

**PSCI 6300 (F)**  
**Political Theory I**  
Thursdays, 11:35 – 2:25  
(Please confirm location on Carleton Central)

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**Course Description**

How do we best develop conceptual or theoretical understandings of our political world? What frames of reference are most appropriate for developing these types of understanding? To what types of sources and/or authorities should we turn in seeking to develop our understanding of politics? To what extent do politics admit of systematic study? What are the necessary presuppositions for developing a systematic study of politics? In what ways and to what extent do understandings of politics rely on particular conceptions of human nature? How do our ways of understanding politics affect how we understand political change? How do they affect our conceptions of the transformative potential of political action? To what extent are politics context-dependent or context-specific? How freely can we transpose experiences or lessons from one historical or political context to another? How are the study of history and the study of politics related? Do the positing of general rules of politics tend more to illuminate or to obfuscate political phenomena in the real world and the experiences of real political actors?

Over the course of the coming term, we will examine these and other questions through the study of works by Aristotle, Christine de Pizan, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Montesquieu, Hume, Burke, and Wollstonecraft. Although all of the assigned readings are primary texts, engagement with secondary literature will figure prominently in this course. We will discuss engagement with scholarly sources at length and it will figure in students' seminar presentations and in their term paper research.

The course is designed for doctoral students who are preparing for their comprehensive examination in Political Theory

### **Evaluation at a Glance**

- Take-Home Exam (max. 25 pages) 45% **(Due Dec.22)**
- Seminar Presentations 30%
- Participation 25%

### **Evaluation in Detail**

#### **Take-Home Exam**

Throughout the term, each student will design and conduct an original research project, related to the course material. The final product for this research project will be an essay (max. 25 pages) which will be due in Brightspace as a Take-Home Exam by 11:59pm on December 22. Students will be expected to incorporate significant secondary research into their essays. Each student must meet with the professor before November 1 to discuss their research project.

The final seminar of the term will be set aside for a mini conference at which each student will deliver a 10-15 minute presentation of their essay. A discussion period will follow each presentation. Students will have the opportunity to incorporate feedback from the mini conference into their essays after their presentations and prior to the due date for these assignments (December 22).

The Take-Home Exam research projects will be discussed in detail in the first seminar of the term (Sept. 7).

#### **Seminar Presentations**

The weekly seminars will be structured around student presentations of the assigned readings. Each student will be required to make three such presentations during the term. Presentations may include discussion of secondary literature. As part of their presentations, students will upload a set of discussion questions (3-5) to Brightspace. The discussion questions must be uploaded by noon the day prior to the presentation. The presentations will be discussed in detail and students will sign up for their three during the first seminar of the term (Sept. 7).

#### **Participation**

Participation grades will reflect each student's overall contribution to the scholarly environment of the seminar. Attendance in this seminar is mandatory.

## Summary

Students are required to:

- 1) Complete assigned readings prior to each seminar
- 2) Attend weekly meetings of the seminar and participate in class discussions (25%)
- 3) Give three seminar presentations (30%)
- 4) Present their research at the mini conference (December 7)
- 5) Submit one Take-Home Exam (45%)

## Readings:

We will read from the following texts this term:

- Aristotle, *The Politics*
- Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*
- Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*
- Niccolo Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*
- Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*
- David Hume, *Essays, Moral, Political, And Literary*
- David Hume, *The History of England*
- Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
- Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*

Many of these texts are available online. Students will likely already own physical copies of some or all of them. We will discuss available editions of the texts during the first meeting of the seminar. Student who do not already own copies of particular texts and who wish to purchase them should consult the professor about their choice of editions.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1 (Sept. 7): Introduction to the Course

- Discussion of syllabus
- Sign-up for seminar presentations

### Week 2 (Sept. 14): Aristotle: *The Politics*

- Assigned Reading:
  - o *The Nicomachean Ethics*
    - Book X, chapters 6-9
  - o *The Politics*
    - Books I-IV

