

# Introduction to Political Theory

POL 2237E-550

Political Science

Huron University College

## 1. COURSE INFORMATION

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Instructor: Dr. David Janzen

Contact Information: [djanzen4@uwo.ca](mailto:djanzen4@uwo.ca)

Office: Lucas Annex in Lucas Alumni House (LAH)

Office Hours: Thursday, 3-4pm or by Appointment

Class Location:

Scheduled Class Times: Thursdays, 6:30-9:20pm

Pre-requisite(s):

1.0 Political Science course(s) at the 1000-level.

Antirequisite(s):

Main Campus: Philosophy 2800F/G, Philosophy 2801F/G, Philosophy 2802E, Political Science 2237W/X, Political Science 2537F/G, Political Science 2538F/G, the former Philosophy 2802E.

Huron and King's Campus: Philosophy 2800F/G, Philosophy 2802E, Political Science 2237W/X, the former Philosophy 2801F/G.

## 2. COURSE DESCRIPTION

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**Calendar Description:** An examination of central themes and issues in the history of political thought from ancient to modern times.

**Overview:** This course is a sustained, critical, and systematic engagement with the concepts, values, and forces that shape political life. This engagement is divided into two parts. Part 1 (Fall 2022) provides a historical overview of key thinkers and ideas from Antiquity to Modernity. By focusing on influential texts, we gain an understanding of how key political problems emerged and evolved over time—and, as we will see, how thinkers (Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Kant) and ideas (freedom, sovereignty, equality, etc.) continue to influence contemporary political thought.

Part 2 (Winter 2023) expands upon Part 1, with a focus on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century thinkers. Our engagement is guided by several theoretical developments, including: the globalization of politics and economics; the expansion of politics to incorporate social, cultural and environmental dimensions; and the development of critical frameworks—including anti-racist, decolonial, and feminist theory—that aim to challenge and transform systemic forms of inequality.

By the end of this course, you will have broad knowledge in the history of political thought; this will provide you with the conceptual tools to analyze big-picture political problems using multiple frameworks and perspectives.

### 3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

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1. Students gain a broad understanding of key themes, concepts and thinkers in Western political thought; this includes an appreciation for, and critical understanding of, how these historical sources impact current debates in political theory.
2. Students enhance their ability to read theoretical texts, including content (what the author is saying) and rhetorical form (the logic by which the argument is developed).
3. Students gain the ability to develop and communicate coherent, logical, and compelling analyses and arguments.
4. Students learn how to be clear and concise writers.

### 4. TEXTBOOKS AND COURSE MATERIALS

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- *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts* (4<sup>th</sup> edition); Oxford University Press, 2022.
- Shakespeare, *Richard III* (any edition).
- Supplementary texts (marked with \* in the schedule) will be available through OWL; I strongly recommend printing a hardcopy and bringing it to class.

### 5. METHODS OF EVALUATION

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#### **Short Essays:**

Value: 45 (3 x 15% each)

Length: 5 pages each

Description: Essays will respond to a prompt question that asks students to analyze a key theme or concept in at least two required readings. Emphasis will be placed on (1) close, thorough reading of course texts; (2) thoughtful comparative analysis; and (3) clear, detailed, organized writing. A grading rubric will be included with each assignment description.

#### **Midterm Exam:**

Value: 15%

Length: 3 hrs

Description: The midterm exam will cover all content from the fall semester, including concepts, themes and ideas from assigned readings, lectures, and class discussion.

#### **Final Exam:**

Value: 20%

Length: 3 hrs

Description: The final exam will be comprised of two parts. Part 1 will cover content from the winter semester, including concepts, themes and ideas assigned readings, lectures, and class discussion. Part 2 will be an essay question that reflects on a key theme covered in both semesters.

**Final Research Paper:**

Value: 20%

Length: ~8 pages

Description: Your final research paper provides an opportunity for a more in-depth examination into a topic relevant to themes, concepts and thinkers addressed in the course. Papers must meaningfully engage with at least three course texts. All students must participate in the ‘Essay Workshop’ (scheduled for March 30).

