

POL200Y
Political Theory: Visions of the Just/Good Society
Summer 2021

LEC5101
Mondays & Wednesdays 6-8pm EDT (online synchronous)

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Virtual Office Hours: Mondays & Wednesdays 3-4pm (on lecture days)

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Acknowledgment of traditional land

We would like to acknowledge this sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory.

Tutorials

TUT 0101 - Mondays 4-5pm EDT

TUT 0201 - Wednesdays 4-5pm EDT

TUT 5101 - Mondays 5-6pm EDT

TUT 5201 - Mondays 8-9pm EDT

TUT 5301 - Wednesdays 5-6pm EDT

TUT 5401 - Wednesdays 8-9pm EDT

Online communication policy

When emailing your instructors or TAs please include the course code (POL200) in the subject line. You can expect a response within 48 hours, not including weekends. Please note that we are only able to reply to @mail.utoronto.ca addresses.

Course Delivery

This is an online synchronous course. All lectures and tutorials are delivered online through Zoom. Links to the lecture will be posted on Quercus, as well as recordings of the lectures. However, we strongly encourage you to attend the lectures synchronously should there be a technical issue with the recordings. There will also be supplementary recorded material that students will be expected to watch in advance of certain lectures. Tutorials are held live and students are expected to be present during their selected tutorial time. It is important to check the course Quercus site regularly to be aware of any course updates.

Course Description and Goals

In this political theory survey course, we will read, interpret, and evaluate some of the best-known texts in ancient, medieval, and early modern political thought. To bring some focus to our broad inquiry, we will concentrate primarily on common ethical and political concepts, questions, and problems across our texts. Particular attention will be paid to questions of justice, freedom, equality, and political authority, and how various articulations of these concepts serve as the foundations of liberalism.

We begin the course by reflecting upon who we read in a political theory survey course, noting that nearly all the major thinkers are white, male, and writing from a Western/European position. There is a rich set of foundational questions posed by these thinkers that we continue to engage today. However, it is also important to reflect on the voices that are absent and why. Throughout the course, we will circle back to this question to contextualize the thinkers and provide contemporary reflections upon their work.

In the first term, we will concentrate primarily on politics as a site of debate and conflict over the meaning of justice. We then move on to questions about the political community and equality. How are communities formed, preserved, and dissolved? Finally, we turn to questions of sovereignty, considering the scope of just authority and power.

This course is meant to teach you to see each reading as politically and philosophically interesting in its own right and in its own historical context. But another major aim of this course is to encourage you to judge for yourself which ethical and political perspectives and arguments are persuasive or compelling to you *now*, and which aren't.

Learning Outcomes

In POL200, you will learn:

- The skills to comfortably read and critically engage some of the best-known texts in the history of political thought;
- To identify major ethical and political questions and concepts that are important to the tradition of political theory;
- Critically evaluate, further develop, and discuss your own political values and commitments, including reflecting on contemporary political institutions; and
- To write argumentative essays that analyze, interpret, and compare relevant texts.

Required Texts

The following texts are required reading and can be acquired through the U of T bookstore or through the online academic bookstore VitalSource. There are other required readings that will be posted to Quercus. Unless specified otherwise, all readings indicated on the syllabus are required. We have included links to the “fixed” editions of the texts that retain the formatting of a traditional hardcopy book. VitalSource also has “reflowable” editions available for most books that resize the text to fit your screen, but this will change the page numbers and will thus not correspond with assigned page numbers.

Note: There are many editions of these texts. We'd like for you to acquire and use these editions, since class discussion will run much more smoothly if we are all using the same translations of the texts with the same pagination. Moreover, you will need to use these editions in order for your TA to accurately evaluate your use of the texts in your essays. If you need help with this, let us know!

- Plato, *Republic*. Translated by C.D.C. Reeve. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2004. ISBN 9780872207363 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781603840132>)

- Aristotle. *Politics*. Translated by C.D.C. Reeve. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2017. ISBN 9781624665578 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781624665592>)
- Al-Farabi. *The Political Writings: "Selected Aphorisms" and Other Texts*. Translated by Charles E. Butterworth. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001. ISBN 9780801489136 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781501700323>)
- Christine de Pizan. *The Book of the City of Ladies and Other Writings*. Edited by Rebecca Kingston & Sophie Bourgault. Translated by Ineke Hardy. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2018. ISBN 9781624667299 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781624667312>)
- Niccolò Machiavelli. *Selected Political Writings*. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994. ISBN 9780872202474 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781603846943>)
- Thomas More. *Utopia*. Translated by Clarence H. Miller. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014. ISBN 9780300186109 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9780300195224>)
- Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*. Edited by Edwin Curley. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1994. ISBN 9780872201774 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781603844864>)
- John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*. Edited by C.B. Macpherson. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1980. ISBN 9780915144860 (<https://www.vitalsource.com/referral?term=9781603844574>)

