

Introduction to Political Thought POL2107C

Professor Sophie Bourgault
Fall 2016

COURSE OUTLINE

Class schedule:	Tuesday 19:00-22:00 MRT 218
Professor's office hours:	Tuesday 13:30-15:00 And by appointment FSS 7062 (613) 562-5800 (ext.4962)
E-mail:	sbourgau@uottawa.ca (please use with moderation!)
Teaching assistants:	Kaleb Earl kearl094@uottawa.ca Abdelkader Filali afile017@uottawa.ca Benjamin Mua bachu024@uottawa.ca Éric Nelson enels036@uottawa.ca

Any questions sent by email should receive a response within two business days or during the following class if taken place within the 48 hours following receipt of the email.

Political theory (defn by Leo Strauss): an endless questioning of received opinion or an attempt to replace an opinion with knowledge.

- Endless: always open; to him this is what giants like Plato and Socrates believed.
- It's an attempt to replace everyday opinion with knowledge (whether correct/incorrect opinion).

Quesns:

1. What is a life worth living?
2. What is human nature? (w/o any govt, law, etc..)
3. Is human nature malleable?

OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

Origins and development of political thought. Study of the principal themes of ancient and medieval political thought; brief discussion of nascent themes of modernity. (PPT)

GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces the student to the discipline of political thought through a close reading of classic texts by Sophocles (*Antigone*), Plato (*The Apology of Socrates; The Republic*), Aristotle (*The Politics*), and Diogenes Laertius. The meaning of the word ‘politics’ for the ancients was extremely broad; this course will thus be concerned with a lot more than the specific issues we tend to understand as political today. We will heed Aristotle’s counsel that students of politics must “study the soul” (*Nicomachean Ethics* 1102a24). Some of the following questions will guide our reading throughout the term: What is virtue? On the basis of what can one distinguish between a tyrannical soul and a good soul? What role—if any—can music play in the cultivation of virtue? What is happiness, and how can human beings work towards it? To what degree is active citizenship central to this pursuit? What is justice? What is the best way for individuals to organize their political communities? What are the main sources of political instability and corruption? Who should rule? And on what basis ought we to judge claims to political authority—wealth, power, virtue, practical experience?

TEACHING METHODS

While this course is primarily lecture-based, it is hoped that students will participate actively in each lecture by raising questions and sharing critical reflections on the material. Therefore, you must come to class prepared, having done the required readings in advance. Also, in order to delve more deeply into the texts and address particular interpretative problems, the class will be divided up into small discussion groups twice during the term. **Your presence and active participation in these discussion groups is compulsory.** It is your responsibility to make sure that you know when and where your discussion group is held (this information will be posted on Blackboard Learn before the end of September). If you have questions about the discussion groups, please come see me right after class. Please note that the names and email addresses of your T.A.s will also be posted on Blackboard Learn.

ASSESSMENT METHODS

- One mid-term test (in class – Nov.1st): 25%
- One essay, 6-8 double-spaced pages (due Nov.29th): 30%
- Final examination (to be held during the official examination period): 35%
- Discussion groups: 10% *
 - * *half of this grade (5%) will be assigned to your one-page response paper (due on Oct.4th), the rest (5%) to your participation and presence in the DGDs. Please note that **no late short response-paper will be accepted.** Details about the response papers will be given on the first day of class.*

Policy on language quality, late submissions, DGD absences, appeals & technology

In this course, you will also be judged on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes such as spelling, syntax, punctuation, inappropriate use of

terms, etc.

Late submissions are not tolerated. Exceptions are made only for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the professor. **There will be a penalty for late submissions (5% per day, including weekends).** University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness to be supported by a medical certificate. Absence for any other serious reason must be justified in writing, to the academic assistants of the Faculty, **within five business days** following the date of the exam or submission of an assignment. The Faculty reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Reasons such as travel, jobs, or any misreading of the examination timetable are not acceptable. We suggest that you advise your professor as early as possible if a religious holiday or a religious event will force you to be absent during an evaluation.

