

POLS 290 History of Political Thought I
Prof. Norma Claire Moruzzi
Fall 2021, M/W 4:30-5:45 BSB 331 IN PERSON & HYBRID

PRIMARY COMMUNICATION: nmoruzzi@uic.edu

Office Hours/Individual Consultation:

Monday & Wednesday 2-2:45 (in person) in BSB1122A (Political Science Department)
and by appointment (online and/or in person)

COURSE SYLLABUS

(May Be Changed to Accommodate Online Conditions!)

COURSE 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? What is the relation between the personal and the political? These and other related questions have preoccupied political thinkers (subjects, citizens, rulers, artists, 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 history, drama, philosophy, statecraft, biography, and autobiography, we will begin to learn about the different ideas that structured political life in the ancient Greek and Roman world, many of which continue to preoccupy us today.

REQUIRED COURSE READINGS

Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, ed. Finley, trans. Warner, Penguin

Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, trans. Ruden, Hackett

Plato, *Republic*, trans. Grube, Hackett

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

Polybius, *Rise of the Roman Empire*, trans. Scott-Kilvert, Penguin

Cicero, *On Duties*, trans. Griffin, Cambridge University Press

Tacitus, *Empire and Emperors*, trans. Tingay, Cambridge University Press

(USE THIS EDITION OF TACITUS! REQUIRED!)

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

All books are available through the UIC bookstore, and are widely available in used bookstores and libraries. Although it is preferable for you to use the selected edition, if you already have another edition, you can use that and match your reading to the class with the internal paragraph numbering system most of these classical texts use (the exception is the Tacitus reading, which is not available in any other edition!). **No excuses for not having a copy of the reading!**

Have a copy of the assigned reading with you during class; we will be working closely with the texts and you will need to be able to refer to the specific selections in your own copy. **It is STRONGLY advised that you use paper copies** of the readings (not e-copies) so you can take notes in the texts and refer easily to the text during class. Reading comprehension is improved by taking notes while reading, in a separate notebook or in the text (underlining, highlighting, margin notes, sticky notes): whatever works! Recent educational research suggests that writing by hand is more effective than working electronically.

COURSE FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

Course materials will be presented through readings, lectures, discussion, and group work; all exams are written essay exams. All these elements are important as we learn the skills of critical thinking, reading, and writing, and the basics of public speaking.

Pace yourself through the assigned reading for the week. You do not have to have the week's reading completely done by Wednesday class, but you should have started it and gotten for enough along that you are prepared to participate in class discussion.

Participation in class discussions is an essential element of this course (and is a lot easier to do if you are reasonably prepared for class, meaning you have done the assigned reading). If you are not used to speaking in class, this is a skill it is important to work on (every little bit helps). All responsible contributions to class discussion are welcome (responsible means respectful of yourself, the material, your fellow students, and the professor).

Consistent lecture and discussion attendance is expected. More than two unexcused absences will lower your grade, since they will interfere with your ability to synthesize material presented in class and participate in class discussions. **If you must unavoidably miss a session, contact the professor as soon as you are able.** If you know in advance that you will need to miss a class, let your professor know ahead of time. If something unexpected causes you to miss class without advance warning, contact your instructor as soon as you can. **The professor will determine whether an absence can be excused, but cannot excuse an absence without information (that means you contacting me)!** Unexcused absences will be given a zero grade for work missed.

“Stuff happens!” I encourage all students to reach out if challenging situations arise that are interfering with your ability to prioritize your academic responsibilities. This applies to everyone, including but not limited to the section on Accommodations below. Illness, accident, domestic crises, etc. can all become even more of a problem if you do not inform your supervisors when something is going on. I do not need/want to know the details of your life! But **I cannot work with you to organize accommodations to a crisis (or a chronic situation) if I don't know about it.**

Assignments & Grades will primarily be based on participation in class discussion and written essay exams. Study Groups can be very useful! In order to facilitate student interaction, discussion, and collective learning, small study groups will be assigned and re-assigned (changed around) on a regular basis. Essay exams will be open book/closed notes and will be graded on content and organization.

Grades will be calculated on the following basis: participation (10%); group work, presentations, postings (10%); three essay exams (20% each); one final essay exam (20%).

Extra Credit Opportunities will be available throughout the semester by attending selected, recommended events, and writing and submitting a short 1-2 page description/response memo of the event you attended. Events may be online! Events may include special lectures, museum events, film screenings, student organization activities, etc. If you are aware of an event that you think would qualify for extra credit, please bring it to the attention of the professor.

ISSUES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The written work for this course will expect you to be able to understand and analyze themes from the assigned readings, and to write a reasonably organized, thoughtful analysis of the key arguments. You do not need to do any outside research for this class. Outside research can help you understand aspects of the readings (background, context, general significance) but it is not substitute for carefully reading and thinking about the assigned texts yourself.

