

# PSCI 225: Classics in Political Thought

Spring 2019

Tuesdays, 11.30-2.20, AL 124

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*\*Please remember: the syllabus is subject to change to suit class needs.\**

**Instructor:** Dr. Christopher Bennett

**Email Address:** [christopher.bennett@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:christopher.bennett@uwaterloo.ca)

**Office Location:** Hagey Hall 354

**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 1-2.20; also readily available by appointment

## ***Contact Policy:***

Please always email me from your Waterloo University account and indicate your reason for emailing in the subject line (e.g. Assignment #3; Feedback participation; etc.), along with the course code. Best practice in writing emails also includes a greeting and a signature. While I am less fussy than many, you will encounter professors, bosses, etc., who will absolutely refuse to respond to emails that omit those. I recommend getting in the habit of writing emails as early as possible.

To see me in person, it is best to come by during my offices hours. I am also available to meet at other times by appointment. I am in the office quite a bit outside of these times, so it will be easy to catch me!

## **Course Description**

What is justice? Why should I obey the state? What do I owe my fellow citizen? What is the good life?

In this course, we will discuss a range of classical answers to these (and similar) questions, beginning with Plato and finishing with St. Augustine. The texts discussed contain some of the earliest articulations of ideas that have become commonsensical features of Western political thought. This course will therefore help students understand where their political views come from, as well as improve the quality of their thoughts about politics.

While this course is about historical ideas, it is not a history course, but a course in normative political theory. We will take ideas as they come to us and scrutinize them to the best of our ability, treating them as substantive political and philosophical claims rather than as historical artefacts.

## **Expectations:**

I expect that all of us, myself included, will arrive in class having completed the necessary preparation and ready to engage constructively with one another. Taking responsibility for one's own learning is crucial to success at university, as well as life more generally.

## **Course Objectives:**

This course will help students learn to:

1. identify key historical thinkers and their main ideas;
2. engage with and evaluate political and philosophical claims;
3. develop rigorous and thoughtful moral claims about the political world.

## **Texts:**

Texts for this course will be available electronically. If you have any issues finding course materials, please let me know.

## **Course Requirements:**

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Due date</b>
In-class test (weeks 1 - 4, inclusive)	35%	June 4 <sup>th</sup>
Paper on Cicero <i>On obligations</i>	30%	July 9 <sup>th</sup>
Final exam (all weeks)	35%	TBD – final exam period
<b>Total:</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## **Assignment descriptions**

- A. Late policy: The syllabus clearly outlines the deadline for each assignment and I have put significant thought into the spacing of assignments, given the work required. Furthermore, I am quite happy to work with students who have extenuating circumstances that require special consideration (usually an extension). With that in mind, late marks will be deducted as follows: 5% for the first day and 2% per day after that. I will not accept assignments that are more than 10 days late. Weekends count as two days.

Examples:

1 day late: -5%

2 days late: -7%

7 days late: -17%

11 days late: submission refused

Please do get in touch with me as early as possible if you are having any issues completing an assignment, ideally before the deadline. I am very happy to help every student meet the deadlines wherever possible. That said, I stick to the rules as a matter of fairness.

- B. Assignment outlines: I will always provide an assignment outline and marking rubric on LEARN. These will answer many of your questions about the assignment (e.g. how do I submit it?).

## **The Writing Centre:**

The Writing Centre works across all faculties to help students clarify their ideas, develop their voices, and write in the style appropriate to their disciplines. Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. You can make multiple appointments throughout the term, or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit

www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre. Group appointments for team-based projects, presentations, and papers are also available.

Please note that writing specialists guide you to see your work as readers would. They can teach you revising skills and strategies, but will not proof-read or edit for you. Please bring hard copies of your assignment instructions and any notes or drafts to your appointment.

## Style Guidelines

Please submit all of your written work with the following specifications.

*Font* – Times New Roman

*Font size* – 12-point font

*Margins* – 2.54 cm / 1-inch margins

*Page numbers* – beginning on the first page of text, not the title page

*Citation style* – Please use the American Journal of Political Science style. This means embedded citations and a bibliography at the end. Footnotes are allowable for explanatory digressions or notes of clarification. If you have any concerns about how use this style, please refer to the reading list for examples of how to do it right.

*Headings* – Yes, you can use headings and subheadings in your submitted work.

## Grade Scale

<b>Letter</b>	<b>% Range</b>	<b>Value</b>	<b>Letter</b>	<b>% Range</b>	<b>Value</b>
<b>A+</b>	90-100	95	<b>C</b>	63-66	65
<b>A</b>	85-89	89	<b>C-</b>	60-62	62
<b>A-</b>	80-84	83	<b>D+</b>	57-59	58
<b>B+</b>	77-79	78	<b>D</b>	53-56	55
<b>B</b>	73-76	75	<b>D-</b>	50-52	52
<b>B-</b>	70-72	72	<b>F+</b>	42-49	46
<b>C+</b>	67-69	68	<b>F</b>	35-41	38
<b>C</b>	63-66	65	<b>F-</b>	0-34	32
<b>C-</b>	60-62	62			

## Topic outline:

Readings for weeks 1-8 are available in the texts for purchase at the book store.

Readings for weeks 9-12 are available as PDFs online.

