Politics 2237E Section 001: Introduction to Political Theory
Part One: Plato and the 'Ancients' to Machiavelli and Modernity: Sept. - Dec. 2014

Instructor: D. Long Office: SSC 4131 E-mail: dlong@uwo.ca
Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:30 – 12:30 p.m.; Tuesdays 1:30 - 3 p.m.
Prerequisite: Politics 020E
Anti-requisites: Philosophy 237E, 235F/G, 236F/g; the former Philosophy 137E;
the former Political Science 147E.

The purpose of this course is NOT to teach you that any particular 'theory of politics' is the 'right' one. Instead, the course aims to promote serious and critical thinking about politics by exposing you to some of the most influential and enduring approaches to political thought that have developed over the past 2300 years or so within the cultural boundaries of the 'western world'. For better and for worse, 'warts and all', the theories we study in this course have shaped our modern assumptions and aspirations, the strategies **and the 'blind spots'**, of modern political theory and practice.

This is not 'just' a history course, though the historical stories it includes are both interesting and important. Our core job is to understand as many as possible of the most influential images, ideas and arguments in a selection of famous texts which have had a huge impact on the development of our most basic political ideas – ideas like liberty, citizenship, power, constitutions, law, and government itself. Some of these texts, those of Adam Smith for example, have been systematically distorted by modern commentators for ideological purposes. Putting texts like Smith's *Wealth of Nations* into their proper historical context helps us to see what is being left out and what is being selected by modern interpreters and ideological 'spin doctors'. The ultimate goal is to give each student the power and the tools to make a critical, informed and independent assessment of the vocabulary of modern politics. It's all about today and about our political future in an increasingly interactive and interdependent global environment. Hiding inside the bubble of the dominant North American political paradigm is not good enough. We need to know more, not less, about ways of thinking about and doing politics that are different from our own. This course aims to broaden our political horizons – yours and mine. DL

Synopsis of First (Fall) Term:

After some preliminary conceptual and historical discussion of political theory generically, we'll begin by focussing on the **classical political philosophy of Greece** in the 4th and 3rd centuries BCE, especially on the seminal figure of Socrates (who didn't publish anything in writing) and on works by **Plato** and **Aristotle** which are still objects of study and debate today. We will also look briefly at the Classical Sceptics – the critics and rivals of Plato and Aristotle. The Greeks gave us the very word 'politics'. They started the 'western tradition'. They created "political" studies out of a fear of chaos and a yearning for stable and 'natural' order that still drives political thought and practice today.

Next we'll turn to the 5th century A.D. to investigate the thought of **St. Augustine**, in which we see the impact on political thought of two great historical developments: **the rise of the Roman Empire and the emergence of Christianity.** The Romans gave us the concept of 'Empire'. The Catholic Church gave the 'west' the idea of 'Christendom'. From 500 A.D. to at least 1650 A.D. European politics was about Princes, Emperors and Popes. The rival sources of "universal" order, peace and justice in this era were God and Caesar.

Eight hundred years later, in the works of **St. Thomas Aquinas**, the influences of Plato, Aristotle and St. Augustine are blended in a unique and powerful theory of politics, morality and society based on the important concept of 'Natural Law'. **Modern theories of jurisprudence begin with St. Thomas's theory of natural law.** Philosophy and theology are combined as foundations for a stale order expressed in the idea of law.

Finally we cross the invisible (in fact non-existent) line which divides the 'late middle ages' from the renaissance, to look at the work of the notorious **Niccolo Machiavelli**, an author denounced - and diligently read - by thinkers from Shakespeare to Henry Kissinger. Machiavelli saw no universal or natural basis for order in the world. He saw politics as the creation of an artificial ordering of things known as "lo stato" - the state. States rise and fell, he thought, according to the political skills of rulers prepared to go outside the boundaries of conventional piety or orality, and according to simple chance or luck ("fortuna"). Machiavelli may be the first modern 'realist' in the history of western political thought - or maybe just the first great irreligious cynic.

The roots of **modern social, economic and political thought**, as something different from ancient and medieval approaches, can be traced to the 17th century (1600s), and connected to the core ideas of (at least) three very famous, if not specifically political thinkers: Francis Bacon, Rene Descartes and Isaac Newton. Before the Christmas break I'll give you some key characteristics of modern political thought as it was shaped by these sources.