If due to serious health problems you cannot make it to your discussion group and would like to avoid losing marks for this absence, **you must contact your T.A. directly.** You will be asked by your T.A. to provide a proper medical certificate in order to have the penalty for your absence waived. Please note that your T.A. is under no obligation to allow you to join another group if you miss a particular one for reasons other than medical.

Please note that **no course work will be accepted electronically.** Moreover, late papers are not to be slipped under my door (or the secretary's door). It is students' responsibility to submit their late essays at the School of Political Studies' reception desk (during regular office hours) or to put them in the appropriate drop-off box (located very close to the secretariat). The School of Political Studies is located on the 7th floor of the FSS building.

Smart phones, recording equipment and other technological devices may not be used in the classroom. Please turn off your phones and leave them in your bags during class time. I also strongly urge you to keep your portable computers in your bags as well. **If you must use a portable computer to take notes during the lecture, I would kindly ask you to sit in the last two rows of the classroom, to avoid distracting your fellow students.** Thank you for your collaboration. If you would like to discuss this, please do not hesitate to come see me after class.

Appeals. If you are convinced that your essay or mid-term test has been graded unfairly, the procedure is the following: 1) you must re-read your work closely and consider all comments made by the T.A. or myself. You must also go back to all lecture and reading notes to understand what you might have missed; 2) you must submit to the professor, along with your test or essay, a **formal written request (one page)** indicating clearly the specific reasons you believe your work should have received a higher mark (having worked hard is not a specific enough reason). If you are still unhappy with the result of this first appeal, you are naturally entitled to fill in a formal request at the School of Political Studies. Please note that all students must keep **hard copies of their assignments until the very end of the academic year.**

The University of Ottawa does not tolerate any form of sexual violence. Sexual violence refers to any act of a sexual nature committed without consent, such as rape, sexual harassment or online harassment. The University, as well as student and employee associations, offers a full range of resources and services allowing members of our community to receive information and confidential assistance and providing for a procedure to report an incident or make a complaint. For more information, visit www.uOttawa.ca/sexual-violence-support-andprevention

SCHEDULE (subject to change)

Sept.13th	Introduction - What is political thought?
Sept. 20th	Sophocles - read Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> (in <i>The Theban Plays</i>)
Sept. 27th	Socrates - read <i>The Apology</i> , in <i>The Trial and Death of Socrates</i> - brief introduction to Plato's <i>Republic</i>
Oct.4th	Discussion groups (<i>Antigone & The Apology</i> will be discussed) ** One-page response papers due at the <u>beginning</u> of the discussion groups. **
Oct. 11th	Plato - read Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books I & II
Oct. 18th	Plato - read Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books III, IV & V
Oct. 25th	Reading week (no class)
Nov.1st	Mid-term test (in class) <i>This test will cover all lecture and reading material covered up to this point. The test will consist of two essay questions (students will be given some choice). Each answer must begin with a clear thesis statement.</i>
Nov.8 th	Plato - read Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books VI, VII, VIII & IX
Nov. 15 th	Aristotle - read Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book I (entire) and Book II (ch.1-5 only)
Nov. 22 nd	Aristotle - read Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book III & IV <i>The professor and the T.A.s will hold special office hours this week to help you with your essays. Please consult Blackboard learn for more details.</i>
Nov. 29 th	Discussion groups (Aristotle's <i>Politics</i> will be discussed. For this meeting, no one-page response paper is required.)

	<p>* TERM PAPERS DUE (at the beginning of your DGD) * <i>Prior to submitting your paper, make sure that you have read attentively "A few tips on essay writing" (document posted on Blackboard Learn). Please note, once again, that papers submitted electronically will not be accepted.</i></p>
Dec.6 th	<p>Cynicism - read excerpt from: Diogenes Laertius, <i>Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers</i> (please consult Blackboard Learn for more details)</p> <p><i>Review for the final exam</i></p>

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following texts are all required for this course. I encourage you to purchase the particular editions recommended below as this will facilitate class interaction (and your study for exams). **All texts are available for purchase at Benjamin Books** (122 Osgoode St (corner of King Edward) (613) 232-7495) and a copy of each has been put on reserve at the Morisset Library.

