

Carleton University
Winter 2020
Department of Political Science
<https://carleton.ca/polisci/>

PSCI 6301W - POLITICAL THEORY II
POLITICAL MODERNITY AS THE CONQUEST OF NATURE
Monday 14:35 – 17:25
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

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Office Hours: by appointment

In this course we will examine how the modern political project can be expressed as the conquest of nature. We will begin with classical political philosophy and its battle against the Sophists. Plato and Aristotle argued that human beings and their communities should live *within* the order of nature. The Sophists believed we can assert our mastery *over* nature to achieve power and wealth through exploiting others. We then turn to the theological concept of a Creator God and how it altered the classical understanding of freedom and necessity and introduced a new conception of the will. Machiavelli inaugurates the full-blown modern project for the conquest of nature to create power and prosperity for princes and peoples, which both was and was not a return to the Sophists because of Machiavelli's transferal of the power of the Creator God to the secular agency of the Prince. Machiavelli's prescription for the modern state is carried forward by his successors including Bacon, Hobbes and Harrington, until it is forced to a screeching halt by the great protest of the Philosophy of Freedom begun by Rousseau, which sought to restore the holism of the classical political community on the basis of the modern account of nature, actualized through historical progress. The debate about the meaning of historical progress unfolds through Hegel and culminates in Heidegger, whose identification of the modern project entirely with global technology takes us back to the beginning by arguing that modern technology is grounded in ancient Greek *techne* but constitutes a radical modification of it. We conclude with some critical engagements with Heidegger's assimilation of political modernity to global technology by political thinkers including George P. Grant and Leo Strauss.

REQUIREMENTS AND BASIS OF GRADING:

a) Students will make presentations on an equally rotating basis on the readings assigned for each class. There is no written component. The aim is to lead the seminar group through the readings and generate a collective discussion of them. Worth 50% of grade.

b) A term paper on the textual exegesis of one or more of the assigned readings. Suggested topics will be provided. You are welcome to use your seminar presentation(s) as a dry run for the term paper, but you are also free to write on something else entirely. Length: 20 thesis pages double-spaced typed. No e-submissions please. Due in the Department drop box on the last day of classes, April 7. Worth 50% of grade.

TEXTS: These texts are readily available as PDFs on line. Because in a number of cases we are not reading them in their entirety, I don't want it to be necessary for you to buy them. The exceptions are the readings from Strauss and Grant, which will be on reserve in the Library.

Martin Heidegger. BEING AND TIME Bk. 1; ESSAY CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY; THE ANAXIMANDER FRAGMENT.

Sophocles. OEDIPUS THE TYRANT.

DIEHL'S FRAGMENTS OF THE PRE-SOCRATICS (selections).

Plato. THEAETETUS (selections); REPUBLIC (selections).

Aristotle. PHYSICS Bk. 2; POLITICS Bks. 1-3.

Cicero. ON FATE.

St. Augustine. THE CITY OF GOD (selections)

St. Thomas. SUMMA THEOLOGICA (selections).

Machiavelli. THE PRINCE; DISCOURSES Bk. 1.

Francis Bacon. THE NEW ORGANON (selections)

Thomas Hobbes. LEVIATHAN (selections);

James Harrington, OCEANA (selections).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau. TWO TREATISES

G.W.F. Hegel. Preface to THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT.

Leo Strauss, ON TYRANNY with response by Alexandre Kojève and re-statement by Strauss.

George P. Grant, IN DEFENSE OF NORTH AMERICA; ENGLISH-SPEAKING JUSTICE.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS:

- Week 1: Introductory remarks.
- Week 2. Heidegger, BEING AND TIME book 1; ESSAY CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY; THE ANAXIMANDER FRAGMENT.
- Week 3. Sophocles, OEDIPUS THE KING; Diehl's FRAGMENTS OF THE PRE-SOCRATICS (selections).
- Week 4. Plato, THEAETETUS (selections); REPUBLIC (selections).
- Week 5. Aristotle, PHYSICS book 2; POLITICS books 1-3.
- Week 6. Cicero, ON FATE; St. Augustine, CITY OF GOD (selections); St. Thomas, SUMMA THEOLOGICA (selections).

WINTER BREAK

- Week 7. Machiavelli, THE PRINCE; DISCOURSES Book 1.
- Week 8. Francis Bacon, THE NEW ORGANON (selections); Thomas Hobbes, LEVIATHAN (selections); James Harrington, OCEANA (selections).
- Week 9. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, TWO TREATISES.
- Week 10. G.W.F. Hegel, PREFACE TO THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT.
- Week 11. Leo Strauss, ON TYRANNY; George P. Grant, IN DEFENSE OF NORTH AMERICA; ENGLISH-SPEAKING JUSTICE.
- Week 12. Concluding remarks.

Academic Accommodations

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 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

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

Academic 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 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. carleton.ca/pmc

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

Accommodation for 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

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.

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 and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

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:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
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

Approval of final grades

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 cuLearn. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

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/> and our website <https://carletonpss.com/>, or stop by our office in Loeb D688!"

Official Course Outline

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