

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
**POLI 240 001 2024-25 W2: Currents of Political Thought**

**Instructor:** Anna Jurkevics, Assistant Professor

**Location and Time:** Tues/Thurs 9:30-11am; Lectures are IN PERSON ONLY and will NOT be posted to Canvas (there is no remote-learning option for this course)

**Office Hours:** In person, Tuesdays 2-3:30pm and by appointment, Buchanan C308 (zoom appointments available)

**TAs:**

Joshua Santeusanio (head TA): [j.santeusanio@ubc.ca](mailto:j.santeusanio@ubc.ca)

Josh teaches

Keanna Brown: [keannabrown@trentu.ca](mailto:keannabrown@trentu.ca)

Keanna teaches

Marisa Fitzgerald: [mfitzg@mail.ubc.ca](mailto:mfitzg@mail.ubc.ca)

Marisa teaches

Adnan Chowdhury: [adnan4pt@student.ubc.ca](mailto:adnan4pt@student.ubc.ca)

Adnan teaches

**Course Description:**

This course surveys the history of Western political philosophy. We will explore four historical moments: 1. Ancient Greek thought and the invention of the *polis*; 2. The social contract and birth of the modern state; 3. The Enlightenment and its critics; and 4. Modernity and the Fate of Politics. Through close-readings of key texts in the Western canon, our class sessions will construct a narrative of canonical debates over the meaning of politics, human nature, and the good life. Readings will include excerpts from works by Plato, Aristotle, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Immanuel Kant, Karl Marx, Friedrich Nietzsche, Max Weber, W.E.B. Du Bois, and Hannah Arendt.

Enrollment is encouraged for students with 2<sup>nd</sup> year standing and above. It is recommended that students take POLI 100 before taking this course. The format of the course will be 2 lectures a week and 1 discussion group.

***This is a no-laptop, no-tablet, no-phone lecture*** (excepting students with a concession from Access & Diversity). Students are expected to take handwritten notes and bring paper copies of the texts to lecture and tutorial. Cell phone, smartphone, and internet use are forbidden in lecture.

**Required Texts:**

The following texts should be **purchased**, and are available at the UBC bookstore. Please buy the editions listed below:

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (ed. Curley, Hackett Publishing Co.)

Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals* (ed. and trans. Kaufmann)

Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (Penguin Books)  
 Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (Penguin)

Excerpts from the following texts will be available **electronically** on Canvas and as a **coursepack at the UBC bookstore**. You may also choose to buy the books (editions listed below):

Plato, *A Plato Reader: Eight Essential Dialogues* (Hackett, ed. Reeve)  
 Aristotle, *Politics* (Hackett, ed. Reeve)  
 John Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* (ed. Macpherson, Hackett Publishing Co.)  
 Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings* (ed. Reiss, Cambridge Texts)  
 Karl Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader, Second Edition* (ed. Tucker, WW Norton & Co.)  
 Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* (ed. Owen and Strong, Hackett Publishing Co.)  
 Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (Penguin)

### **Class Sessions and Readings:**

**Tues Jan 7** - Introduction

**Thurs Jan 9, Tues Jan 14** - *Plato: The Conflict between Politics and Philosophy*  
 Readings: Plato, “The Apology of Socrates” and “Crito”

**Sections Begin in Week 2 (starting Monday Jan 13th)**

**Friday Jan 17th: Add/Drop Deadline**

**Thurs Jan 16, Tues Jan 21, Thurs Jan 23** – *Aristotle: The Ancient Polis*  
 Readings: Aristotle, *Politics*: Book One (Parts I-VII, XII-XIII), Book Three (Parts IV-V), Book Six (Parts I-II), Book Four (Parts I-XI)

**Tues Jan 28th: Textual Analysis In-Class\***

\*If you have a conflict with this date or fall ill, the only day to make-up the assignment is **Tues Feb 4th** in lecture (all make-up assignments will be completed in the Buch A201 during lecture, if you are worried about noise distractions please bring earplugs)

