

POLS 3201: History of Political Theory I
Foundation of "People Power"

POLS 3201, History of Political Theory I
Spring 2021
Political Science
Instructor: Dr. Chris Barker
Course time: Sunday and Wednesday 10:00-11:15am Course location: C149; online-only until further notice
Instructor email: chris.barker@aucegypt.edu
Office hours: After class or by appointment Office location: online-only until further notice (Zoom)
<p>Communication Procedures:</p> <p>The instructor will respond to emails about course administration and course readings within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends. Student are required to use their official AUC email for communication. Blackboard announcements will be used throughout this course; these announcements will be sent to your AUC email. You are able to send the instructor an email directly through Blackboard via the link titled "Send Email" that is located on the left hand navigation panel of the course site. Please identify yourself and the course number, POLS 3201, about which you're writing.</p>
<p>Course Catalog Description:</p> <p>Analysis of the thought of the major contributors, from Plato to the present. Fall semester (301): ancient and medieval political philosophy and the modern break with traditions. Spring semester (302): main currents of modern thought.</p>
<p>Fall 2020 Course Overview:</p> <p>What is a republic, and how is it different than a democracy? Are democratic and republics alternatives to empires, or can these regimes also turn into empires? Finally, are there some especially legitimate forms of imperial power, such as the medieval Islamic caliphate, and how do these forms differ from the Greek/Islamic ideal republic? What do the Christian and Muslim medieval thinkers say about the ancient democracy/republic? This class introduces students to these important conceptual questions, using both primary and secondary sources.</p>
<p>Course Outcomes:</p> <p>At the end of the course, the successful student will be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Identify the unit of analysis of classical political theory- Identify and explain the differences between the types of political regimes- Critically analyze major authors in the pre-modern history of political theory

- Engage in persuasive analytical writing, as assessed through substantial, original, argumentative papers on assigned topics in the history of political theory

Course Objectives:

This course offers a survey of the subfield of political theory. It introduces students to key concepts and theoretical debates, and develops students' ability to think critically and to read analytically in the core texts of the history of political thought.

Course Requirements:

Participation in (Zoom) classroom discussions: 15%, including occasional inverted classroom assignments/group work, and formal debates

Presentations: 1 student presentation = 5%

Literature Response Paper: 5%

Discussion board posts: 15%

Paper 1 Peer Review: 5%

Paper 1: 25%, due March 14 at 11:59pm

Final paper (Take-home exam): 30% due no later than the conclusion of our scheduled exam slot. **Final exam: Friday, May 28 8:30-10:30 am**

Prerequisites: RHET 1010, RHET 1020, RHET 1100, RHET 2010, POLS 1001 or POLS 2003

Class Meeting Overview:

Class sessions will consist of either a synchronous Zoom meeting, or a Panopto/Audio PPT lecture, and in some cases both. In some cases, students will also be asked to watch a 10-15 minute pre-recorded student presentation prior to class. This is a part of the formal class meeting. Hopefully, we will be able to hold most of our activities in synchronous Zoom meetings, internet access permitting.

Provost's Message about Online Classes:

The decision to begin the spring 2021 semester with a fully online schedule of courses was based upon a careful and rigorous evaluation of current health conditions in Egypt related to the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope that we will be able to return as soon as possible to the schedule announced in early December 2020.

Literature Response Paper:

The aim of these papers is to practice the type of analytical writing required by midterm and final course papers. Students will write one short (1-2 page) analytical paper on ONE of the week's required theory readings. Students will state in one sentence the topic of the reading, explain in one or two sentences the methodological approach of the author,

and then summarize the main point(s) in one paragraph. In this analysis and comparison, students are welcome to introduce their own opinions and normative challenges, subject to the usual rules of persuasive writing. Students' writing assignments should include parenthetical references to the week's reading, in the format laid out in the course Style Guide posted online. E.g., (author date, page#).