**Week 3 (Sept. 21): Aristotle: *The Politics***

- Assigned Reading:
  - *The Politics*
    - Books V-VIII

**Week 4 (Sept. 28): Christine de Pizan**

- Assigned Reading:
  - *The Book of the City of Ladies*
    - (excerpts)

**Week 5 (Oct. 5): Machiavelli: *The Prince***

- Assigned Reading:
  - *The Prince*

**Week 6 (Oct. 12): Machiavelli: *Discourses***

- Assigned Reading:
  - *Discourses on Livy*
    - Books 1 and 2

**Week 7 (Oct. 19): Hobbes: *Leviathan***

- Assigned Reading:
  - *Leviathan*
    - Part 1

**Week 8: (Oct. 26): No Seminar (Winter Break)**

**Week 9 (Nov. 2): Hobbes: *Leviathan***

- Assigned Reading:
  - *Leviathan*
    - Part II; Part IV (chapter xlvi and “A Review and Conclusion”)

**Week 10 (Nov. 9): Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws***

- Assigned Reading:
  - *The Spirit of the Laws*
    - Books 1-8

**Week 11 (Nov. 16): Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws***

- Assigned Reading:
  - o *The Spirit of the Laws*
    - Books 9-13; 19 (chapters 1-5, 27); 20

**Week 12 (Nov. 23): Hume: *Essays, History of England***

- Assigned Reading:
  - o *Essays, Moral, Political, and Literary*
    - “That Politics May be Reduced to a Science”
    - “Of the First Principles of Government”
    - “Of the Origin of Government”
    - “Of Parties in General”
    - “Of the Parties of Great Britain”
    - “Of Superstition and Enthusiasm”
    - “Of Civil Liberty”
  - o *The History of England*
    - Volume 3, Chapters XXXIV-XXVI (Reign of Henry VII)
    - Volume 4, Appendix III (Appendix to the reign of Elizabeth I)

**Week 13 (Nov. 30): Burke and Wollstonecraft**

- Assigned Reading:
  - o Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (excerpts)
  - o Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Men*

**Week 14 (Dec. 7): Mini Conference**

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**Key Dates: Summary**

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<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
September 7	Intro to the Course	
September 14	Aristotle	
September 21	Aristotle	
September 28	Christine de Pizan	
October 5	Machiavelli	
October 12	Machiavelli	
October 19	Hobbes	
October 26	No Class: Fall Break	
November 2	Hobbes	

November 9	Montesquieu	
November 16	Montesquieu	
November 23	Hume	
November 30	Burke/Wollstonecraft	
December 7	Mini Conference	
<b>December 22</b>		<b>Take-Home Exam</b>

## Course Policies

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**Copyright:** Lectures and course materials (including any PowerPoint presentations, videos, or similar materials) are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not allow others to reproduce, distribute, or make available lecture notes and/or course materials, whether publicly or for commercial purposes, without the professor's express written consent.

### Citations and Bibliography

All written assignments must include a full list of sources used. In addition, students must indicate all references to the texts in footnotes or in-text citations. You are free to use the citation style of your choice (APA, Chicago, etc.), so long as you employ your chosen style consistently and correctly throughout your assignment. For more details on how to provide proper citations, please consult the MacOdrum Library website:

<https://library.carleton.ca/help/citing-your-sources>

As a university student, you are a member of a community of scholars in this class, at Carleton University and, more generally, with others around the world. A core ethical principle that undergirds all of these scholarly communities is the responsibility of every scholar to give credit to others for the work that they have produced and to refrain from taking credit for work that is not their own. This ethical principle is very democratic. It applies equally to the internationally-renowned scholar whose list of published works runs for many pages and to the first-year university student, fresh out of high school, who has yet to publish their first piece of writing.

If you have any questions at all about your obligations as a member of these scholarly communities, please consult with your professor. Every student should familiarize themselves with Carleton University's Academic Integrity Policy (<https://carleton.ca/secretariat/wp-content/uploads/Academic-Integrity-Policy-2021.pdf>). For examples of what constitutes plagiarism and for details of possible consequences for students found to have violated the Academic Integrity Policy, please see below (p.10) and consult the University's page on academic integrity:

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>

### Oral Examinations of Written Assignments

The professor reserves the right to examine any student in-person on the content of written work they have submitted in the class.