Course Requirements and Grade Distribution

The course has five major graded components. All written assignments are due by 11:59pm EDT of the specified deadline. Please make sure to submit your assignments in advance of the deadline as we are unable to accommodate extensions due to technological issues:

- Tutorial participation: 15%
- First Term Passage Interpretation Assignment: 15% (Due May 21, 11:59pm EDT)
- First Term Essay Assignment: 20% (Due June 11, 11:59pm EDT)
- Second Term Comparative Essay: 30% total (Due August 6th, 11:59pm EDT)
- Capstone Writing Assessment: 20% total (Assigned during the Final Assessment period)

Lectures & Tutorials

This course is a combination of lectures and tutorials. You must attend both to succeed in this course.

Lectures:

Lectures will be held live on Zoom Mondays and Wednesdays from 6-8pm EDT and recordings will later be posted on Quercus. Lectures will provide the historical context for each text, help distill the main arguments of the materials, highlight some of the most important and/or tricky

passages in the readings, and generate questions for further consideration. Lecture attendance is important for your success in the course, since we will cover material that will help you with your tutorials and writing assignments.

Tutorials:

Tutorials are held exclusively live, synchronously. **If you are unable to attend synchronous tutorials for a reason related to time zones, please be in touch with Thilo or Rachael *the first week of classes* to make alternative arrangements.**

Tutorial will be the setting in which you, your TA, and your peers can discuss the readings in greater depth and detail. Since this is the case, tutorial attendance is *mandatory*. To prepare for each tutorial meeting, you must do the reading and come prepared with questions or comments to discuss. Your final tutorial grade will rest on four factors: (1) attendance; (2) preparation - bring your readings and notes to every meeting; (3) quality of contributions to the discussion and tutorial activities; and (4) respectful engagement with your peers and tutorial leader.

That being said, we understand that sometimes emergencies or illness will prevent you from attending tutorial. You will have one free absence for the course, no questions asked. Any other absences will count against your tutorial mark. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the University is temporarily suspending the need for a doctor's note for absences because of cold or flu-like symptoms, or due to self-isolation requirements. Instead, you will need to record all absences through the Absence Declaration tool on ACORN (<https://help.acorn.utoronto.ca/blog/uFAQs/declare-an-absence/>). You should record each day of your absence as soon as it begins, up until the day before you return to classes or other academic activities. The University will use this information to provide academic accommodation and to monitor overall absences. You should also let your TA know as soon as possible about any tutorial absence.

Assignments

Writing Assignments:

You will have **four writing assignments** this year. All assignments are submitted electronically through the course Quercus site. In the first term, you will have a short textual interpretation paper on a passage from Plato (1200 words) and a short essay assignment on the material from the first half of the course (1800 words). In the winter term, you will write a second comparative paper on the material from the second half of the course (1800-2100 words). There will be a capstone writing assignment during the August final assessment period. Each of these assignments will be clearly spelled out on the assignment sheet, which will be posted well in advance of your deadline.

Late work and extension policy:

All assignments that are submitted after the deadline will immediately incur a penalty of 5%. Each additional day after that will increase the penalty by 3% of the assignment weight. After 1 week, no late assignments will be accepted. **Please send all extension requests directly to the course instructors** (and not your TA).

Re-marking policy:

Should you disagree with an assigned grade, you may submit a request for reassessment to your TA. The request must (a) be submitted **no sooner than 24 hours after** the assignments have been returned (b) include a paragraph explaining why you disagree with the assigned grade, with **reference to the comments** provided to you in the original assessment of your assignment. Your assignment will then be evaluated by another TA. Please note that a grade appeal results in a “new” grade for the assignment (which could be higher, lower, or remain the same) and you do not have the option to revert back to the original grade.

Accommodations and Accessibility

Accessibility:

The University provides academic accommodations for students with disabilities in accordance with the terms of the Ontario Human Rights Code. This occurs through a collaborative process that acknowledges a collective obligation to develop an accessible learning environment that both meets the needs of students and preserves the essential academic requirements of the University’s courses and programs. Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. If you have a disability that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach us and/or the Accessibility Services office:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/accessibility-services/>

Religious observances

The University provides reasonable accommodation for the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Students have a responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences and instructors will make every reasonable effort to avoid scheduling tests, examinations or other compulsory activities at these times. Please reach out to us as early as possible to communicate any anticipated absences related to religious observances, and to discuss any possible related implications for course work.