Presentations (Seminar Leadership):

Students will be required to make at least one audio-visual presentations during the semester. The presentation readings (indicated in the syllabus below) will be posted on Blackboard under "Presentation Readings." Students will sign up for presentations on Wednesday of Week I. Presentations are typically multimedia and take no less than ten minutes and absolutely no more than fifteen minutes. (Please respect your classmates' time! I will stop watching any video at the 15-minute mark.) The default position will be that student presentations will be pre-recorded and sent to the TA by 10pm for uploading on the night before the presentation is "presented." Thus, if a student signs up for a January 31 presentation slot, they must email the TA their presentation by 10pm on January 30. This policy may change depending on students' internet access and the flow of the class.

Discussion Board:

Students will be asked to engage with course materials on assigned questions posted to Blackboard's Discussion Board. Sometimes, an alternative form such as a Padlet post will be used (and explained via BB announcement), but for the sake of simplicity we will rely on Blackboard. Note: Discussion posts should be succinct and analytical. The aim is not to "win" by posting the lengthiest post. A good post will typically be between 50-150 words.

Online Engagement Tools:

This class uses Mentimeter polling software to send poll questions directly to students' phones. These polls are anonymous and allow students to engage with the course's controversial materials in an anonymous, ungraded format. The instructor will often incorporate student poll responses into Panopto/Zoom lectures. Student participation is highly encouraged, and appreciated!

Paper 1 (Midterm Paper):

The midterm paper will be approximately 5-7 double-spaced pages (1500-2000 words) in length. Each paper will address one assigned question that will allow students to use their "toolbox" of concepts and theoretical approaches to address an important theme in the history of political thought. These are argumentative papers. Students will be called upon to defend a thesis and to support that thesis using textual evidence. Students will pay special attention to our course academic integrity guidelines (see below), and cite

their sources in the format required by the course style guide posted to BB under "Course Writing Materials."

Final Paper (Take-Home Exam):

The final exam will be a comprehensive take-home examination due at the end of the exam timeslot scheduled for this class (1500 words maximum). Since this is an exam, absolutely no late exams will be accepted for any reason that is not covered by a prior accommodation discussed in advance with the course instructor. As per AUC policy, no collaboration on exams (or on any other assignment) is permitted.

Peer Review:

For the midterm paper, students will review work of peers via Google Docs. Students will be randomly paired with a partner in order to provide specific advice and recommendations to peers. The aim of this graded activity is to lengthen the iterative writing process, and encourage practices of criticism and constructive back-and-forth.

Class Schedule:

Note: A detailed list of class-by-class readings and responsibilities will be posted to Blackboard during the first week of classes. This schedule and the one below are subject to change as decided by the instructor.

Week 1 (Jan. 31 and Feb. 3): Introduction to the syllabus; Introduction: What is people power (reading on popular revolution, ancient and modern)

Week 2 (Feb. 7 and Feb. 10): Hebrew law, *Deuteronomy*, and Shulman, "The Political and the Sacred," excerpt; the first Hebrew monarchy, *I and II Samuel*, and Elazar, "The Polity in Biblical Israel"

Week 3 (Feb. 14 and Feb. 17): Greek monarchy (Homer, *Iliad*, excerpt from Book I, and Hammer, "Who Shall Readily Obey? Authority and Politics in the *Iliad*"), and Hassan, "Epigraph"; Euripides, *Trojan Women*, and short excerpt from Aristotle, *Poetics*

Week 4 (Feb. 21 and Feb. 24): The city (Aristotle, *Politics* I on the city; and Yack, *Problems of a Political Animal*, excerpt); The city and its dissidents (Sophocles' *Antigone*)

Week 5 (Feb. 28 and March 3): Greek democracy (James Miller, "A Closed Community of Self-Governing Citizens, *Can Democracy Work?*, 19-52) and Thucydides, "Funeral Oration," *History of the Peloponnesian War*; Sparta ("The Spartan Revolution") and Thucydides, "Melian Dialogue," *History of the Peloponnesian War*

