

**PSCI 5310 A**  
**History of Political Thought**

Tuesday 14:35 – 17:25

This course will be held remotely online

Instructor: Hans-Martin Jaeger  
Online Office Hours: Thursday 11:00 – 13:00  
(Zoom) (or by appointment)  
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**Course Description**

This course is intended – and indeed a curricular requirement – for graduate students who have not completed a full-credit course in the history of Western political thought (such as the sequence of PSCI 2301 and 2302) in the course of their post-secondary education prior to joining the Political Science Department. It is of course open to all other graduate students (and space permitting, qualified fourth-year students in Political Science granted on override) interested in revisiting and deepening their knowledge of the subject matter as well. The premise of the course is that political theory and specifically the history of political thought, apart from constituting an important subfield of intellectual investigation in its own right, is an integral part of the study of political science informing theoretical and empirical inquiry and debates in all other subfields of the discipline.

With the above parameters in mind, the course provides an advanced, albeit selective, introduction to the Western tradition of political thought. As such, it proceeds according to a dual learning trajectory. On the one hand, we will examine a small selection of emblematic and seminal texts ranging from Greek antiquity to the twentieth century in their original form (or in translation) and in relation to their intellectual and historical context. On the other hand, we will investigate this tradition as a site of contestation and active engagement in contemporary debates in political theory and political science. Following the first trajectory, we will consider some fundamental questions about politics. These questions include: What is the purpose of politics and what is the basis of political community and its organization? What is the relationship between politics and justice or morality? What role do values of liberty and equality play in politics, and in what ways have they (and their relationship) been conceived? How does politics relate to nature (including human nature) and to other spheres of human (and non-human) association, such as the family, the economy, and religion? What social divisions does politics rely on or create, and how does this affect political legitimacy? Following the second trajectory, we will consider some of the interpretative controversies around the selected primary texts and discuss the legacies and relevance of the history of political thought for political science and contemporary political practice. In this connection we will think about how to adjudicate between competing interpretations and consider if and how the Western tradition of political thought may be “both indispensable and inadequate” (Dipesh Chakrabarty) by discussing its impact and contributions (such as institutional and critical legacies) as well as its limitations and liabilities (such as particular

Greek, Judeo-Christian, colonial, patriarchal and other biases) with respect to contemporary political thought and practice.

The objective of the course is to familiarize students with a selection of important concepts, debates, and intellectual fault lines in the history of Western political thought, and to inspire and guide a critical engagement with the latter. In class discussions and assignments, students are expected to formulate their own views on the merits and limitations of different theoretical approaches. Doing so should hone students' analytical, interpretative, and critical skills in speech and writing. Students are encouraged to draw on their broader knowledge of political and intellectual history, and contemporary social and political issues as a background for the theoretical discussions.

### **Course Format**

The online format of the course is predominantly synchronous. This means you will be expected to attend all online classes on Zoom on Tuesdays between 14:35 and 17:25 (Standard Eastern Time). In case of absences from online sessions (or incidental technical difficulties with Zoom), class attendance and participation can also be made up in the asynchronous discussion forum for each class on CuLearn. However, please note that attendance and participation in synchronous class meetings is the default expectation for the course. Our online seminar sessions will put the main emphasis on class discussions (some in small groups in Zoom break-out rooms) alternating this with student mini-presentations and short introductory or synthetic presentations by the instructor (all in real time). The instructor will be available (upon prior request by email) for online office hours on Zoom on Thursdays 11:00-13:00 (Standard Eastern Time) or by appointment. Zoom access information for class meetings and office hours will be provided on CuLearn in the first week of classes.

### **Learning Outcomes**

By the end of the course, students should be able to

- identify some critical lineages and trajectories in the history of Western political thought and relate these to particular areas of interest in political science and the conduct of politics.
- differentiate and explain some major intellectual fault lines in the history of Western political thought.
- assess the merits of, and critically engage with, different and competing interpretations of contributions to the history of political thought.
- formulate and justify their own views on contributions and limitations, and the contemporary relevance of the history of Western political thought.

