

POLS*2000 - Political Theory

CALENDAR INFORMATION

A study of the philosophic and ideological developments which have led to the emergence of the modern state and contemporary politics.

Credit Weighting: [0.50]**Pre-/Co-Requisites:****Restrictions:** PHIL*2280**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION****Name:** Prof. Mark Harding**Email:** mark.harding@uoguelph.ca**Office Location:** MCKN 546**GENERAL DETAILS**

This course introduces students to the history of Western political thought, focusing on the transition from ancient to modern political philosophy. Political theory is not merely a historical study but an exploration of the enduring ideas and questions that have shaped political communities across time. By engaging with these fundamental questions, students will gain the analytical tools to understand, critique, and appreciate both our current political context and the broader tradition of Western political philosophy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Informational: to have students gain familiarity with the arguments and positions of the thinkers and texts covered;
2. Analytical: to have students be able to analyze the arguments for, and explore the implications of, the thinkers' attempts to set out what they take to be the foundational ideas and questions for a political community and the individuals within it; and,
3. Critical: to have students be able to take a careful and worked-out position—both interpretatively within the texts and thematically with regard to the overarching concerns or tensions that run through the material—and to defend that position using the intellectual resources gained in the course.
4. Programmatical: to be able to have the foundational knowledge of key Western political philosophers to be prepared to take upper-year courses in political theory.

COURSE FORMAT

This course will be delivered face-to-face. Lectures will not be live-streamed or recorded.

METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

Participation
In-class tests
Final Exam

REQUIRED READING

Plato, Four Texts on Socrates: Plato's Euthyphro, Apology, and Crito and Aristophanes' Clouds (Trans. Thomas G. West & Grace Starry West) (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998). [\$21]

Aristotle, Politics (Oxford World's Classics) (Trans. Ernest Barker) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009). [\$14.50]

Niccolò Machiavelli, The Prince (Trans. Harvey Mansfield) (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998). [\$17.25]

Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan (Oxford World's Classics) (Ed. J.C.A. Gaskin) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998). [\$11]

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Discourse on Inequality (Oxford World's Classics) (Trans. Franklin Philip) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999). [\$11]