Week 6 (Mar. 7 and Mar. 10): Class reenactment of the Melian Dialogue
The Greeks on ideal republics and tyrannies (Plato's *Republic* and Ibn Rushd, *Commentary on Plato's Republic*)

Week 7 (Mar. 14 and Mar. 17): **Paper 1 due** March 14 at 11:59pm. Plato's *Republic* and Hindu Varnas; Greek citizenship and the basis of polity (Aristotle's *Politics* III and

Danielle Allen, "Brotherhood, Love, and Political Friendship," *Talking to Strangers*, 119-139)

Week 8 (Mar. 21 and Mar. 24): Comic poets on female power and feminist (anti-feminist?) utopias: Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* and Mary Beard, *Women and Power: A Manifesto*, 62-68; Aristophanes' *Assembly of Women* or guest speaker

March 25 Drop Course Deadline

Week 9 (Mar. 28 and Mar. 31): Roman monarchy and revolution (Livy's *Early History of Rome* on the founding and Machiavelli, *Discourses*, excerpt on founders; Livy's *Early History of Rome* on the 509 BCE republican revolution and Machiavelli, *Discourses*, excerpt on Brutus and republican severity)

Week 10 (Apr. 4 and Apr. 7): No class April 4 (Easter Holiday);

The Roman foundation of popular power (TBD/neo-Roman wealth republicanism)

Week 11 (Apr. 11 and Apr. 14): Roman republicanism (Cicero's *On the Republic*); Classical oratory – the power of the spoken word (Aristotle, *Rhetoric*, excerpt; Cicero "Against Catiline" and Mary Beard, "The Public Voice of Women," *Women and Power: A Manifesto*, 3-45)

Week 12 (Apr. 18 and Apr. 21): The Death of Caesar (Strauss, *The Death of Caesar*); Should you join the conspiracy to kill Caesar? (formal class debate)

Week 13 (Apr. 25 and Apr. 28): No class April 25 (Palm Sunday Holiday); The ideal Christian city (Augustine, *City of God*, excerpts on Roman republic)

Week 14 (May 2 and May 5): No class May 2 (Easter Holiday);

The ideal Islamic republic (Al-Farabi, *Political Regime*) and Orwin, "Democracy under the Caliphs"

Week 15 (May 9 and May 12): Islamic empires (excerpts: Kennedy, *Caliphate*; March, *The Caliphate of Man*); recommended, excerpt, Khaled El-Berry, *Life is More Beautiful Than Paradise*

Assembly hour makeup class: the polis-university (Danielle Allen, "Epilogue: Powerful Citizens" *Talking to Strangers*, 173-186, and class discussion of our polis-university)

No class May 12 (Eid Holiday)

Week 16 (May 16 and May 19): Cultural heritage: preserving a fragile past (Oxford Union debate and Reid, *Contesting Antiquity in Egypt*, excerpt); course review

Classes end May 20

Final exam: Friday, May 28 8:30-10:30 am

Texts

All required readings will be posted to blackboard unless otherwise indicated in the detailed course meeting schedule. Students are responsible for preparing the required readings in advance of each class session.

Online Resources:

The course instructor will post reading guides and/or lectures (audio Powerpoint lectures, and/or video lectures in Panopto format) for the major required readings. These will be available online.

Students who have difficulty with connectivity are asked to make arrangements with the instructor (preferably prior to the class meeting) regarding ways in which they can participate. As a rule, all students will be expected to attend and participate in all online classes.

All students will be required to watch an introductory video, Online Course Guidelines, prior to the first class. Students who continue to be enrolled in the course will abide by all the policies and guidelines found in this syllabus.

Participation:

The course participation grade recognizes contributions to classroom (online) discussion by students. Prepared students who actively contribute to classroom discussion and debate by asking and answering questions will receive higher participation grades. A rough participation grade will be posted to Blackboard prior to the midterm. The *final* participation grade may improve or decrease depending on student performance in the second half of the course.