Your written work must be your own. Do the assigned reading, reread it, take notes, think about it. Critical thinking comes through practice.

PLAGIARISM—THE PASSING OFF OF OTHERS’ WORDS OR IDEAS AS YOUR OWN—WILL BE SEVERELY PENALIZED. Sanctions include automatic course failure and possible subsection to the Student Disciplinary Policy: see the link under <http://dos.uic.edu/conductforstudents.shtml>.

ISSUES OF PRIVACY

You are encouraged to consider the course material critically and with imagination. All responsible contributions to class discussion are welcome (responsible means respectful of yourself, the material, your fellow students, and the professor).

NOTE ABOUT ONLINE CLASSES (if this happens again).

When classes meet on campus in classrooms, it is obvious that the classroom is a space dedicated to free and respectful discussion among the course members (students, instructors, occasional permitted guests). Privacy is assured by closing the door, and students must ask permission to record the lecture or other aspects of the class. (Sharing recordings of anyone without their explicit consent is against the law!) When we are using online “classrooms,” extra precautions must be respected to maintain privacy and the integrity of the classroom environment.

In order to maintain the online “classroom” as a space where we can share ideas freely within the group without fear of retaliation and humiliation (in other words, a space where it is ok to be confused and ask ignorant questions while we try to make sense of the material and the issues we are learning), online content from in the class cannot be shared outside the class. Of course, it is ok to share your notes with someone else, to share a copy of the reading, etc. It is NOT ok to share photos of other people, clips from class recordings, etc. (Again: sharing recordings of anyone without their explicit consent is against the law!) **I will drop the final grade by one full letter grade (minimum) for anyone found sharing/posting course content online with people beyond the class! This does include social media!**

ISSUES OF ACCOMMODATION:

I encourage **students with disabilities**, including non-visible disabilities such as chronic diseases, learning disabilities, head injury and attention deficit/hyperactive disorder, to discuss with me appropriate accommodations that might be helpful to them. (This applies whether or not you are registered with the UIC Disability Resource Center.)

I encourage **students with technological challenges**, including connectivity issues and access, etc, to discuss with me appropriate accommodations that might be helpful to them.

Students must notify the instructor within the first ten days of the semester of the specific dates on which they are requesting an **absence for religious observance**.

NOTE ABOUT ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION

(Especially important now that life is a mix of electronic and in-person.)

Learn to be formal and complete in your electronic communication, especially initially. Most

instructors expect you to use email (not texts) when communicating electronically. Address your instructor respectfully, by their title and last name (for instance, Prof. Moruzzi) unless otherwise instructed. Do not address instructors by their first names unless they have explicitly told you to! Nothing is more likely to cause you unnecessary difficulties than accidentally offending someone by being too informal. (Note: unless otherwise instructed, do not address women instructors as Miss or Mrs.; for instructors who are not professors, use Ms. since it is considered more professional.) Be sure to introduce yourself in an email (this is so-and-so from such-and-such class). Keep in mind that instructors teach several classes and have many students, and that many students have similar netids. Sending an email to an instructor saying “Hi there, what is our assignment for Tuesday?” is worse than useless, as it doesn’t provide enough information to get the answer you need, and it will probably annoy the recipient if they have first to write back to you asking for more information before they can respond effectively.

SCHEDULE of Course of Study and Assignments

Aug. 23 (M)	Course Introduction
Aug. 25 (W)	Thucydides Introduction: The Origin of Democracy
Aug. 30, Sept. 1 (M, W)	Thucydides, <i>Peloponnesian War</i> , Book 2
Sept. 6 (M)	LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)
Sept. 8 (W)	Thucydides, <i>Peloponnesian War</i> , Books 3
Sept. 13, 15 (M, W)	Thucydides, <i>Peloponnesian War</i> , Books 4, 5
Sept. 20 (M)	Aristophanes, <i>Lysistrata</i> , and Review (EXTRA CREDIT: Spike Lee’s <i>Chi-Raq</i>)
Sept. 22 (W)	First Exam
Sept. 27, 29 (M, W)	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books 1-7
Oct. 4, 6 (M, W)	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books 8-10
Oct. 11, 13 (M, W)	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Books 1-2 (SKIM Books 3-6)
Oct. 18 (M)	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Books 7-8, and Review
Oct. 20 (W)	Second Exam
Oct. 25, 27 (M, W)	Polybius, <i>Rise of the Roman Empire</i> , pp. 41-54, 302-352, 535-541
Nov. 1, 3 (M, W)	Cicero, <i>On Duties</i>
Nov. 8, 10 (M, W)	Tacitus, <i>Empire and Emperors</i>
Nov. 15 (M)	Review
Nov. 17 (W)	Third Exam
Nov. 22, 24 (M, W)	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i>
Nov. 29, Dec. 1 (M, W)	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> and Review

**Final Exam to be scheduled during Exam Period:
Tuesday 3:30-5:30 to be confirmed.**