Lecture Topics for the Fall term:
First Class: Welcome! Everybody comfortable? Discussion of Course Outline, clarification of course requirements, explanation of course 'skill set'. Exploration of the indispensable 'Owl' web site.

Introductory Lectures: "What is …?"
What is politics?
What is 'Political Theory?
What is the narrative thread of this course? What is the story it tells?
Required Reading: this is a sort of course overview – there are no specific preparatory readings.

What is 'Classical Political Philosophy'?
Could Socrates get tenure now, since he never published anything?
Who / what are the 'Idealists' and the 'Sceptics'?
Is an 'Epicurean' a sort of 'foody'?
What's the difference between 'Ancients' and 'Moderns'?
Readings: Cahn textbook pp. 22-30, *The Crito* (the death of Socrates) and Cahn pp. 5-21, *The Apology* (Socrates's trial)
If you're curious about Scepticism: I have posted an excellent (very readable) section from Hallie's introduction to the Classical Sceptics in the "Additional Readings" folder at 'Owl". And I will have more to say about the Sceptics at the end of the Classical section of the course.

1. **The Basics of Platonism: 'It's strictly Platonic'.**
   'Human nature' - The 'Soul' and the 'Polis'; Philosophy and Sophistry / truth and power; 'Justice'; why 'idealism' is not naivety
   Reading: Plato's *Republic*, Book I (on justice and sophistry) & Books 2 - 5 (the 'Myth of the Metals'). In Cahn's course textbook. **And check out my Plato graphics in the "Graphics" file.**

2. **Issues of Platonism: 'Great - but where's the politics?'**
   Faking it - Images and Truths
   Open and closed systems: The impossibility – and authoritarianism - of the ideal.
   The political 'cycle of futility'.
   Readings: ***Republic***, Books 7, 8, 9: political regimes. In Cahn's course textbook.

3. **Plato and Aristotle: political philosophy and political science**
   Reading: Aristotle's criticisms of Plato's ideal polis - from **Aristotle's *Politics***, Bk. II, in Cahn pp. 181 - 8.

4. **Aristotle: 'the first political scientist'?**
   The Methodology of Political Science
   Politics and Ethics in Aristotle
   Readings: Selections from **Aristotle's *[Nichomachean] Ethics***: in the "Additional readings" folder at Owl, in the "More extensive excerpts from Aristotle" sub-folder, see "Aristotle Sciences" (*Ethics* Intro), "Aristotle Happiness" (*Ethics*, Book I) and "Aristotle Ethics & Politics" (*Ethics*, Book 10). These are reproduced incompletely in Cahn at pp. 154-75. Also **Aristotle's *Politics***, the first two pages (Chap. 1) of Book IV are really key: see Cahn at pp. 202 - 3

5. **Aristotle on Justice - the first great theory of justice: three kinds of justice**
   Readings: Aristotle's Nichomachean Ethics Book V, posted at Owl as "Aristotle's Three Forms of Justice", in the Aristotle sub-folder or the "Additional readings" folder.

6. **Aristotle: the *'zoon politikon'*, the citizen and the state**
   The Theory of Associations and the idea of a Polity
   Citizenship, Constitutions and Political Change
   Readings: Aristotle's *Politics*, Books I ('Political Association') and III ('Constitutions'); the first two pages (Chap. 1) of Book IV are also really important. All these readings are in Cahn at pp. 175-224.

<u>Test on "The Classics" – Plato & Aristotle</u>: in a tutorial session (i.e. 45 minutes long). Short written discussions of central ideas in their texts as highlighted in lectures and tutorial work.

7. **St. Augustine: Two 'Cities'**: Rome and Christendom
   The City of God and the 'Civitas Terrena'
   'True Justice is not of this world.'
   Readings: Selections from *The Political Writings of Saint Augustine* at 'Owl' site; see the sub-folder on "Fallen Nature and the Two Cities"

8. **St. Augustine: Christian Pessimism and Christian Platonism**
   Readings: Selections from *The Political Writings of Saint Augustine* at 'Owl' site; see the sub-folders on the "empty dreams of the classical political philosophers", and on the fate of all "earthly kingdoms".