Family care responsibilities:

The University of Toronto strives to provide a family-friendly environment. You may wish to inform me if you are a student with family responsibilities. If you are a student parent or have

family responsibilities, you also may wish to visit the Family Care Office website at <https://familycare.utoronto.ca>

Turnitin

Normally, students will be required to submit their course assignments to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their material 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.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism is unacceptable, and we are required to report all suspected cases of plagiarism. If you are not sure whether something counts as plagiarism, please don't hesitate to ask your TA or the Instructors. This guide includes links to many helpful online tutorials, style guides, and related documents to help you understand citation practice, and build correct citations for your bibliography: <https://guides.library.utoronto.ca/citing>.

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student's individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf>) outlines the behaviours that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement;
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor;
- Making up sources or facts;
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids;
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test;
- Misrepresenting your identity; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing it.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades;
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes; and
- When you knew or ought to have known you were doing so.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following procedures outlined in the Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. If students have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, they are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from their instructors or from other institutional resources.

Privacy and Copyright

This course, including your participation, will be recorded on video and will be available to students in the course for viewing remotely and after each session. Course videos and materials belong to your instructor, the University, and/or other sources depending on the specific facts of each situation and are protected by copyright. Do not download, copy, or share any course or student materials or videos without the explicit permission of the instructor. For questions about the recording and use of videos in which you appear, please contact your instructors.

Additional Supports

Writing Centres

The fourteen or so writing centres at U of T provide individual consultations with trained writing instructors, along with group teaching in workshops and courses. There's no charge for any of this instruction—it's part of your academic program. The mandate of writing centres is to help you develop writing skills as you progress through your studies. For more information or to book an appointment, visit: <https://writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science/>

Academic Success Centre

U of T offers a number of resources to help you succeed in your studies. These include helping you develop a healthy approach to learning, find confidence and motivation to study, take better notes that actually help, better prepare for tests and exams, and manage your tasks more efficiently. You can find more information here:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/academic-success/>

Health & Wellness Centre

The Health & Wellness Centre offers information on health insurance, appointments, mental health resources, and emergency support for both domestic and international students. Please visit: https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task_levels/health-and-wellness/

Required Reading and Lecture/Tutorial Schedule

Lecture 1 (May 3): Introduction to POL200Y

Why study political theory?

No required readings. Recommended:

- John Rawls, *Justice as Fairness* (pp. 1-5) (Available on Quercus)

Lecture 2 (May 5): Perspectives on political theory

- Charles Mills, “The Whiteness of Political Philosophy” in *Black Rights/White Wrongs* (pp. 181-200) (Available on Quercus)
- Plato, *Apology* (Available on Quercus)

Part I. Justice and citizenship in Ancient Greece

Tutorial 1 (May 10 & 12): Plato

Lecture 3 (May 10): Plato I: Conventional justice

- Plato, *Republic*:
 - Book I (all), pp. 1-35
 - Book II (357a-367e), pp. 36-45

Lecture 4 (May 12): Plato II: Justice in the city and the soul

- Plato, *Republic*:
 - Book II (368a-379a), pp. end of 45-59
 - Book III (412c-end) pp. 96-102
 - Book IV (419a-424c, 427a-434e, 441c-444b), pp. 103-108, 111-121, 129-133

Tutorial 2 (May 17 & 19): Plato

Lecture 5 (May 17): Plato III: Philosophy and politics

- Plato, *Republic*:
 - Book V (449a-464d, 471c-475e), pp. 136-155, 164-169
 - Book VI (484a-48b, 496a-499c), pp. 176-179, 190-193
 - Book VII (514a-521a, 540a-541b), pp. 208-214, 236-237

Lecture 6 (May 19): Plato IV: Imperfect constitutions

- Plato, *Republic*
 - Book VIII (543a-564c), pp. 238-262
 - Book IX (571a-580e), pp. 270-281

First Term Passage Interpretation Assignment due May 21

May 24 – No lecture (Victoria Day) & No tutorials this week

Lecture 7 (May 26): Aristotle I: Political community

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*: Book I; Book X.9 (pp. 3-22, 199-204) (Available on Quercus)
- Aristotle, *Politics*: Book I (all) (pp. 1-25)

Tutorial 3: Aristotle (May 31 & June 2)

Lecture 8 (May 31): Aristotle II: Citizenship

- Aristotle, *Politics*: Book II.1-5 & Book III.1-13 (pp. 26-35, 65-90)

Lecture 9 (June 2): Aristotle III: Political regimes

- Aristotle, *Politics*: Book IV.1-12; Book V.11; & Book VII.1-4, 13-17 (pp. 101-122, 166-170, 191-199, 212-226)

