

**POL 2000Y: COMPARATIVE STUDIES IN THE
HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT
2019-2020
Wednesday 4-6: SSH 3130**

Prof. Andrew Sabl
SSH 3030
Office Hours: Thursdays, 4:15-6 p.m., or by appt.
Telephone: 416-978-2381 (but please use email)
andrew.sabl@utoronto.ca

Prof. Rebecca Kingston
SSH 3117
Office Hours: Wed. 2-4 or by appt.
Telephone: 416-946-0187
Rebecca.kingston@utoronto.ca

We will spend two to three weeks apiece on twelve major political philosophers. The course presupposes some familiarity with these theorists. By the time of the first class on a given theorist you will be expected to have read all of his work that is under consideration in the course. This will enable us to consider the relationship between earlier and later parts of a work, or in some cases relationships among different works, in addressing questions of interpretation.

Requirements:

1. Twelve short papers (**maximum one page – single spaced, 11 pt. type, one inch margins**), one on each author.

We will provide two sets of questions to guide each week's discussion, and each short paper should respond to one of the sets of questions for the class in which the paper is submitted. Your papers should not attempt to develop an argument in detail. Rather you should provide a summary statement of claims that you are prepared to support with arguments and **explicit references to the text** in the course of class discussion.

The papers must be posted on the class website by **5:00 pm on the Tuesday before class**. They will be graded on a pass/fail basis. **Late papers (i.e., papers submitted after 5:00 pm) will not be accepted.** If you fail to turn in at least one paper on each theorist or fail to turn in the twelve on time, you will be required to write a five page makeup paper for each one you have missed. These makeup papers will also be graded on a pass/fail basis.

2. Active and informed participation in class discussion (including familiarity with your colleagues' short papers): 20% of the final grade. Regardless of whether you have written a paper or not, you should come prepared to discuss the week's questions and you should have read carefully the comments of your fellow students.
3. One 15 page paper per term on a topic of your choice dealing with the theorists from that term. At least one of these papers must compare two theorists.

Each term paper is worth 40% of the final grade. The first paper is due on Jan. 9; the second is due on April 5, the last day of the semester. Please submit your papers electronically in .doc or .rtf format to both instructors.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Sept. 11: Introduction

Sept. 18 and 25, Oct. 2: Plato, *Republic*

Strongly recommended for the Plato weeks: Leo Strauss, "Persecution and the Art of Writing", in *Persecution and the Art of Writing* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1988).

Oct. 9 and 16: Aristotle, *Politics*. Aristotle, *Ethics*, Book X, cc. 6-9. (This *Ethics* reading will be posted on the class website)

Oct. 23: Augustine of Hippo, *The City of God*.

Book 1. Preface and chapters 9, 11, 15, 24, 35 (henceforth written like this: 1. Preface, 9, 11, 15, 24, 35); 2.7, 18; 3.13, 16; 4.3, 4, 15, 18-19, 34; 5.13-16, 19, 20, 24; 9.5; 11.1; 12.8, 14.1, 4, 9-13, 15, 25, 28; 15.1, 2, 4, 5; 17.7; 18.2, 48; 19.1, 4-7, 12-15, 17, 19, 24-5, 27-8; 20.2; 21.12; 22.30.

Oct. 30, Nov. 13: Machiavelli, *The Prince* and *Discourses*

Strongly recommended: Quentin Skinner, "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas," *Visions of Politics* Vol. I (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002)

Nov. 6: Reading week. No class.

Nov. 20 and 27: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Parts I and II; chapter 46 from Part IV; and "A Review and Conclusion"

Dec. 4 and Jan. 8: Locke, *Second Treatise*, *Letter Concerning Toleration*

Jan. 15: David Hume: *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book III ("Of Morals"): all; *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*: selections to be announced.

Jan. 22 Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*

Jan. 29: Rousseau, *Social Contract*

Feb. 5 and 12: Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*

Feb. 19: Reading Week: No class.