9. **St. Thomas Aquinas: Christian Aristotelianism** - Natural Law, Politics and Justice
   Readings: My selection of "Aquinas Quotes" from his theory of law and politics, posted at 'Owl' in the St. Thomas Aquinas: theory of law" sub-folder.

Note: In the second edition (the one ordered for this year) of the textbook, Cahn has added a few bits from St. Augustine (pp. 225-36) and Saint Thomas Aquinas (pp. 237-52). There's a lot more for each of these authors at the 'Owl' site in the "Additional Readings" folder.

10. **Plato / Aristotle / Augustine / Aquinas: how they are connected and how they are distinguished from one another.**
    Readings: Nothing for this specific lecture - it is to prepare you for Test #2 the following week.

Second test: a 'Critical textual Analysis' in tutorials; one essay-style answer on ideas of the Pagans (Classics / Philosophers) and Christians (Medievals / Theologians).

11. The Skeptics (or Sceptics'): fighting 'dogmatism' with 'inquiry' and 'doubt'. The classical antidote to Plato and Aristotle.
    Reading: Hallie's Introduction to his book on Classical Skepticism. Posted at Owl in the "On the Skeptics" sub-folder, in the "Additional Readings" folder.

12. **The Two Faces of Machiavelli: The Prince & The Discourses**
    Readings: Excerpts in Cahn, pp. 256 - 281**: Book One and the Preface to Book two of *The Discourses* are the key texts.**

Note*: Please consult my lecture slide (in the "Graphics" file) on how to approach the study of Machiavelli, including a recommended sequence of specific readings.*

13. **Machiavelli: Realist? Cynic? Patriot?** The Cycle of Regimes: nature, history and political necessity; from 'virtue' to 'virtu'.
    Readings: Same as for the previous week.

    Note: DO NOT JUST READ The Prince. Part of it is in Cahn (256-70). You need also to read the excerpts from Machiavelli's Discourses in Cahn (270-81). There is at least one passage from the Discourses that I will put on a Power Point slide for you. It is essential reading, but inexplicably not included in Cahn's excerpts.

14. **Looking ahead to 'modernity':** science, ideology, secularization, democratization, deconstruction: the triumph of having and doing over being. **I will provide some key ideas from three great 'game changing' 17th century thinkers: Francis Bacon, Rene Descartes and Isaac Newton.**
    Reading: I may post an article by Sheldon Wolin on 'Modern Theory and Modern Power' at 'Owl', but other than that there will be required readings for this unit.

Christmas Test – somewhere in the Xmas Exam period - when I know the date I'll let you all know immediately. Two hours long. Two questions. Lots of choice. Opportunities to discuss three or more of all the figures and schools of thought covered in this term.

Buying the Book:

Cahn, S.M., Political Philosophy: the essential texts, Oxford University Press, Second Edition, 2011. This is a reasonably priced anthology, which we will use for the whole course, i.e. both Fall and Winter terms. It doesn't have everything I want you to read, but what it does not contain can be had on line or made available to you in a pdf file posted to the "Owl" web site. **Check out the "Additional Readings" folder at your convenience.**

Most of the texts we will read are such famous classics, and have been used in so many courses, that they can be found free on line or can be purchased in used book stores or borrowed from just about any library worth its salt.

First Term Assignments and Grades:

1) A **one-hour test** will be given **in tutorials** after we have studied the "ancients" (i.e. Plato and Aristotle and the Sceptics) [tentatively set for **the week of November 3rd – 7th**]. You will be asked **to "identify and explain the meaning and significance of" individuals, stories, concepts etc discussed in lectures and highlighted in the texts**. This is a preliminary chance for you to see how you are doing at retaining important information and understanding concepts and issues.

Value: 5% of your final grade in this course.

3) A **"critical textual analysis"** [i.e. an essay-style discussion of a short, specified passage – a quotation - from one of the authors studied to that point in the term]: **[Tentatively set for the week of November 17th – 21st] Value: 10% of your final grade in this course.**

4) A **Christmas Test** to be written in the December test period: Dec. 9th – 21st. It will be two hours long, require one long essay-style answer and two shorter answers, and cover the whole term's work. Full details of its format will be distributed in class well in advance of the test.

Value: 20% of your final grade in this course.