**Thurs Jan 30, Tues Feb 4, Thurs Feb 6** – *Hobbes: The Invention of Political Modernity*  
 Readings: Hobbes, *Leviathan*: Introduction (Hobbes’s); chapters I-II; V-VI; X sections [1]-[18]; XI sections [1]-[5]; XIII; XIV all sections except [15]-[17]; XV sections [1]-[3], [21], [34], [38]-[40]; XVII-XVIII, XXI, XXVI sections [1]-[8]; XXIX  
 \*\*Note on Hobbes readings: If you have a different copy of the text than the one assigned, these are the assigned section headings in the chapters that are not assigned in full:  
 X sections (beginning – “dignity”)  
 XI sections (beginning – “And from love of Arts”)  
 XIV all sections except (“free gift passeth by words of the Present or Past” – “Merit what”)  
 XV sections (beginning – “Justice and propriety begin with the Constitution of Commonwealth”, “the ninth, against Pride”, “the nineteenth, of Witnesses”, “The Laws of nature are eternal” – “The science of these laws is the true moral philosophy”  
 XXVI (beginning – “The laws of nature and the civil law contain each other”)

**Tues Feb 11th: Special Lecture on How to Write an Essay in Political Theory**  
**Essay 1 Assignment will be distributed on Feb 11th**

**Thurs Feb 13, Tues Feb 25** *Locke: Taming the Social Contract?*

Readings: Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*: I-V, VII, VIII (par. 95-99 only), XVIII

**MIDTERM BREAK FEB 17-21 (NO CLASS)**

**Thurs Feb 27, Tues Mar 4** – *Rousseau: Democracy Re-Emerges in Modern Europe*

Readings: Rousseau, *The Social Contract*, Book I (entire), Book II (Chapters 1-7, 10), Book III (Chapter 4), Book IV (Chapters 1-2, 8)

**Thurs Mar 6, Tues Mar 11** – *Kant: What is Enlightenment?*

Readings: Kant, “What is Enlightenment?” pp. 54-60; Kant, “Theory and Practice,” pp. 74-78

**Friday Mar 7, 8pm: Essay 1 due via Canvas Assignments**

**Thurs Mar 13, Tues Mar 18, Thurs Mar 20** – *Marx’s Critique of the Enlightenment*

Readings: Marx and Engels, “The Communist Manifesto,” pp. 469-491, 499-500; Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” pp. 42-45. *Optional reading*: Marx, *The Grundrisse*, pp. 222-223

**Essay 2 Assignment will be distributed on Thurs Mar 13**

**Tues Mar 25, Thurs Mar 27** – *Nietzsche: A Total Critique of Reason*

Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Preface (title page, sections 2-3, 6), First Essay (sections 1-4, 7-8, 10-14, 16), Second Essay (sections 1-7, 9, 12, 16, 24-25)

**Tues Apr 1** – *Weber and the Fate of Modernity*

Readings: Weber, *Protestant Ethic*, pp. 120-121; Weber, “Science as a Vocation,” pp. 16-31

**Thurs Apr 3, Tues Apr 8** – *Arendt: Reviving Modernity’s Promise*

Readings: Arendt, *On Revolution*, chapter 4 (pp. 132-170), chapter 5 (pp. 171-206)

**Friday April 4th, Essay 2 due via Canvas Assignments**

**Tues April 8th Course Evaluations**

**Final Exam Zoom Review Session TBD**

**Final Exam: TBD**

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### Course Learning Objectives:

In this course, we encounter texts primarily through close reading and interpretation. By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Take handwritten lecture notes and synthesize information without the use of electronic devices.
2. Develop close reading skills with difficult philosophical texts.
3. Be able to explain and articulate, in your own words, the arguments in the texts.
4. Synthesize political arguments by comparing and contrasting them with other arguments discussed in the course.
5. Analyze passages of text and bring this analysis together into a coherent argument in the form of an essay.
6. Evaluate, critique, and apply political arguments in essays and discussion.
7. Articulate a thoughtful and *interesting* response to the large questions about politics.

### Assignments and Grades:

Students are responsible for material covered in lectures and class discussions as well as in the assigned readings. Consistent attendance in class is required.

Grades will be determined on the basis of the following:

a. Textual Analysis (In-Class)	10%
b. Essay 1	25%
c. Essay 2	25%
d. Final Exam	30%
e. Weekly participation in discussion group	10%

### Assignment Descriptions and Expectations:

*Textual Analysis Writing Assignment:* A short, in-class textual analysis from one of the works will take place in the first month of the course. This assignment is meant to familiarize students with close reading and writing about difficult philosophical texts. Students will be asked to answer a few questions about a passage in Aristotle's *Politics* to provide textual evidence to answer those questions. Students will be graded on whether they demonstrate a clear understanding of the text, whether they are able to identify and explain the textual evidence from that text that allows them to answer the questions.

