist)</td>
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**JOHN LOCKE**
(1632-1704)

*Two Treatises of Government*

**Enlightenment England**
The Discourses and the Social Contract

Pre-Revolutionary France


Fri 4/8  de-moralization continued,


Fri 4/15  thinking historically about Rousseau
**JOHN STUART MILL**  
(1806-1873)

*On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*  
London, England

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**Mon 4/18**  
Mill, liberty, and freedom of thought, caveats:  
*On Liberty*, pp.5-23.  
[1-2 ...]

**Wed 4/20**  
No Class: Student Scholarship Recognition Day

**Mon 4/25**  
freedom applied:  
[...2]

**Wed 4/27**  
individuality, authority, and harm:  
*On Liberty*, pp.56-115.  
[3]

**Fri 4/29**  
women’s liberation:  
Ideals of Victorian Womanhood  
A woman’s right, BEP v AM  
*On Women*, pp.119, 122-3, 128-152, 156-169, 184, 195-200, 212-7.

**Mon 5/2**  
SAIs, thinking historically about Mill

**TBD**  
Review

**Mon 5/11**  
8-11am Exam 3
Today is an excellent day. I think for walking around, I own the place!

Woo! Looks like my day just got filled up!

Onomatopoeiaus, would you say that I'm an excellent dude for walking around like I own the place?

Actually, my friend, I would disagree. I think there are more productive uses of your time.

I'll let history be the judge of that!

That's a pretty suspect saying, don't you think?

Seriously! It's predicated on history always being a story of progression, with the future assumed to be a better judge of what's right than the present. I'm not sure that's valid! Plus, I'm certain there's things that have been variously judged to be good and bad at different points in history!

okay, so what if I said "I think I'll let an assumed future history which agrees with my current position be the judge of THAT?"

Then I'd cancel our bowling plans on Saturday!

I wonder: are we actually making progress?

(Where "we" refers to the general population, of course!)

You assume that there exists an answer to such cosmic questions!

What about the whole idea of "the only questions worth asking are those that can't be answered?"

Self-justification from philosophers who can't reach a conclusion my friend. I want ANSWERS, not debates! I want a one sentence SUMMARY of LIFE.

How do you mean, T-Rex?

Well - what about philosophy, for instance? We've had thousands of years to think about what it means to be alive, yet we're still no closer to an answer! Where's the progress? Where's the progress when we're still grappling with the same questions as the ancients?

You assume that there exists an answer to such cosmic questions!

What about the whole idea of "the only questions worth asking are those that can't be answered?"

Self-justification from philosophers who can't reach a conclusion. My friend. I want ANSWERS, not debates. I want a one sentence SUMMARY of LIFE.

Something like, "too bad we'll all be dead!"

Yeah, only catchier and more informative! And less depressing!