



Lakehead University
Ancient and Medieval Political Thought (2016)
POLI-2510-FA
MW 11:30-1:00 pm
Ryan Building 1021

Instructor: Dr. Patrick Cain (Political Science)
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Office hours: Tuesdays 2:30-3:30 pm (or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on ancient and medieval thinkers with the purpose of introducing students to some of the most important political philosophers and concepts in the tradition. The writers from these periods provide us with a series of inquiries into how we should live and how we should live together. In doing so, they provocatively raise questions of justice, virtue, freedom, and the political order. We will read and discuss their work with the purpose of achieving an understanding of the presented arguments and concepts on their own terms, and with the aim of gaining a critical perspective on the politics and ethics of our own time.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Texts:

Because we will refer often to the text during class, and because some translations are better than others, please purchase the editions listed.

1. Plato and Xenophon, *Apologies*. Focus/Hackett.
2. Plato, *Gorgias*. Focus/Hackett.
3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. University Of Chicago Press.
4. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality, and Politics*. Hackett.

Recommended Reading:

1. Homer, *Iliad* (any translation)

Grading:

Term Paper: 30%

Final Exam: 30%

Reading Assignments: 10% X 2 Assignments = 20%

Reading Quizzes: 2.5% X 4 = 10%

Participation: 10%

Assignment and Grading Details:*Reading Assignments*

Each student is to select and complete any 2 of the 5 listed reading assignments (each assignment is associated with a particular set of readings). Each reading assignment is worth 10% of the final grade.

Assignments will generally consist of one set of questions based on the day's readings, which will be posted on the course website. In response to each selected prompt, student should construct a single brief essay of 1250-1500 words. Each reading assignment is worth 10% of the final grade.

Students will submit an electronic copy (through the course website) of their reading assignments at the beginning of class time on the prescribed date. Papers will not be accepted late for any reason, as one of their purposes is to measure and develop student's ability to independently read and analyze difficult texts without the benefit of a direct lecture from the instructor. Missing and late assignments will be given a grade of zero. If an assignment cannot be completed on time, then students should select a different topic to complete.

Reading Quizzes

There will be 6 quizzes based on the assigned readings for the day worth 2.5% each. They will not be announced in advance, and cannot be made up for late or absent students. To cover unavoidable absences, the lowest 2 quiz scores will be dropped, with the result that the top four quiz scores will count for a total of 10% of the final grade (2.5% X 4).

Term Paper

Paper topics to be distributed. Unless otherwise stated, the paper is due in class on the date scheduled. A late paper will see a grade deduction of 5% per day. Extensions may be requested in advance of the due date, but not afterwards.

Class Participation

Although the instructor will regularly lecture, much of class time will also be spent discussing the assigned readings. Students are expected to fully participate in this discussion. To do so, students should: 1. Read assigned material carefully; 2. Bring the readings to class; 3. Be prepared to discuss the readings; 4. Avoid being inattentive and/or appearing inattentive.

In order to facilitate discussion, and in order to allow the lectures to be executed in the most effective manner, students are required to follow the seating direction of the instructor, who will advise students which seats are available for use.

Class Readings

The readings from this course involve complicated ideas and difficult arguments. Moreover, the presentation of these ideas and arguments sometimes take forms that may not be familiar to students. Students should therefore read the assigned readings carefully, slowly, and several times in order to grasp their content. The importance of this task is reflected in the weight of the grade given to reading assignments (20%), reading quizzes (10%), and class participation (10%).

Other Policies:

Communication

The instructor will regularly communicate with students about a variety of matters, both through in-class announcements and via email using students' Lakehead email account. Students are encouraged to contact the instructor with any questions that arise during the course of the semester. While course administrative questions are entirely appropriate, students are also encouraged to meet with the instructor to discuss questions related to the course's subject matter. Students are reminded that while email is appropriate for factual inquiries, more complex questions are usually best handled in person.

Electronic Devices

No laptops are allowed. Cell phones should be left at the front of the class, or should not be visible to the instructor (e.g. placed in a bag or purse). If a cell phone is visible, the instructor will assume that it is being used. No audio or video recording of the class is allowed without the permission of the instructor. If permission is granted, recording is allowed solely for private use.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is expected of all Lakehead University students. Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students are expected to make themselves fully familiar with Lakehead's policy in this area. Although all these policies will be enforced in full, it is worth emphasizing the following:

Plagiarism involves presenting another's words, work, ideas, theories, or interpretation as one's own.

To avoid plagiarism, writers should always:

1. Put quotation marks around any words from sources
2. Paraphrase material completely; changing (with the help of a thesaurus) or rearranging a few words or the tense of a verb is not paraphrasing.
3. Give accurate and complete citations for all material *including paraphrased material.*
4. Avoid borrowing entire arguments or approaches to a subject from another writer. Make it 'original' while staying faithful to the assignment parameters.

COURSE SCHEDULE

(Readings and schedule will be adjusted throughout the year
at the instructor's discretion)

- 9/7 Course Outline
Introductory Lecture: Political Thought Ancient and Modern
- 9/12 Plato, *Apology of Socrates to the Jury*
- 9/14 Xenophon, *Apology of Socrates to the Jury*
- 9/19 Plato, *Gorgias*, 447a-465e
- 9/21 Plato, *Gorgias*, 466a-479e
- 9/26 Plato, *Gorgias*, 480e-487e
- 9/28 Plato, *Gorgias*, 488a-506e
- 10/3 Plato, *Gorgias*, 507a-527e
Reading Assignment #1 Due
- 10/5 Plato, *Gorgias*, 447a-527e
- 10/10 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
- 10/12 **FALL BREAK**
- 10/17 Aristotle, *Ethics* 1.1-1.5
- 10/19 Aristotle, *Ethics* 1.7-2.4
- 10/24 Aristotle, *Ethics* 2.5-3.5
- 10/26 Aristotle, *Ethics* 3.6-4.9
Reading Assignment #2 Due
- 10/31 Aristotle, *Ethics* 5.1-5.11
- 11/2 Aristotle, *Ethics* 6.1-6.13
- 11/7 Aristotle, *Ethics* 8.1-8.14
Reading Assignment #3 Due
- 11/9 Aristotle, *Ethics* 9.1-9.12
- 11/14 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (ST) I.I.1.Articles 1-2 (available
online at <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1001.htm#article1>)
St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (ST) I.I.2.Articles 2-3 (available

online at <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/1002.htm>)

Reading Assignment #4 Due

11/16 St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality and Politics*, chapter 2, ST I.II.90-92
Term Paper Due

11/21 St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality and Politics*, chapter 2, ST I.II. 93-95
Reading Assignment #5 Due

11/23 St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality and Politics*, chapter 2, ST I.II. 96-97,
Note (pg 75),

11/28 St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality and Politics*, chapter 2, ST I.II.100, ST
I.II.105

11/30 St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality and Politics*, chapter 8, ST II.II.47, ST
II.II.50

12/5 St. Thomas Aquinas, *On Law, Morality and Politics*, chapter 4, ST II.II.66, ST
II.II.77

FINAL EXAM (Check University Exam Schedule)