*Essays:* Two 4-6 (1250-1800 words) page essays will be assigned. The essay will be submitted by email to TAs and must *also* be submitted by the same time to TurnItIn. The essay will take the form of an argument that compares and contrasts different texts from the course in response to one of three possible prompts. You will be evaluated on your ability to construct a coherent and convincing argument. The coherence of the argument will depend on your ability to craft a clear and arguable thesis, and to structure a paper in a way that allows you to present convincing textual evidence in support of your thesis. You will also be evaluated on your grammar and style and consistent citation format. No outside sources beyond the course texts will be permissible as resources for writing the paper: you must rely on your personal class and reading notes *alone*.

**The use of AI software to assist in writing papers is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.** See plagiarism policy below.

*Final Exam:* The final exam will cover all course readings and lectures. Students will be given a choice of essay prompts, from which they will choose 2, that synthesize big themes across authors in the course.

*Participation:* Teaching assistants will evaluate discussion group attendance and participation. You may miss two tutorials, no questions asked, no concession needed. After this absence, points will be deducted for subsequent absences. You may also be deducted points from your participation grade for failure to bring the relevant text to discussion sections. The text is the center of all discussions and you must arrive at tutorial with a hard copy. For unforeseen circumstances, see *extensions, absences, and concessions policy*.

### **Extensions, Absences, and Concessions Policy**

Please see [this document](#) for the full policy. If you are seeking an extension, excused absence, or an academic concession, you must read this document in its entirety before you approach us. If you fail to read the policy or follow its guidelines, we reserve the right to ignore your request.

### **General Academic Policies**

*Laptops and electronic devices:* The use of laptops and electronic devices for note-taking is not permitted in this course, with the exception of students who have a written letter from the Centre for Accessibility. Students are expected to take handwritten notes and bring paper copies of the texts to lecture and tutorial. Cell phone, smartphone, and internet use are forbidden in lecture.

*Late Essays:* Late assignments are subjected to light penalties. For more information, please see the [Extensions, Concessions, and Absences Complete Policy Guide](#). The policies for late papers, where the student has not received an extension or concession, are the following:

1. Up to 3 days late: .5 points deducted per day (.5% of your final grade)
2. 4 or more days late: each day beyond the 3rd day, 1 point (1% of your final grade) will be deducted per day
3. Maximum late penalty: for the two essays, the maximum penalty is 15 points (15% of your final grade). The maximum penalty for the textual analysis is 10 points (10% of your grade, this is the full value of the assignment, but it is a small one). If you turn in an essay really late, the penalty is capped. It is always worth it to try to complete the essays for the course, as the possible grade will never go down to zero for being late.
4. \*\*Late assignments must be handed in by the start of the final exam. No work will be accepted after the final exam unless a student has SD standing.

*Grade appeals:* Students who wish to appeal a grade *must wait until 48 hours after receiving your graded assignment to submit an appeal, and the appeal must be made in writing*. The initial appeal should be made to the TA. If the student is unsatisfied, they should proceed to the professor. Bear in mind that if you appeal your grade it can go either up or down according to a fair regrade.

*Attendance:* Regular attendance in lectures and tutorials is expected. **Success in this course requires that you be present and engaged at almost every lecture.** Many professors *say* this, but you will see that I *really mean it*. Please note that I do not provide lecture recordings under any circumstances, even excused absences.

Attendance and participation in tutorials is required and will form the basis of your participation grade (10% of your overall grade). Tutorial attendance factors into your participation grade. Unexcused absences from tutorial will result in a 1 point (1% of your total grade) deduction for any absences after 2 missed sessions. You may miss up to 2 tutorial sessions with no questions asked. For these first two, you do not need to alert your TA and you will not be penalized. Please note that lecture attendance is not strictly mandatory, but it is difficult to succeed if you do not attend. For more information on attendance requirements and absences, see the [Extensions, Concessions, and Absences Complete Policy Guide](#).

*Religious holidays:* UBC permits students who are scheduled to attend classes or write examinations on holy days of their religions to notify their instructor in advance of these days and their wish to observe them by absenting themselves from class or examination. Instructors will provide an opportunity for students to make up work or examinations without penalty (Policy #65).

*Disabilities:* UBC is committed to the academic success of students with disabilities. Students with a disability should meet with a Centre for Accessibility to determine what accommodations/services you are eligible for. If you are registered with Accessibility, you should notify your instructor at least two weeks before examination dates. It is your responsibility to schedule an examination at Access and Diversity within the correct time period.

*Mask Policy:* Masks are welcome but not required in lecture and tutorial.