## **Late Penalties & Extensions**

Written assignments (Take-Home Exams) submitted after the due date will be subject to a penalty of one half letter grade per day (including Saturdays and Sundays). The professor will accept late submissions up to seven days past the deadline. Assignments that are more than seven days late will not be accepted except in cases where the student has received an extension from the professor.

Extensions will be granted at the discretion of the professor and only for serious medical reasons or for other emergency personal circumstances. Please note that having assignments and/or exams due in other courses will not be considered sufficient grounds to justify an extension in this course. Requests for extensions submitted after the due date will usually not be considered.

If you are ill or have any other legitimate reason for requesting an extension, it is your responsibility to contact the professor as early as possible. Do not assume that you will receive an extension until one has been granted by the professor. Students should be prepared to provide proper documentation to support their request for an extension.

At any point, if you are experiencing mental health-related challenges, please consider availing yourself of the resources that Carleton University offers:

<https://carleton.ca/wellness/>

## **Grade Appeals**

Grading written assignments is not an exact science. If you feel that an assigned grade does not fairly reflect the quality of your work, the professor will be happy to discuss your assignment and the grade with you. If you would like to have your grade reviewed, you must submit a one-page justification for your position that responds directly to the comments and grade that you received. You must also indicate the grade that you believe your assignment deserved. Submit your one-page justification together with your original assignment to the professor no later than one week after receiving your grade. A request for review can result in the professor raising or lowering your original grade.

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## **Core Courses and Comprehensive Examinations**

All graduate Students registered in a core course should be aware of the following guidelines:

- (i) A student must complete both halves of the core course, with a B+ standing or higher, to be eligible to write the scheduled August comprehensive examination.

- (ii) Eligibility to write the comp will be determined by the Graduate Administrator and Graduate Supervisor by the end of May.
- (iii) Students must complete the Fall core course and submit all outstanding work by the end of the Fall term. In the case of extenuating circumstances an extension may be granted by the course instructor, but all outstanding work must be completed by January 15. In these instances, a student will be awarded an "F" until a change of grade is submitted. Students may be deregistered from the second half of the core course if this condition is not met.
- (iv) Students seeking accommodations for the final comprehensive exam in August must inform the Graduate Administrator and seek formal accommodation for the exam through the Paul Menton Centre by end of May.

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## Appendix

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### **Student Mental Health**

As a university student, you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. Here is a list that may be helpful:

#### ***Emergency Resources (on and off campus):***

<https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

- ***Carleton Resources:***
  - Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
  - Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
  - Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
  - Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
  - Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
  - Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>
- ***Off Campus Resources:***
  - Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
  - Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
  - Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
  - Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
  - The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>



## **Requests for Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

***Pregnancy accommodation:*** 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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

***Religious accommodation:*** 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 [click here](#).

***Accommodations for 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, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, [click here](#).

***Accommodation for student activities:*** Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and to the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who engage in student activities 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. For more information, please [click here](#).

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

## **Sexual Violence Policy**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated. 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).

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Carleton's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) addresses academic integrity violations, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, impersonation, withholding of records, obstruction/interference, disruption of instruction or examinations, improper access to and/or dissemination of information, or violation of test and examination rules. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's academic integrity rules.

### ***Plagiarism***

The Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include, but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, websites, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- Any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- Using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- Using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- Submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

### ***Use of Artificial Intelligence***

Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor in a particular course, any use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to produce assessed content (e.g., text, code, equations, image, summary, video, etc.) is considered a violation of academic integrity standards.

## ***Procedures in Cases of Suspected Violations***

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are serious offences which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. When an instructor suspects a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the assignment/exam in question 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).

## **Submission and Return of Term Work**

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. The departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

## **Grading**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>12-point scale</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter grade</b>	<b>12-point scale</b>
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

### **Carleton E-mail Accounts**

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.

### **Carleton Political Science Society**

The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

### **Official Course Outline**

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.

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