Feb. 26 and March 4: Marx, selections from *Marx-Engels Reader*, ed., Tucker, 2nd edition:

pp. 3-6, *Preface to the Critique of Political Economy*

pp. 26-46, *On the Jewish Question*

pp. 53-65, *Introduction: Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*

pp. 70-93, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts*

pp. 143-199, *Theses on Feuerbach and The German Ideology, Pt. I*

pp. 469-500, *The Communist Manifesto*

pp. 525-541, *Critique of the Gotha Programme*

pp. 594-617, *18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*

Mar. 11: Mill, *Utilitarianism* Chapter 2 and *On Liberty*

Mar. 18: Mill, *Representative Government* (chapters 1-8, 10, 12, 16, 18) and *The Subjection of Women*

Mar. 25: Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

April 1: Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*

RECOMMENDATIONS ON TEXTS:

- Plato, *Republic*. G. Grube revised by C.D.C. Reeve, ed. (Hackett) or R.E. Allen (Yale University Press) or A. Bloom, ed. (Basic Books).
- Aristotle, *Politics*. Lord, ed. (Chicago); Everson, ed. (Cambridge); Barker, ed. (Oxford).
- Augustine *City of God*. Dyson trans/ed. (Cambridge) or Bettenson trans/ed (Penguin)
- Machiavelli, *The Prince*. Mansfield (Chicago); or Lerner (Modern Library).
- Machiavelli, *The Discourses*. Crick (Penguin); or Lerner (Modern Library).
- Hobbes, *Leviathan*. Macpherson, ed. (Penguin), Oakeshott, ed. (Collier), Schneider, ed. (Bobbs-Merrill), Tuck, ed. (Cambridge), or Curley, ed. (Hackett)
- Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*: any reputable edition, but please number the paragraphs within each section by hand if not using the Clarendon edition.
- Hume, *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*: any reputable edition, but recommended is either the Eugene F Miller edition (rev. ed., Indianapolis, Liberty Fund, 1987) or this edition online at <https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/hume-essays-moral-political-literary-lf-ed>
- Locke, *Second Treatise*. Laslett, ed. (Cambridge); Macpherson, ed. (Hackett); or Peardon, ed. (Bobbs-Merrill).
- Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality*. Masters, ed. (St. Martin's); or Gourevitch, ed. (Cambridge).
- Rousseau, *Social Contract*. Masters, ed. (St. Martin's); or Gourevitch, ed. (Cambridge).
- Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*. Knox, ed. (Oxford); or Wood, ed. (Cambridge).
- Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader*. Tucker, ed. (Norton).
- Mill, *Utilitarianism, On Liberty and other Essays*. Gray, ed. (Oxford) (or any other edition).
- Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*. Kaufmann, ed. (Vintage); or J. Norman, ed. (Cambridge)
- Nietzsche, *Genealogy of Morals*. Kaufmann, ed. (Vintage).

Questions for Short Papers and Class Discussion
(Further questions will be posted in advance of future weeks.)

PLATO

September 18:

1. Before outlining a novel theory of justice, Socrates first must contend with other, rival theories of justice. What theories are offered by Thrasymachus and Glaucon? What is at the heart of the challenges posed by these characters? How does Glaucon's theory of justice contrast with the one proposed by Socrates? Do you want to be just and, if so, why? How does your answer relate to the ones offered in this exchange?
2. Why is the *Republic* written as a dialogue? How, and where, should the fact that it is written as one affect our reading of it? (Give concrete examples.) Analytic philosophers often ignore the dialogue and analyse Socrates' position as the one to be taken seriously and/or as representing Plato's own view. What, if anything, would be lost by doing so?

September 25:

1. The discussions of women and the family in the *Republic* have given rise to many different interpretations. What is yours? Does Socrates (and/or Plato) ultimately advocate a radical alteration in family structure, or does he intend this example as instructive in other ways? Do we have anything to learn today from Plato on these matters? Support your views with explicit references to the text.
2. How apt, given the *Republic* as a whole, is Socrates' analogy between the just soul and the just regime (introduced at 368c)? Socrates suggests that the "city in speech" is best seen as a model for the well-ordered soul, not as a political ideal: to what extent does this make sense? Are there viable psychic analogies to all the institutions and practices attributed to the ideal city?

October 2:

1. What is the character of Plato's utopianism? Is the Callipolis intended to embody an ideal which human beings can and ought to try to approximate? Is it rather an unattainable standard intended to criticize the project of utopianism altogether? Or, something different again, is it a hypothetical thought-experiment designed to stimulate readers to think more profoundly about politics, whatever the practical outcomes? On what do you base your answer to this question – the words of Socrates, the literary or dramatic features of the work, or something else?
2. The explicit theme of the *Republic* is justice. Can it be read instead as a reflection on the disadvantages or hazards of over-emphasizing justice at the expense of other values (e.g. political stability, liberty, a diversity of chosen lifestyles, government by consent)?