*Rules on Respect and Harassment:* Respectful debate and disagreement are encouraged in class. *Disrespectful* behavior, including interrupting, rudeness, bullying and harassment, will not be tolerated. The instructor will display respect toward students, and students will exercise respect with each other and with the instructor. *If you have any concerns about the class environment, please raise them immediately with the instructor.* The full *UBC Statement on Respectful Environment for Students, Faculty and Staff* can be found at <http://www.hr.ubc.ca/respectful-environment/files/UBC-Statement-on-Respectful-Environment-2014.pdf>. Students can also review the Student Code of Conduct at: <http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=3,54,750,0>.

### Plagiarism and AI

Academic communities depend on their members' honesty and integrity in representing the sources of reasoning, claims, and wordings that appear in their work. Like any other member of the academic community, you will be held responsible for the accurate representation of your sources: the means by which you produced the work you are submitting. If you are found to have misrepresented your sources and to have submitted others' work as your own, penalties will follow. Your case may be forwarded to the Head of the department, who may decide that

you should receive zero for the assignment. The Head will report your case to the Dean's Office, where the report will remain on file. The Head may decide, in consultation with your instructor, that a greater penalty is called for, and will forward your case to the Dean's Office. After an interview in the Dean's Office, your case may be forwarded to the President's Advisory Committee on Academic Misconduct. Following a hearing in which you will be asked to account for your actions, the President may apply penalties including zero for the assignment; zero for the course; suspension from the university for a period ranging from 4 to 24 months; a notation on your permanent record. The penalty may be a combination of these.

Like any academic author submitting work for review and evaluation, you are guaranteeing that the work you submit for this course has not already been submitted for credit in another course. Your submitting work from another course, without your instructor's prior agreement, may result in penalties such as those applied to the misrepresentation of sources. If an outside tutor or other person helps you, show this policy to your tutor or helper: make sure you both understand the limits of this person's permissible contribution. If you are uncertain, consult your instructor. **The use of AI software to assist in writing papers is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.** Still a little uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism? For a quick refresher visit: <http://www.indiana.edu/%7Ewts/pamphlets/plagiarism.shtml> and/or: <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/files/plagiarism.pdf>

**Artificial Intelligence:** The use of generative AI tools, including ChatGPT and other similar tools, to assist with writing or support the completion of any assignment or assessment in this course is forbidden and, if discovered, will be considered academic misconduct. **Let me be clear: The use of AI software to assist in writing papers is STRICTLY FORBIDDEN.** TurnItIn software, which is used to evaluate assignments uploaded to Canvas, may signal possible AI use. We may also become suspicious if the writing in your submitted assignment does not reflect the writing style and skills demonstrated earlier in an in-class assignment. [Please note that we take account for the fact that take-home assignments will be subject to editing and allow students more time, which will result in cleaner writing than an in-class assignment.]

Any student caught using software such as ChatGPT to write papers will automatically fail the assignment, and the case may be forwarded to the department officer for academic misconduct. *Why?* This course teaches you to think for yourself, and one way we learn to think is by writing. Substituting an AI algorithm for your own thoughts defeats the purpose of the course. You cannot learn to write and think if you are not doing it for yourself.

*What happens next* if we suspect the use of AI? In suspicious cases, your TA will call you in for a writing session during office hours. They will provide you with a short writing assignment that you will be required to complete in person. If the results diverge significantly from the writing style/skill of the suspicious submission, you will be called in for a meeting with the Professor, who will meet with you to discuss academic misconduct proceedings. The case will be forwarded to the department officer for academic misconduct.

### TurnItIn

In accordance with departmental policy, in this course your work will be analyzed for plagiarism via a service called TurnItIn. TurnItIn will analyze any work submitted through Canvas Assignments. UBC subscribes to this service that checks written material for originality by searching for matching text. TurnItIn scans the paper against a database which includes public websites, paper writing services, previous essays submitted to TurnItIn, and journal articles. It also scans for signs of the use of AI (e.g. ChatGPT) in the generation of your text. The service then produces a report on the paper's originality. The instructor will review the reports, and where necessary, the papers themselves. Assignments are not accessible to the public once submitted to TurnItIn, and you, as the author, retain ownership of your original material. Your work will be added to TurnItIn's archive for comparison against subsequently submitted material, thus ensuring that your work is not plagiarized. For more information on TurnItIn, reasons for its use, and general policies, see the UBC Vice President Academic and Provost web site, at: <http://www.vpacademic.ubc.ca/integrity/turnitin/index.htm>