- Sophocles, *The Theban Plays*, E.F. Watling trans. (New York: Penguin Classics, 2003).
- Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates*, G.M.A. Grube trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2000).
- Plato, *Republic*, G.M.A. Grube trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1992).
- Aristotle, *Politics*, C.D.C. Reeve trans. (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998).

Resources for you - <http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/student-life-academic-resources>

FACULTY MENTORING CENTRE - <http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/mentoring>

The goal of the Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well-being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the Mentoring Centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the Mentoring Centre for very different reasons. Younger students may wish to talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older student may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills or learn about programs and services for students nearing the end of their degree.

In all, the Mentoring Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. While students are able to voice their concerns and problems without fear of judgment, mentors can garner further insight in issues unique to students and find a more practical solution to better improve the services that the Faculty of Social Sciences offers, as well as the services offered by the University of Ottawa.

ACADEMIC WRITING HELP CENTRE - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/>

At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer. In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:

- **Master the written language of your choice**
- **Expand your critical thinking abilities**
- **Develop your argumentation skills**
- **Learn what the expectations are for academic writing**

CAREER SERVICES - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/>

Career Services offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the

employability skills you need in today's world of work.

COUNSELLING SERVICE - <http://sass.uottawa.ca/en/counselling>

There are many reasons to take advantage of the Counselling Service. We offer:

- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Study skills counselling

ACCESS SERVICE - <http://sass.uottawa.ca/en/access>

The University has always strived to meet the needs of individuals with learning disabilities or with other temporary or permanent functional disabilities (hearing/visual impairments, sustained health issues, mental health problems), and the campus community works collaboratively so that you can develop and maintain your autonomy, as well as reach your full potential throughout your studies. You can call on a wide range of services and resources, all provided with expertise, professionalism and confidentiality.

If barriers are preventing you from integrating into university life and you need adaptive measures to progress (physical setting, arrangements for exams, learning strategies, etc.), contact the Access Service right away:

- in person at the University Centre, Room 339
- online at <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/access/registration/>
- by phone at 613-562-5976

Deadlines for submitting requests for adaptive measures during exams

- midterms, tests, deferred exams: seven business days before the exam, test or other written evaluation (excluding the day of the exam itself)
- final exams:
 - November 15 for the fall session
 - March 15 for the winter session
 - Seven business days before the date of the exam for the spring/summer session (excluding the day of the exam itself).

STUDENT RESOURCES CENTRES - <http://www.communitylife.uottawa.ca/en/resources.php>

The Student Resources Centres aim to fulfill all sorts of student needs.

Beware of Academic Fraud!

Academic fraud is an act committed by a student to distort the marking of assignments, tests, examinations, and other forms of academic evaluation. Academic fraud is neither accepted nor tolerated by the University. Anyone found guilty of academic fraud is liable to severe academic sanctions.

Here are a few examples of academic fraud:

- engaging in any form of plagiarism or cheating;
- presenting falsified research data;
- handing in an assignment that was not authored, in whole or in part, by the student;
- submitting the same assignment in more than one course, without the written consent of the professors concerned.

In recent years, the development of the Internet has made it much easier to identify academic plagiarism. The tools available to your professors allow them to trace the exact origin of a text on the Web, using just a few words.

In cases where students are unsure whether they are at fault, it is their responsibility to consult the University's Web site on *Student Life and Academic Resources* at the following address:

<http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/student-life-academic-resources>

Within that, students should consult the "*Writing and Style Guide for University Papers and Assignments.*" It can be found at: <http://socialsciences.uottawa.ca/undergraduate/writing-style-guide>

Persons who have committed or attempted to commit (or have been accomplices to) academic fraud will be penalized. Here are some examples of the academic sanctions, which can be imposed:

- a grade of “F” for the assignment or course in question;
- an additional program requirement of between 3 and 30 credits;
- suspension or expulsion from the Faculty.

For more information, refer to the *Student's Guide to Academic Integrity*:

<http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/academicintegrity/documents/2011/academic-integrity-students-guide.pdf>

and Academic Integrity Website (Office of the Vice-President Academic and Provost)

<http://web5.uottawa.ca/mcs-smc/academicintegrity/home.php>