### **Texts**

The books listed below include most of the required readings for the course and have been ordered at the Carleton University bookstore. You can of course also purchase them from your favorite alternative bookseller, or find them online (for purchase, and in some cases, free of charge). All books containing

required readings have also been placed on reserve at the CU Library. The additional required readings (on Aristotle and Arendt) are available on CuLearn through Ares or the CU Library's E-journals.

\*\*\* Please note that for four of the six primary texts (marked with an asterisk) specific (Norton Critical) editions are required because they contain secondary materials we will read. \*\*\*

Aristotle, *Politics*. Oxford University Press (Oxford World's Classics), 1995 [or any other edition/publisher].

\*Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*, ed. by Richard E. Flathman and David Johnston. W.W. Norton (Norton Critical Edition, first edition), 1997 [first edition only, *not* second edition].

\*Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *Rousseau's Political Writings: Discourse on Inequality, Discourse on Political Economy, On Social Contract*, ed. by Alan Ritter and Julia Conaway Bondanella. W.W. Norton (Norton Critical Edition, first edition), 1987.

\*Wollstonecraft, Mary. *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, ed. by Deidre Shauna Lynch. W.W. Norton (Norton Critical Edition, third edition), 2009.

\*Marx, Karl. *The Communist Manifesto*, ed. by Frederic L. Bender. W.W. Norton (Norton Critical Edition, second edition), 2012 [second edition only, *not* first edition].

Arendt, Hannah. *The Human Condition*. University of Chicago Press, 1998 [or any other edition].

### **Requirements and Evaluation**

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Attendance & Class Participation	20%	Weekly
Mini-presentation & Discussion Questions	10%	(Sign-up request will be circulated before first class)
Two Reading Responses (600-800 words each)	30%	(Sign-up request will be circulated before first class)
Term Paper (4800-5400 words)	40%	Dec. 10

**As per early feedback guidelines, the first of the two Reading Responses will be returned by October 20.**

**Attendance and Class Participation (20%).** Attendance of synchronous class meetings on Zoom is mandatory. Please notify me in advance, if you have to miss a class meeting for compelling reasons (e.g. medical or family emergency, observance of a religious holiday). Please also notify me after the fact in cases of internet connection or other technological failures. Absences incurred for these reasons will be excused. All other absences are unexcused. Unexcused absences from synchronous class meetings (and credit for class participation) can be made up through asynchronous participation in the discussion forum for each class on CuLearn (e.g. through responses to discussion questions or, if applicable, commentary on another class member's contribution to the forum). However, please note that attendance and participation in synchronous class meetings is the default expectation for this course. Unexcused absences will lower your grade for class participation. Three or more unexcused absences will additionally lower your grade for class participation by one third of a letter grade (e.g. from A- to B+). Six or more unexcused absences will additionally lower your grade for class participation by a full letter grade (e.g. from B to C). To benefit from the course, it is essential that you read the assigned texts prior to class meetings, and that you participate actively and regularly in class discussions (including small-group discussions in the break-out rooms on Zoom). Your class participation will be evaluated based on the quality and frequency of your contributions, with greater weight given to quality. It is expected that you engage with other students' and the instructor's ideas constructively, critically, and respectfully. Quality contributions to class discussions (questions, responses, comments) demonstrate that you have read and comprehended the assigned materials; that you can analytically reflect and critically comment on the central ideas of the readings; and that you can make connections between these ideas and other themes or readings in the course.

**Mini-presentation and Discussion Questions (10%).** Each student must prepare two to three discussion questions related to the required reading(s) for one class meeting. These questions should critically engage with the class reading(s) and must be posted in the CuLearn discussion forum for the class at least 24 hours prior to our class meeting (i.e. by Monday, 14:35 at the latest). The students preparing the questions will also be responsible for leading off the class discussion with a mini-presentation (of about five minutes). The mini-presentation should convey one or two overall reactions you had to the class reading(s) and thereby explain the intellectual, political, pedagogical, or other rationale(s) of your discussion questions. A request to sign up for a date for the mini-presentation and the discussion questions will be circulated before the first class.