PLEASE NOTE: Students who do not 'show up' for and write the required assignments may be ineligible to write the final examination, and could as a result fail the course. 'Make up' tests will only be arranged in cases where documented medical or compassionate grounds for special accommodation are provided.

5) Tutorial grades:

You will be given a grade out of 5 for tutorial attendance (you lose a point every time you don't show up without providing documented medical or compassionate grounds).

Each term you will be given a grade of 10 for the quality (quantity is not enough by itself) of your participation. This means engaging in reasoned discussion, not haranguing , mud-slinging or indulging in sarcasm or destructive criticism. It refers to the quality of your listening, as indicated by your responses to what other say. It means encouraging others, being informed by reading, and making the discussions better for your participation. Everyone can do their best to achieve these goals. You don't have to be brilliant. You don't have to be right. You just have to add your voice to the conversation.

Total value of Tutorial work: 15% of your final grade in this course.

What you need to do to succeed in this course:

1. **COME TO CLASS: I only test people on what the Tutors and I have taught them – or at least tried to teach them. Use lectures and tutorial discussions to 'shop' and identify the theorists you might choose for test answers or (next term) for the essay – and also the ones you find least attractive or accessible. I truly believe that in this course, more than in most others, missing lectures puts you at a real disadvantage.**
2. **READ: I don't assume that you will have read the assigned material before you come to the relevant lectures. I hope to incite you to read it by means of the lectures. Accentuate the positive: don't obsess about reading everything assigned – read what you can, and go deeply into what you can handle best.**
3. **SPECIALIZE (see 1. Above). You do not have to study every theorist on the course in depth. You will always be given plenty of choice on tests and in essay topics. Go with your strength.**
4. **PLAN: study the schedule of lectures and assignments. Go over the formats for tests, which will be posted at 'Owl' in advance. Know what choices you have, so that you can study effectively.**
5. **RESPECT AND LEARN FROM YOUR TUTORS:** they are all graduate students, in some cases doctoral (Ph D) candidates. **They have all done something you all seek to do. They have graduated with a first-class average in Political Science.** They are (usually) more computer 'savvy' than I am. And (invariably and increasingly) younger than I am. Do not 'game' them. Work with them. I know and respect them all. They are your best resources as you seek success in this course. They are charged with assessing your tutorial participation. Make this easy by showing up and participating. I will be working with them all year to try to make the course rewarding and comfortable for all of you.
6. **DON'T FORGET: I want you to succeed. If you succeed, I succeed.**

APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

Essay course requirements

With the exception of 1000-level courses, most courses in the Department of Political Science are essay courses. Total written assignments (excluding examinations) will be at least 3,000 words in Politics 1020E, at least 5,000 words in a full course numbered 2000 or above, and at least 2,500 words in a half course numbered 2000 or above.

Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")

"Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning.
Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:
• the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
• the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence."

Security and Confidentiality of Student Work (refer to current *Western Academic Calendar* (http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/)

"**Submitting or Returning Student Assignments, Tests and Exams -** All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner. Particularly in this respect, leaving student work unattended in public areas for pickup is not permitted."

Duplication of work

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

Grade adjustments

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

Academic Offences

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:
http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf ."

Submission of Course Requirements

ESSAYS, ASSIGNMENTS, TAKE-HOME EXAMS MUST BE SUBMITTED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR (I.E., IN CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, TA'S OFFICE HOURS) OR UNDER THE INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE DOOR.

THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/

Students registered in Social Science should refer to http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/ http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/havingproblems.asp for information on Medical Policy, Term Tests, Final Examinations, Late Assignments, Short Absences, Extended Absences, Documentation and other Academic Concerns. Non-Social Science students should refer to their home faculty's academic counselling office.

Plagiarism

"Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence." (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

Plagiarism Checking: "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (http://www.turnitin.com)."

Multiple-choice tests/exams: "Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/

PLAGIARISM*

In writing scholarly papers, you must keep firmly in mind the need to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another writer's words or ideas. Different forms of writing require different types of acknowledgement. The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication, and page number.

Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

B. In adopting other writers' ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source, these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases in their suspension from the University.

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Accessibility at Western: Please contact poliscie@uwo.ca if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

SUPPORT SERVICES
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.