### ***Week 1 – May 7<sup>th</sup>***

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
<b>Optional:</b> read Plato’s <i>Republic</i> , 514a to 521b (9 pages), his Allegory of the Cave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Housekeeping</li> <li>- Pre-Socratic philosophy</li> <li>- The concept of truth</li> <li>- Plato’s Allegory of the Cave</li> </ul>

### ***Week 2 – May 14<sup>th</sup>***

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Plato’s <i>Republic</i> , chapter 1 (40 pages)	- Plato’s opening arguments

### ***Week 3 – May 21<sup>st</sup>***

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Plato’s <i>Republic</i> , chapter 2 (12 pages) and chapter 6 (25 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Plato on morality</li> <li>- reasons and passions (cf. Hume)</li> </ul>

### ***Week 4 – May 28<sup>th</sup>***

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Plato, part of <i>Defence of Socrates</i> (p. 41 onwards, from 10b onwards, “Now someone may perhaps say...”) Plato, all of <i>Crito</i> (40 pages total)	- Socrates via Plato on personal obligations to the state

### ***Week 5 – June 4<sup>th</sup>***

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
In-class test, weeks 1-4	In-class test, weeks 1-4

### ***Week 6 – June 11<sup>th</sup>***

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Aristotle , <i>The Nicomachean Ethics</i> , book V ‘Justice’ (20 pages) Aristotle , <i>The Nicomachean Ethics</i> , book X ‘Pleasure, Happiness’ (18 pages) <b>Optional</b> —we will also discuss material from the following: Aristotle, <i>The Nicomachean Ethics</i> , book I ‘The Human Good’ (22 pages)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Aristotle on justice, the (purpose of a) good life (cf. Dworkin’s distinction of a good life and a life well lived)</li> </ul>

**Week 7 – June 18<sup>th</sup>**

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , the following selection (42 pages total) - Book II, chapter 5 - Book III, chapters 2-5 - Book VII, chapters 1-3	- Aristotle’s political views (on property, citizenship, collective agency, justice, among other things)

**Week 8 – June 25<sup>th</sup>**

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Aristotle, <i>The Art of Rhetoric</i> , Book I, chapters 9-15 (26 pages) <b>Optional</b> —we will also discuss material from the preceding 8 chapters of Book I, as well as Book II, chapters 12-17.	- Deliberative, epideictic, and judicial rhetoric - Does it matter if Trump really has all the best words? E.g., tremendous, spectacular, low-energy, collusion-delusion, etc.

**Week 9 – July 9<sup>th</sup>**

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Epicurus, <i>Letter to Menoecus</i> and <i>Principle Doctrines</i> (6 ½ pages)	- rational hedonism - ideas from Sextus Empiricus, <i>Against the Rhetoricians</i>

Paper due (paper due on Cicero) \*\*\*Paper due on LEARN and hardcopy at the start of class\*\*\*

**Week 10 – July 16<sup>th</sup>**

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
Epictetus, <i>The Handbook (Encheiridion)</i> (17 pages) Marcus Aurelius, <i>Meditations</i> (1-page passage from Book 3)	- Stoicism

**Week 11 – July 23<sup>rd</sup>**

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
***extracts from Volume I – on LEARN*** Augustine, <i>Letter 153: Augustine to Macedonius</i> (17 pages) Augustine, <i>The City of God against the Pagans</i> , Book IV, chapters 3 and 4 (2 ½ pages) Augustine, <i>The City of God against the Pagans</i> , Book V, chapters 13, 19 and 20 (5 pages) <b>Optional:</b> Augustine, <i>The City of God against the Pagans</i> , Book V, chapters 9, 10 (8 pages)	- free will and determinism - Augustine on justice, private and public, and their interrelationship

**Week 12 – July 30<sup>th</sup>**

<i>Preparation</i>	<i>In-class agenda</i>
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\*\*\*extracts from Volume II – on LEARN\*\*\*

Augustine, *The City of God against the Pagans*, Book XIX, chapters 4, 15, 16, 21, 24, 25 (15 pages)

- Augustine on justice, private and public, and their interrelationship
- the source and nature of goodness

## University Regulations

### *Cross-listed course:*

Please note that a cross-listed course will count in all respective averages no matter under which rubric it has been taken. For example, a PHIL/PSCI cross-list will count in a Philosophy major average, even if the course was taken under the Political Science rubric.

### *Academic Integrity:*

*Academic Integrity:* In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility.

*Discipline:* A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g., plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-71>.

*Grievance:* A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-70>. In addition, consult <http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/student-grievances-faculty-arts-processes> for the Faculty of Arts’ grievance processes.

*Appeals:* A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 - Student Appeals, <http://uwaterloo.ca/secretariat/policies-procedures-guidelines/policy-72>.

*Academic Integrity website (Arts):* [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic\\_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html)

*Academic Integrity Office (uWaterloo):* <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/>

*Turnitin.com:* Plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) will be used to screen assignments in this course. This is being done to verify that use of all material and sources in assignments is documented. In the first week of the term, details will be provided about the arrangements for the

use of Turnitin in this course. If you have read this far, send me an email and I'll give you a one percent bonus on your final grade.

Note: students must be given a reasonable option if they do not want to have their assignment screened by Turnitin. See <http://uwaterloo.ca/academic-integrity/integrity-waterloo-faculty/turnitin-waterloo> for more information.

***Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:***

*Note for students with disabilities:* The AccessAbility Services (AS) Office, located in Needles Hall, Room 1132, collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS Office at the beginning of each academic term.

If you need to request special accommodation, please communicate with me as soon as possible. This way we can arrange for the proper arrangements with little disruption.