**Course Instructor**
Zachariah Black  
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Office Hours: Mondays, 2 p.m. – 3 p.m. EST [location]

**TAs:**  
Elizabeth McDermott  
Rachel Wagner

**Course Description**

Who gets to rule, and why should we obey? In this course, we will examine some of the most profound answers to these fundamental political questions. In the fall term, we begin with ancient Athenian democracy and its philosophical critics. We then turn to the Abbasid Caliphate to consider how the political philosophies of Plato and Aristotle could be adapted to an Islamic context. Our major themes this semester will be the purpose of political community and the meaning of citizenship, the power of law and institutions to shape human behaviour, and various justifications for rulership.

In the winter semester, we turn to early modern Europe to see how the political philosophy of ancient Greece was adapted or rejected in the context of the fragmentation of Christendom, the rise of the modern state, and the emergence of theories of popular resistance. Our major themes this semester will be the meaning and importance of political equality and natural right, the role of the state in preventing and perpetrating violence, and the proper scope of political authority and obedience.

This course introduces students to classic works of political theory and familiarizes them with some of the foundational concepts of the field. One of the primary goals of our course will be for you to come to know these authors through first-hand engagement. There is therefore no substitute for reading the texts yourself.

**Texts**

Available at U of T Bookstore (unless otherwise indicated)

*Note:* There are many editions and translations of these texts (some of them of very poor quality); we will be using the editions listed below in our course. You will be required to cite these editions in course essays and refer to them in class and tutorials.


**Assignments & Grade Distribution**

Tutorial Participation — 10%
- Tutorial grade will depend upon attendance and participation. A full participation grade will be earned by students who have completed readings before tutorial and come prepared with their notes, the course text, and questions of their own. Students will be expected to engage respectfully with their peers and tutorial leader.

Essay 1 (1200 words) — 15%
- Thesis statement brought to tutorial the week of **25 October 2021** (2%)
- **Due 5 November 2021**, at 5 p.m., to Quercus (13%)

Essay 2 (1200 words) — 20%
- Outline brought to tutorial the week of **29 November 2021** (3%)
- **Due 3 December 2022**, at 5 p.m., to Quercus (17%)

Essay 3 (2750 words) — 25%
- **Due 7 March 2022**, at 5 p.m., to Quercus

Final Exam — 30%

**Late Penalties and Accommodation**

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of **2% per day**. For your sake and ours, please plan to submit your work on time. Cultivating strong time-management skills is an important part of your university education. However, your overall success in the course is more important. If you find yourself needing an extension, please reach out to your TA. We ask that you include (a) the reason for your request, and (b) a proposal for a new deadline. If you have additional documentation (like a doctor’s note), please include that, too.

All requests will receive serious consideration.
Requests for accommodation made through Accessibility Services will be honoured. If you require accommodation, please register with Accessibility Services as soon as possible: https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/accessibility-services/.

**Course Schedule**

Note: Lectures will be held in person, but the first two lectures will also be recorded and posted to Quercus (for two weeks) to accommodate students returning to campus from abroad.

**FALL TERM**

1. **THE POLITICAL THOUGHT OF ANCIENT GREECE**

13 September 2021: What is Political Theory?

20 September 2021: Sophocles, *Antigone* (all)

27 September 2021: Plato, *Apology* (all)

4 October 2021: Plato, *Republic*, I-II.367d (pp. 1-45) [45]

11 October 2021 – THANKSGIVING MONDAY; NO CLASS

18 October 2021: Plato, *Republic*, II.368a-383c; III.410b-417b; IV.419a-445e (pp. 45-65; 94-135) [61]

25 October 2021: Plato, *Republic*, V.449a-480a; VII.514a-521b (pp. 136-75; 208-14) [45]

1 November 2021: Plato, *Republic*, VIII.543a-569c; IX.571a-577e & 588b-592b (pp. 238-77; 292-6) [43]

8 November 2021 – FALL READING WEEK; NO CLASS


22 November 2021: Aristotle, *Politics* III (pp. 65-100) [35]

29 November 2021: Aristotle, *Politics* IV.4-9, 11-12; VII.1-3, 13-15; VIII.1-2 (pp. 106-17; 118-24; 191-7; 213-19; 227-31) [33]

2. **EARLY ISLAMIC POLITICAL THOUGHT**

6 December 2021: Alfarabi, *The Political Writings*, vol. 1, “Selected Aphorisms” (pp. 11-44; 57-61); “The Enumeration of the Sciences,” (76-84) [46]

**WINTER TERM**

3. RENAISSANCE AND EARLY MODERN POLITICAL THOUGHT

10 January 2022: Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, part I, chs. 1-32 (pp. 21-74) [53]

17 January 2022: Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, part I, chs. 33-41; part II, chs. 7-13, 17, 21, 28-31, 36, 53; part III, chs. 1-3, 10, 19 (75-87; 106-114; 117-19; 121-2; 127-33; 139-41; 164-6; 189-93; 203-8; 219-21) [47]

24 January 2022: Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Letter Dedicatory, chs. 1-13 (pp. 5-45) [40]

31 January 2022: Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chs. 14-26 (pp. 45-80) [35]

7 February 2022: Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, Letter Dedicatory; book 1, Preface, chs. 6, 9-13, 26-7, 34, 46, 58 (81-101; 107-21; 131-3; 137-9; 140-2; 154-8) [34]


21 February 2022: FAMILY DAY/READING WEEK; NO CLASS

28 February 2022: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, LD, Letter & Intro, chs. 4-6; 10-13 (1-5; 15-35; 50-78) [53]


14 March 2022: Hobbes, *Leviathan*, chs. 20-21; 29-31; Review & Conclusion (127-45; 219-44; 489-97) [52]

21 March 2022: Locke, *Second Treatise*, in *The Political Writings*, chs. 1-5; 7-9 (261-86; 300-27) [52]

28 March 2022: Locke, *Second Treatise*, in *The Political Writings*, chs. 10-14; 19 (327-49; 369-87) [40]

4 April 2022: Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration*, in *The Political Writings* (390-436) [46]
Essays should be submitted online through Quercus and will automatically be reviewed using Turnitin.com. However, the use of Turnitin.com is voluntary, and students who do not consent to the use of Turnitin.com may choose to submit their essays directly to the instructor at zak.black@mail.utoronto.ca. In cases where students choose not to use Turnitin.com, they will be required to submit all rough work, drafts, and notes at time of submission.

Official U of T statement on Turnitin.com: “Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for 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.”

**Note on Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information on plagiarism please see Writing at the University of Toronto [http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources).