POLI 300A: Ancient and Medieval Political Thought
Fall 2018
Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday 9:30AM – 10:20AM
COR A229

Matthew Law: law@uvic.ca
Office Hours: Tuesday, 12:30PM – 2:30PM (DTB A334), or by appointment.

Course Description:
In this course, we will explore foundational texts from the ancient world that have informed contemporary Western political thought. These texts, for better and worse, continue to inform the terms of many political debates today. They explore, and offer answers to, questions about the nature of justice, democracy, politics, and virtue. In reading these texts, we will become acquainted with how political ideas have been defined, what these ideas exclude, how they have changed, and where they have remained the same. We will begin with an exploration of the themes and method of Plato’s dialogues before turning to the response and reactions of his student, Aristotle. Jumping ahead over a thousand years, we then turn to the revival of Aristotelian ideas in the writings of St. Thomas Aquinas. Finally, we will explore the resurgence of the form of the allegorical city (Plato’s Republic) in Christine de Pizan’s radical critique of the status of women in The Book of the City of Ladies.

Course Texts:
Plato. Symposium. (Oxford University Press)
Plato. Republic. 3rd Edition. (Basic Books)
Aristotle. Politics. (Lits)
Aquinas. On Law, Morality and Politics. 2nd Edition. (Hackett)
Pizan, Christine de. The Book of the City of Ladies. (Penguin)

It is highly recommended that students use the assigned editions of Aquinas and Pizan as these translations will be referred to in class. Different editions of the works of Plato or Aristotle are acceptable insofar as they use the Stephanus and Bekker numbers.

Course Evaluation:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Quote and Comment (x4)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
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Participation (10%): Students are expected to come to class each week having done the readings and ready to participate in class discussion. Attendance will be recorded and failure to attend at least 90% of courses will result in an incomplete grade for the course. It is strongly advised that students come to class with a passage from the readings that they would like to discuss or a question based on the readings – see the Quote and Comment assignment for a guideline.
**Quote and Comment (40%):** Students are expected to complete a total of **four** quote and comment assignments. **Students are expected to do one Quote and Comment assignment per course text. (Excluding Plato’s Symposium).** In these assignments, students are expected to pick a passage from the week’s readings and write a 600-800 word reflection or response to the reading. The purpose of these assignments is to encourage a close reading of the text and to explore its themes, its relation to other texts of political theory, and/or its relevance for contemporary politics. These reflections also offer an opportunity for early feedback on your writing.

*Quote and Comment assignments are due **AT LEAST TWO DAYS BEFORE** in-class discussion of the week’s readings.*

Quote and Comment assignments are to be submitted through CourseSpaces.

**Essay Proposal (10%):** The essay proposal assignment is designed to assist you with the formation of an argument for your final essay. (Essay topics will not be provided but students may draw from the ideas developed in the Quote and Comment assignments.) The proposal is expected to be three double-spaced pages in length (12 point, Times New Roman font). The proposal should include textual references to at least **two** of the main course texts. Secondary sources are not required but encouraged where relevant.

The deadline for the proposal is **Tuesday, November 2nd by 10:00pm.**

**Proposals must be submitted through CourseSpaces.**

**Final Essay (40%):** For the final essay I expect evidence of a close reading of at least two of the course texts. Students are encouraged to draw connections between course texts on related themes. Students are encouraged to write on the implications of such themes for contemporary political problems or theory provided that such arguments remain grounded in the text. However, students may also choose to engage in a deep comparative textual analysis of the course texts. In doing so, my expectation is that students highlight *why* such differences between texts are important for the way they frame a discourse, or for the kinds of problems they pose. *Essays must have an argument.*

The final essay should be between 10 and 12 pages (double-spaced) in length. Chicago is the standard citation style for writing in political theory, however APA and MLA are acceptable.

The final essay is due on **Sunday, December 12th by 10:00pm, submitted through CourseSpaces.**

**Late Policy**

Late assignments are incomplete assignments. Extensions will only be granted in cases of illness or family emergency.

**Incomplete Policy**

Failure to complete and submit all assignments will result in a “N” grade for the course.
Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offences.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity, which can be found on pages 32-34 of the undergraduate calendar.

Please see the (revised) academic integrity policy: http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

UVic Grading Scale

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<tr>
<th>Passing Grades</th>
<th>Grade Point Value</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
<td>Exceptional, outstanding and excellent performance. Normally achieved by a minority of students. These grades indicate a student who is self-initiating, exceeds expectation and has an insightful grasp of the subject matter.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>85 – 89</td>
<td>Very good, good and solid performance. Normally achieved by the largest number of students. These grades indicate a good grasp of the subject matter or excellent grasp in one area balanced with satisfactory grasp in the other area.</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>80 – 84</td>
<td>Satisfactory, or minimally satisfactory. These grades indicate a satisfactory performance and knowledge of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
<td>Marginal Performance. A student receiving this grade demonstrated a superficial grasp of the subject matter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>73 – 76</td>
<td>Unsatisfactory performance. Wrote final examination and completed course requirements; no supplemental.</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>70 – 72</td>
<td>Did not write examination or complete course requirements by the end of term or session; no supplemental.</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>65 – 69</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>60 – 64</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50 – 59</td>
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Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.

Schedule (Subject to Revision):

Week 1
September 5th: Introduction
September 7th: Plato, Symposium, 172a-189d

Week 2
September 11th: Plato, Symposium, 189e-203b
September 12th: Plato, Symposium, 203c-223d
September 14th: Plato, Republic, Book 1

Week 3
September 18th: Plato, Republic, Book 2
September 19th: Plato, Republic, Book 3
September 21st: Plato, Republic, Book 4

Week 4
September 25th: Plato, Republic, Book 5
September 26th: Plato, Republic, Book 5 (cont’d)
September 28th: Plato, Republic, Book 6

Week 5
October 2nd: Plato, Republic, Book 6 (cont’d)
October 3rd: Plato, Republic, Book 7
October 5th: Plato, Republic, Book 7 (cont’d)

Week 6
October 9th: Plato, Republic, Book 8
October 10th: Plato, Republic, Book 9 (Final Date for Q&C #1)
October 12th: Plato, Republic, Book 10

Week 7
October 16th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 1
October 17th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 2
October 19th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 3
Week 8
October 23rd: Aristotle, Politics, Book 3 (cont’d)
October 24th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 4
October 26th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 4 (cont’d)

Week 9
October 30th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 5
October 31st: Aristotle, Politics, Book 5 (cont’d)
November 2nd: Aristotle, Politics, Book 6
(ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE NOVEMBER 2nd BY 10:00PM ON COURSESPACES)

Week 10
November 6th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 7
November 7th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 7 (cont’d) (Final Date for Q&C #2)
November 9th: Aristotle, Politics, Book 8

Week 11
November 13th: NO CLASS – READING BREAK
November 14th: NO CLASS – READING BREAK

Week 12
November 20th: Aquinas, On Law, Morality and Politics, Chapter 2, pp. 50-96.
November 21st: Aquinas, On Law, Morality and Politics, Chapter 3. (Final Date for Q&C #3)
November 23rd: Aquinas, On Law, Morality and Politics, Chapter 6, 7, and 8.

Week 13
November 30th: de Pizan, The Book of the City of Ladies, Part 2, pp. 91-143.

Week 14
December 4th: de Pizan, The Book of the City of Ladies, Part 2, pp. 143-198. (Final Date for Q&C #4)
December 5th: de Pizan, The Book of the City of Ladies, Part 3.

FINAL ESSAY DUE DECEMBER 12TH BY 10:00PM ON COURSESPACES