Attendance:

Attendance may be taken in any given synchronous class. Students with more than six unexcused absences have not completed the course and will receive a failing grade. Students will be informed of this pending status by email after the fourth absence. Written work that is due in class, or tests that are taken in class, cannot be made up or taken at a later date in the case of unexcused absences. Please see the AUC attendance policy (<http://catalog.aucegypt.edu/content.php?catoid=27&navoid=1333>).

Netiquette Guidelines:

Communication is very important in this online course. In order to maintain a positive online environment for our class, all students are expected to:

1. Show respect for the instructors and for other students in the class.
2. Express differences of opinion in a polite and reasonable way.
3. Maintain an environment of constructive criticism when commenting on the work of other students.
4. Stay on topic when involved in group discussions or other collaborative activities.
5. Use sentence case in messages. Use of all uppercase in a message is the equivalent of shouting and is considered offensive.
6. Use good grammar and spelling, and avoid using text messaging shortcuts.

Student Writing:

The Writing Center provides a place where all university students are welcome to receive consultations on their writing from trained writing consultants. These services will occur online in Fall 2020-Spring 2021. To reserve an appointment at the writing center, please click [here](#) (you will be prompted to enter AUC email address and password). For more information please [click here](#).

A list of resources to develop proper writing techniques will be posted on Blackboard (e.g., <https://writingcenter.fas.harvard.edu/pages/developing-thesis>).

Student Technical Support and Assistance:

Blackboard hotline: 0122.900.5544 or blackboard@aucegypt.edu

Or submit a ticket on <http://itsupport.aucegypt.edu/>

Zoom: support@aucegypt.edu

Office of Disabilities Services:

AUC seeks to maintain a supportive academic environment for students with disabilities. If you are a student with a disability who requires accommodations, please contact the Office of Disabilities Services during the **first few days** of the semester. please contact Student Disability Services (SDS) at extension 3918 or sds@aucegypt.edu (located in the Office of Wellbeing/Dean of Students). More information can be found [here](#).

Grading

94%-100%	A	"A" grades confirm exceptional, extraordinary effort and results
90%-93%	A-	
87%-89%	B+	"B" grades confirm effort exceeding average and high quality work.
84%-86%	B	
80%-83%	B-	
77%-79%	C+	"C" grades confirm average and satisfactory work.
74%-76%	C	
70%-73%	C-	
65%-69%	D+	"D" grades confirm less than satisfactory effort and less than adequate work.
55%-65%	D	
55% and below	F	"F" grades confirm far less than sufficient effort and results or may be given in response to a violation of academic integrity.

Academic Integrity Policy:

Academic integrity includes a commitment neither to engage in nor tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Prohibited acts include cheating or

copying, plagiarizing, submitting another person's work as one's own, using Internet or other sources without citation, fabricating field data or citations, stealing examinations, tampering with the academic work of another student, facilitating other students' acts of academic dishonesty, etc.

Plagiarism will result in a zero grade for the assignment in question. Cheating during an examination will result in a zero grade for this examination. Further action, according to university regulations, may also be implemented.

You should be aware that all written work might be submitted to "Turnitin.com," the detection prevention software.

Student Honor Code:

By accepting this syllabus and enrolling in this course, students affirm for all assignments and alternative assessments that the work they submit is their own. Students will not consult unauthorized resources or materials nor collaborate with other individuals unless allowed.

Furthermore, the student agrees to follow *AUC's Code of Academic Ethics.*

Policies:

Students should familiarize themselves with the policies found here:

- <https://documents.aucegypt.edu/Docs/Policies/AUC%20Acceptable%20Use%20Policy.pdf>
- <https://documents.aucegypt.edu/Docs/Policies/Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>
- https://documents.aucegypt.edu/Docs/about_Policies/Reformatted%20disability%20policy.pdf