Part II. Virtue, religion, and feminism in the Medieval Period

Tutorial 4 (June 7 & 9): Al-Farabi

Lecture 10 (June 7): Al-Farabi I: Religion and politics

- Alfarabi, *The Political Writings*: “Enumeration of the Sciences” (pp. 76-84) & “Book of Religion” (pp. 93-113)

Lecture 11 (June 9): Al-Farabi II: Excellence and the virtuous city

- Alfarabi, *The Political Writings*: “Selected Aphorisms” (pp. 11-67)

First Term Essay Assignment due June 11

Lecture 12 (June 14): Pizan I: Challenging stereotypes

- Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*: Book I.1-19, I.27, I.33-37, & I. 43 (pp. 21-59, 70-71, 77-81, 88-90)

Summer break (June 17 – July 4)

Part III. Political realism and idealism in the Renaissance

Tutorial 5 (July 5 & 7): Pizan

Lecture 13 (July 5): Pizan II: Medieval feminism

- Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*: Book II.7-18, II.28-9, II.37-46, II.53, II.64, II.66 & Book III.1, III.19 (pp. 106-119, 127-131, 141-149, 164-166, 181-182, 183-184; 189-190, 219- 221)

Lecture 14 (July 7): Machiavelli I: A new political science?

- Machiavelli, “*The Prince*” in *Selected Political Writings*: Ch. 1-10, 15-19, 25-26 (pp. 5-45, 47-63, 74-80)

Tutorial 6 (July 12 & 14): Machiavelli

Lecture 15 (July 12): Machiavelli II: Origins of republicanism

- Machiavelli, “*The Discourses*” in *Selected Political Writings*: Dedicatory Letter and Book I.1-6, 11-13, 16-18, 55, 58 & Book II.2 (pp. 81-101, 113-129, 150-158, 165-171)

Lecture 16 (July 14): More I: Satire as political critique

- More, *Utopia*: “Thomas More to Peter Giles, Greetings” & Book I (pp. 3-50)

Tutorial 7 (July 19 & 21): More

Lecture 17 (July 19): More II: Utopia

- More, *Utopia*: Book II & “Thomas More to His Friend Peter Giles, Warmest Greetings” (pp. 51-139)

Lecture 18 (July 21): Cavendish: Political science fiction

- Cavendish, *The Blazing World* in *Margaret Cavendish: Essential Writings* (pp. 171–199) (Available on Quercus)

Part IV. The early modern foundations of liberalism: freedom, oppression, order, revolution

Tutorial 8 (July 26 & 28): Hobbes

Lecture 19 (July 26): Hobbes I: The state of nature

- Hobbes, *Leviathan*: “Dedicatory Letter”, “Introduction”, and Ch. 4-6, 10, 13-16 (pp. 1-5, 15-34, 50-57, 74-105)

Lecture 20 (July 28): Hobbes II: Sovereignty and the social contract

- Hobbes, *Leviathan*: Ch. 17-18, 21, 26-29 (pp. 106-118, 136-145, 172-219)

August 2 – No lecture (Civic holiday) & No tutorials this week**Lecture 21 (August 4): Equality and revolution**

- Müntzer, “A Highly Provoked Defense” & “Twelve Articles” (in *Radical Reformation*, Baylor ed.) (pp. 74–94, 231–238) (Available on Quercus)
- Winstanley et al., “A Declaration from the Poor Oppressed People of England” (in *Law of Freedom and other writings*, C. Hill ed.) (pp. 99–108) (Available on Quercus)

Second Term Comparative Essay due August 6th

Tutorial 9 (August 9 & 11): Locke

Lecture 22 (August 9): Locke I: Natural rights

- Locke, *Second Treatise*: Ch. 1-9 (pp. 7-67)

Recommended:

- Barbara Arneil, “Introduction” and “Colonialism: Locke’s Theory of Property” in *John Locke and America: The Defense of English Colonialism* (pp. 1-2, 132-167) (Available on Quercus)

Lecture 23 (August 11): Locke II: Representative government

- Locke, *Second Treatise*: Ch. 10-19 (pp. 65-124)

Lecture 24 (August 16): Oppression and dispossession

- Victor P. Lytwyn, “A Dish with One Spoon: The Shared Hunting Grounds Agreement in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley Region” in *Papers of the 28th Algonquin Conference* (pp. 210-227) (Available on Quercus)
- Stacy Clifford Simpican, *The Capacity Contract* (Chapter 1, pp. 25-46) (Available on Quercus)

August final assessment period (August 18 – 30)***Capstone Writing Assignment assigned during the Final Assessment period***