



Intro to Political Philosophy

Extra Evaluation Course

Description

This course helps students discover the world beyond political headlines and democratic institutions—the world that forged the path for the systems of government that dominate our international arena today. Students explore the primary thinkers in political philosophy, from Plato and Aristotle to Alexis De Tocqueville and John Locke. By digging into classic texts, they consider the most fundamental questions about the very ideas that underpin the political sphere: What is justice? Is democracy the best form of government? What is just war? What makes an ideal regime? This course enables students to hone their critical thoughts, develop an arsenal of ideas for political critique, and come to understand politics as they have never understood it before.

Cost: \$300

Course Reading List

- *The Republic* by Plato (excerpts)
- *The Politics* by Aristotle (excerpts)
- *The City of God* by Augustine (excerpts)
- *Summa Theologica* by Thomas Aquinas (excerpts)
- *The Prince* by Niccolo Machiavelli
- *Leviathan* by Thomas Hobbes (excerpts)
- *Funeral Oration* by Thucydides (Pericles)
- *The Communist Manifesto* by Karl Marx
- *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII
- Selections from works on the social contract and government by John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Abraham Lincoln, James Madison, J.S. Mill, and Alexis de Tocqueville

Primary Learning Objectives

- Students will gain a broad familiarity with the development of political philosophy from Plato to Leo XIII.
- Students will develop nuanced perspectives on the basic principles of democracy, freedom, justice, and liberty from a Christian perspective.
- Students will critically analyse key texts of political philosophy and consider real world application of the ideas therein.

Method of Evaluating Student Performance

Assignments	Weight
Week 4: Essay (Ancient Political Philosophy)	14%
Week 7: Essay (Medieval and Renaissance Political Philosophy)	14%
Week 8: Oral Midterm Exam	10%
Week 11: Essay (Enlightenment Political Philosophy)	14%
Week 14: Essay (Modern Political Philosophy)	14%
Week 14: Oral Final Exam	16%
Class Participation	18%

Instructions for essays: Essay topics can be chosen from a list of pre-determined questions and should respond substantively to the question posed. They should reflect the student's own thought and not just repeat what is found in the readings. The essay should be no less than 1000 words. The student will be graded on the quality of their thought as well as the clarity of their presentation.

Instructions for oral exams: Oral exams will test both the student's familiarity with the broader course material as well as their critical reasoning ability. In these exams, the tutor will engage the student with a number of questions, to which the student must thoughtfully respond. Oral exams are 20-30 minutes long and will take place in the classroom at a time determined by the student and his/her tutor.