

## **History of Political Thought I**

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Office Hours: T,Th 3:15-4:00 and by appointment

### Description

What values form the basis of our political life together? How do they change over time? What responsibility does the individual have towards the larger community? Does personal integrity matter in political life? These and other related questions have preoccupied political thinkers (subjects, citizens, rulers, and philosophers) from antiquity to the present. Through close readings of major texts, this course will address significant approaches to these issues and the historical problems of imperial power, democratic responsibility, and personal participation. By considering the political themes presented in various works of drama, history, philosophy, autobiography, and statecraft, we will begin to learn about the different ideas that structured political life in the ancient Greek and Roman world.

Grades will be based on written exams; regular class attendance is expected, and class participation will improve your understanding of the material, and therefore your grade. Grades will be calculated on the following basis: three in-class exams (20% each), one final exam (40%). Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Office of Disability Services.

### Texts

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, Viking Penguin

Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, trans. D. Parker, NAL Dutton

Plato, *Republic*, trans. Grube, Hackett

Aristotle, *Politics*, ed. S. Everson, Cambridge University Press

Polybius, *Rise of the Roman Empire*, Viking Penguin

Cicero, *The Republic and the Laws*, Oxford University Press

Tacitus, *Empire and Emperors*, Cambridge University Press (packet)

Augustine, *Confessions*, trans. H. Chadwick, Oxford University Press

All books are available through Women and Children first independent bookstore; other editions of these classic texts are widely available in used bookstores and libraries. The Tacitus reading will be available in a xerox packet.

## Syllabus

Aug. 26 (T) Course Introduction

Aug. 28 (Th) Thucydides Introduction: The Origin of Democracy

Sept. 2, 4 (T, Th) Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, Book 2

Sept. 9, 11 (T, Th) Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, Books 3,4

Sept. 16, 18 (T, Th) Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*, Book 5

Sept. 23 (T) Review

Sept. 25 (Th) **First Exam**

Sept. 30 (T) Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*

Oct. 2 (Th) Plato, *Republic*, Books 1-7

Oct. 7, 9 (T, Th) Plato, *Republic*, Books 8-10

Oct. 14, 16 (T, Th) Aristotle, *Politics*, Books 1,2

Oct. 21, 23 (T, Th) Aristotle, *Politics*, Books 7,8

Oct. 28 (T) Review

Oct. 30 (Th) **Second Exam**

Nov. 4, 6 (T, Th) Polybius, *Rise of the Roman Empire*, pp. 41-54,  
302-352, 535-541

Nov. 6-8 (T, Th) Cicero, *The Republic and the Laws*

Nov. 11-13 (T, Th) Tacitus, *Empire and Emperors*

Nov. 18, 20 (T, T) **Third Exam**

Nov. 25 (T) Augustine, *Confessions*

Nov. 27 (Th) Thanksgiving (NO CLASS)

Nov. 2, 4 (T, Th) Augustine, *Confessions*; Conclusion and Review

**Final Exam to be Scheduled during Exam Period**