



Lakehead University
Ancient and Medieval Political Thought (2012)
POLI-2510-FA
MW 11:30-1:00 – Braun Building 1021

Instructor: Dr. Patrick Cain (Political Science)
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Office hours: Wednesday 1-3:00 pm and Tuesday 2:30-4:30 pm (or by appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the ancient and medieval periods with the purpose of introducing students to some of the most important political thinkers 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, 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 ethical practices 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 (especially the Greek texts).

1. Aristophanes, *The Assembly of Women*. Prometheus Books
2. Plato, *Republic*. Basic Books
3. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. University Of Chicago Press
4. Shakespeare, *Coriolanus*. Oxford University Press
5. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Treatise on Law*. Hackett

Grading:

Paper 1: 20%
Paper 2: 25%
Final Exam: 20%
Reading Assignments: 4% X 5 Assignments = 20%
Participation: 15%

Assignment and Grading Details:

Reading Assignments

Each student is to select and complete 5 of the 13 listed reading assignments (each assignment is associated with a particular set of readings—see Course Schedule for list). Each reading assignment is worth 4% of the final grade.

Assignments will generally consist of one or two set of questions based on the day's readings. Students will answer the questions in full sentence form, filling 2-3 double spaced pages with standard font size (12 inch Times New Roman or equivalent size) and 1 inch margins.

Each reading assignment's questions will be sent to students via email at least 24 hours prior to its due date. All reading assignments are due in-person at the beginning of the class for which they are assigned, and will not be accepted late for any reason. Missing assignments will be given a grade of zero.

Papers: Paper topics to be distributed. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are due in class on the date scheduled. Late assignments will see a grade deduction of 2% 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 quizzes/reading assignments (20%) and class participation (15%).

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

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. Laptop use is not allowed. No audio or video recording of the class is allowed without the permission of the instructor.

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)*

- 9/10 Course Outline
Introductory Lecture: Ancient Political Thought and the Problem of Socrates
- 9/12 Aristophanes, *Assembly of Women*
- 9/17 Aristophanes, *Assembly of Women* (Reading Assignment #1)
- 9/19 Plato, *Republic*, Book 1 (Reading Assignment #2)
- 9/24 Plato, *Republic*, Book 1 (Reading Assignment #3)
- 9/26 Plato, *Republic*, Book 2
- 10/1 Plato, *Republic*, Book 3
- 10/3 Plato, *Republic*, Book 4 (Reading Assignment #4)
- 10/8 Thanksgiving – No Class
- 10/10 Plato, *Republic*, Book 5 (Reading Assignment #5)

- 10/15 Plato, *Republic*, Books 6-7 (selections to be announced) (Reading Assignment #6)
- 10/17 Aristotle, *Ethics* I (Reading Assignment # 7)
- 10/22 Aristotle, *Ethics* I
Paper 1 Due
- 10/24 Aristotle, *Ethics* II
- 10/29 Aristotle, *Ethics* III (Reading Assignment # 8)
- 10/31 Shakespeare, *Coriolanus* (Reading Assignment #9)
- 11/05 Aristotle, *Ethics* IV (Reading Assignment #10)
- 11/07 Aristotle, *Ethics* V-VII (selections TBA)
- 11/12 Aristotle, *Ethics* VIII (Reading Assignment # 11)
- 11/14 Aristotle, *Ethics* IX-X (selections TBA)
- 11/19 St. Thomas Aquinas, Introduction, *Summa Theologica* I.I.1 (Article 1 only)-2
Paper 2 Due
- 11/21 St. Thomas Aquinas, On Natural Law, *Summa Theologica* II.II.90-92 (Reading Assignment #12)
- 11/26 St. Thomas Aquinas, On Natural Law, *Summa Theologica* II.II.93-95 ((Reading Assignment #13)
- 11/28 St. Thomas Aquinas, On Natural Law, *Summa Theologica* II.II.96-97
- 12/03 St. Thomas Aquinas, On the Judicial Precepts, *Summa Theologica* I.II.105

Final Exam

