

**Pol 200Y1Y (LEC0101): Political Theory: Visions of the Just/Good Society
2008-2009**

Professor: Ryan K. Balot

Tutorial Leaders: Larissa Atkison, Andrea Cassatella, Pinar Dokumaci, Michael Gray,
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 2-4pm

Description

The course examines seven attempts to understand the behavior of human beings as political agents and the normative principles underlying that behavior. We will first reconstruct the central theses of these texts in their historical contexts. Then we will normatively evaluate their stances on topics such as power, individuality, the distribution of resources, the cultivation of virtue, and human nature. Come to class having completed the reading assigned for that day. Take notes as you read—both summaries of content and interpretative ideas; this will be much more productive than simply underlining in your copies of the texts.

Texts

Thucydides, *On Justice, Power and Human Nature*, tr. Woodruff (Hackett)

Plato, *Republic*, tr. Grube (rev. by Reeve) (Hackett)

Aristotle, *Politics*, tr. Barker (Oxford)

Cicero, *On Obligations*, tr. Walsh (Oxford)

Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings*, tr. Wootton (Hackett)

Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Curley (Hackett)

Locke, *Second Treatise*, ed. Macpherson (Hackett)

These books are available at the Bob Miller Book Room, 180 Bloor St. West. Be sure to purchase the correct translations and editions.

Grades

Grades will be based on attendance and participation, three essays, and a final examination:

Attendance and Participation (you must attend both lectures and discussion sections):

10% of the final grade.

Essay 1: 1500 words, Thucydides and Plato. Topics distributed October 1; paper due on October 29. 15% of the final grade.

Essay 2: 1500 words, Aristotle and Cicero. Topics distributed November 5; paper due on December 3. 15% of the final grade.

Essay 3: 2500 words, Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Locke. Topics distributed March 4; paper due April 1. 25% of the final grade.

Final examination during the examination period: 35% of the final grade.

Guidelines for Papers

1. Be sure to keep an extra hard copy of your papers in case the paper you submit is lost.
2. Place a word count at the top of each paper just under your name. Penalties (2 points for each 100 words or fraction thereof) will be attached to papers that run over the prescribed word limit.
3. Hard copies of the essays are to be turned in during the lecture to your discussion leader on the due dates.
4. Late papers will be penalized 2 points per day of lateness.
5. No extensions, etc. without a certificate from your physician.
6. You should familiarize yourself with the university's policy on plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto's policy on plagiarism at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>. You must write your papers specifically for this class; you should not borrow material from another class; and you should not use another person's words or ideas without attribution, whether those words or ideas come from conversations, the internet, or printed materials. If you are in doubt about whether you are committing plagiarism, feel free to ask me or a discussion leader; but a good rule of thumb is that if you are wondering about this, you should cite a source.
7. Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their essays and assignments before them in. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned.
8. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.
9. It is a good idea to examine the guidelines on writing provided at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/advise.html>

Blackboard

Our course will have a Blackboard website on which you can find the syllabus, study questions for lectures, tutorial topics, your marks in the course, and other information relevant to the course. Please check it frequently.

Tutorials, TAs, and Head TA

We will conduct tutorials throughout the term. Sign-up for these tutorials will take place in the first two weeks of class. Your assignment to particular sections will be posted on Blackboard as soon as it becomes available, probably in the second week of term. Tutorials will begin in the third week of classes. You must have a TA in order to receive grades for the course. Please check the Blackboard website for tutorial topics for each tutorial. Note that tutorials will not be held every week of term; the schedule can be found on Blackboard. Your TA is your first point of contact for any questions about the course; the Head TA, Xunming Huang, is your next point of contact. Please feel free to discuss any concerns about the course with me during my office hours (listed above).

Schedule

Read the assignments before the lecture, using as your guide the study questions, which can be found on the Blackboard website (the schedule of readings for the spring 09 term will be posted to the website on Blackboard in December)

September 10: Introduction

September 17: Thucydides, pp. 12-50 (note: page numbers refer to the Woodruff edition; other assignments will be listed by book, chapter, or section number, unless otherwise indicated)

September 24: Thucydides, pp. 66-76, 89-95, 102-109, 111-123

October 1: Plato, *Republic* Book 1. First paper topics distributed.

October 8: Plato, *Republic* Books 2-3

October 15: Plato, *Republic* Books 4-5

October 22: Plato, *Republic* Books 6-7

October 29: Plato, *Republic* Books 8-9; **First paper due**

November 5: Plato, *Republic* Book 10; Second paper topics distributed.

November 12: Aristotle, *Politics* Books 1.1-7, 1.12-13, 2.1-5

November 19: Aristotle, *Politics* Books 3, 4.1-9

November 26: Aristotle, *Politics* Books 7.1-3, 7.8-10, 7.13-15, 8.1-2

December 3: Cicero, *On Obligations* Book 1; **Second paper due**