**Two Reading Responses (2 x 15% = 30%).** Each student must write two short (600-800 word) reading responses to the required reading(s) for a particular class: the first one for one of the classes from September 22 to October 13, the second one for one of the classes from October 20 to December 8. A request to sign up for dates for the two reading responses will be circulated before the first class. You cannot write a reading response for the class in which you are giving the mini-presentation and presenting your discussion questions. The reading responses must be sent to the instructor by email before the class meetings in which the readings will be discussed. Late submissions of the reading responses will not be accepted except in cases of an excusable absence (e.g. medical reason, family emergency, religious observance). The reading responses should identify central arguments or ideas of the assigned texts, elucidate their meaning, and critically assess their persuasiveness. This elucidation and assessment can take (or combine) different forms including (but not limited to)

- an “interpretation/analysis,” i.e. an analytical dissection, interpretative commentary, or “consistency test”/critique (e.g. discussion of internal tensions or contradictions) and assessment of the coherence of the text(s);
- a “contextualization” of the text(s) within a (or several) particular tradition(s) of political thought and an assessment of its/their contribution(s) to that tradition (e.g. pitfalls, improvements, refinements, etc.);
- a “critique,” i.e. a critical assessment of the normative status of the text(s) and/or critique of its/their political/practical, ideological, or ethical implications.

The reading responses should be coherent but do not require the organization of an essay or the use of outside sources. Reading responses for the weeks on “Contestations” (see class schedule below) should discuss at least two or three of the secondary sources (along with consideration of the original texts). When you refer to (or quote) specific points in the reading(s) you must provide the corresponding page reference(s).

**Term Paper (40%).** Each student is required to write a term paper on a topic of their choice in consultation with the instructor. The term paper is **due** by email submission to the instructor by **December 10**. The term paper should engage with one or two of the primary texts we will read in the course, and/or with the critiques and debates these texts have inspired. Engagement with the primary and secondary class readings (supplemented by outside sources) could take different forms, such as a discussion of a primary text (and/or an interpretative controversy around the text) in relation to a theoretical or political issue or debate in another subfield of political science, a deeper interpretative and/or critical exegesis/investigation of particular theoretical issues in a primary text, a comparative discussion of chosen aspects of two (or three) primary texts, or a broader consideration of a particular controversy in the secondary literature on a particular primary text.

Whichever form of engagement with the class material you choose, *the term paper must present and defend a clear argument*, i.e. a reasoned statement about the theoretical approach, comparison, relationship, question, issue, debate, etc. at hand. The paper should draw on one or several class readings as well as several outside sources. The length of the paper should be 16-18 pages double-spaced (approximately 4800-5400 words plus bibliography). All sources (class readings or outside sources including books, articles, internet sources, etc.) must be acknowledged and properly referenced in the text, with page citations where appropriate (and listed in the bibliography). Any recognized citation style is fine (parenthetical or footnotes), just be consistent. The paper should have an introduction which states your research question and argument, a main part which develops different aspects or steps of the argument, and a conclusion which summarizes the main findings of the analysis (and may point to broader implications). Please include a word count. Evaluation of the paper is based on (in declining order of importance):

- (a) the merits (originality, persuasiveness) of your argument;
- (b) the logic and clarity of your argument, and your general understanding of the subject matter;
- (c) the appropriateness and relevance of the cited readings (including a consistent citation style);
- (d) correct English grammar, spelling, and usage.

In preparation for writing the term paper each student is required to confer – either in electronic correspondence or in online office hours on Zoom – with the instructor to discuss the topic of the paper and how the student will approach the topic. Your preparation for this consultation should include

writing some notes stating the proposed paper topic, your tentative argument about this topic, and how you will go about substantiating this argument (including a list of bibliographic references). It is strongly suggested that you hold this consultation with the instructor before November to give yourself sufficient time to work on the paper.

There will be no extension of the deadline for submission of the paper, except in cases of a documented medical or family emergency (documented, that is, through the self-declaration available at <https://students.carleton.ca/2020/03/covid-19-update-final-exams-and-academic-accommodation/>).

Late submissions of the term paper will be accepted but penalized by one third of a letter grade per day (e.g. from A- to B+) for up to seven calendar days. **In the absence of circumstances warranting an extension, failure to submit the Term Paper on the due date (or within seven calendar days of the due date) will automatically result in a failing grade for the course.**

### CuLearn

The course has a CuLearn page which contains the course outline, Zoom access information, the discussion forum for each class, links to secondary-literature class readings through Ares, and ppt slides related to the instructor's introductory background presentations.

### Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

Sept. 15	Introduction
Sept. 22	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> Book I; Book III, chs. 1-13; Book IV, chs. 1-13; Book V, chs. 1-2, 8-9; Book VI, chs. 1-5; Book VII, chs. 1-7, 13-15
Sept. 29	Aristotle – Contestations: De Sepúlveda, Juan Ginés (1547/1550-51) “Democrates Alter, Or, on the Just Causes for War against the Indians,” available at <a href="http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/CCREAD/sepulved.htm">http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/CCREAD/sepulved.htm</a> De Las Casas, Bartolomé (1559/1550-51 [?]) “Apologetic History of the Indies,” available at <a href="http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/CCREAD/lascasas.htm">http://www.columbia.edu/acis/ets/CCREAD/lascasas.htm</a> Salkever, Stephen G. (1981) “Aristotle’s Social Science,” <i>Political Theory</i> 9(4): 479-508. Frank, Jill (2005) “Aristotle on the Rule of Law and the Rule of Men,” <i>International Studies Review</i> 7(3): 508-512. Mulgan, Richard (2000) “Was Aristotle an ‘Aristotelian Social Democrat’?” <i>Ethics</i> 111(1): 79-101.
Oct. 6	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> Introduction, Chapters 1, 4-6, 11-21, 26, 29, 30, 32, 46, Review and Conclusion

- Oct. 13        Hobbes – Contestations (in Hobbes, ed. by R.E. Flathman and D. Johnston):  
Leibniz, Montesquieu, Strauss, Tuck, Hampton, Johnston, Kateb, and Flathman
- Oct. 20        Rousseau, *Discourse on Inequality* (entire)  
Rousseau, *On Social Contract*  
Book I; Book II; Book III, chs. 1-3, 8-18; Book IV, chs. 1-3, 7-9
- Oct. 27        Fall break – classes suspended
- Nov. 3         Rousseau – Contestations (in Rousseau, ed. by A. Ritter and J.C. Bondanella):  
Leigh, Nisbet, Shklar, Wolff, Weil, and Barber
- Nov. 10        Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*  
[Dedication], Advertisement, Introduction, Chapters I-IV, VII, IX
- Nov. 17        Wollstonecraft – Contestations (in Wollstonecraft, ed. by D.S. Lynch):  
Guralnick, Myers, Kaplan, Poovey, Johnson, Taylor
- Nov. 24        Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (entire, but skim Prefaces and Section III)
- Marx – Contestations (in Marx, ed. by F.L. Bender):  
Harrington, Lenin, Adler, Marković, Selsam, Löwith, Lee;  
Hardt and Negri, Žižek, Fotopoulos and Gezerlis
- Dec. 1         Arendt, *The Human Condition*  
Pp. 1-78, 175-181, 188-207, 212-230, 248-257
- Dec. 8         Arendt – Contestations:  
Leonard, Miriam (2018) “Hannah Arendt and the Ancients: Preface,” *Classical Philology* 113(1): 1-5.  
Balibar, Etienne (2007) “(De)Constructing the Human as Human Institution: A Reflection on the Coherence of Hannah Arendt’s Practical Philosophy,” *Social Research* 74(3): 727-738.  
Habermas, Jürgen (1977) “Hannah Arendt’s Communications Concept of Power,” *Social Research* 44(1): 3-24.  
Pulkkinen, Tuija (2003) “Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Philosophy,” *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 28(2): 215-232.  
Schwarz, Elke (2014) “@hannah\_arendt: An Arendtian Critique of Online Social Networks,” *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43(1): 165-186.

## **Accommodations during COVID-19**

Due to COVID-19, instructors will not request or require a doctor's note when students seek accommodation for missed term work or exams due to illness. Instead, students will be asked to complete the self-declaration form available here: [https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19\\_Self-declaration.pdf](https://carleton.ca/registrar/wp-content/uploads/COVID-19_Self-declaration.pdf)

## **Academic Accommodations**

### Pregnancy

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### Religious obligation

Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf)

### Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

### Survivors of Sexual Violence

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### Student Activities

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>



For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline)

### Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

More information on the University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at:  
<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

### Intellectual property

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

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