6. TENTATIVE COURSE SCHEDULE

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**Schedule: Part 1**

Week	Date	Theme(s)	Readings
1	Sep 8	Introduction: What is political theory?	Syllabus and Schedule
2	Sep 15	Origins of Western political thought	Plato, ‘Defense of Socrates’ (5-23) Aristotle, ‘Politics’ (105-127)
3	Sep 22	The science of state and power	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (177-190)
4	Sep 29	Social contract and civil society	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> (199-230)
5	Oct 6	Governance, property and the self	Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> 251-279)
6	Oct 13	Freedom	Rousseau: <i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> ; and <i>Of the Social Contract</i> (308-338) <b>DUE: Short Essay #1</b>
7	Oct 20	Ruler, state and language	Shakespeare, <i>Richard III</i> (complete play). <b>Optional: Experiential learning opportunity (Stratford Festival: 8pm, Oct 19) – limited number available.</b>
8	Oct 27	Political economy: individuals and the state	Smith, <i>Wealth of Nations</i> (374-394)
	Nov 3	READING WEEK (NO CLASS)	

9	Nov 10	Enlightenment and internationalism	Kant, <i>Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals</i> (414-422)
10	Nov 17	Expanding rights	Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Women</i> (400-408) Kant, <i>Perpetual Peace</i> (436-448) <b>DUE: Short Essay #2</b>
11	Nov 24	History and the actualization of freedom	Hegel, <i>Philosophy of Right</i> (469-485) Recc: <i>Introduction to the Philosophy of History</i> .
12	Dec 1	Historical materialism and revolution	Marx and Engels: <i>Communist Manifesto</i> (560-574). Recc: purchase and read entire text.
13	Dec 8	Midterm Review/Catch-up	
	(TBA)		<b>Midterm Exam (as scheduled by the registrar during the exam period).</b>

### SCHEDULE: Part 2

Week	Date	Theme(s)	Readings
1	Jan 12	What is 'Critical Theory'?	*Macdonald: 'Traditional and Critical Theory Today'
<b>Multiculturalism and/as Recognition</b>			
2	Jan 19	Liberal Justice	Rawls, 'A Theory of Justice' (708-731)
3	Jan 26	Multiculturalism and its limits	*Kymlicka, 'Chapter 2: Politics of Multiculturalism', from <i>Multicultural Citizenship</i> (1995: p. 10-33). *Zizek, 'Multiculturalism, or, The Cultural Logic of Multinational Capitalism' (NLR, 1997: 28-51).
4	Feb 2	Beyond 'Recognition'	*Taylor, 'Politics of Recognition' from <i>Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition</i> : 25-73). *Coulthard, 'Red Skin, White Masks' (selections) <b>DUE: Short Essay #3</b>
<b>Feminism(s) and Intersectionality</b>			

5	Feb 9	Intersectionality	*Crenshaw: 'Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity politics, and Violence Against Women of Colour' ( <i>Stanford Law Review</i> : 1241-1299).
6	Feb 16	What is oppression?	Young, <i>Five Faces of Oppression</i> (818-833) *Frye, 'Oppression.'
	Feb 23	READING WEEK (NO CLASS)	
<b>Post-/Decolonial theory</b>			
7	Mar 2	Decolonization	*Fanon, 'On Violence', from <i>Wretched of the Earth</i> (p. 1-51).
8	Mar 9	From Biopolitics to Necropolitics	Mbembe, 'Necropolitics', from <i>Necropolitics</i> (p. 66-92)
<b>Political theory in the time of climate change</b>			
9	Mar 16	Political possibility after climate change	*Mann and Wainright, 'Part 1' from <i>Climate Leviathan</i>
10	Mar 23	(cont.)	*Wynter and Mckittrick, 'Unparalleled Catastrophe for Our Species?'
11	Mar 30	<i>Essay Workshop</i>	<b>DUE: Final Research Paper (Workshop draft)</b>
12	Apr 6	<i>Exam Review</i>	<b>DUE: Final Research Paper (Final submission)</b>
	TBA	<i>Final Exam</i>	<b>Final Exam (as scheduled by the registrar during the exam period).</b>

## COURSE GUIDELINES

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**Preparation and Participation:** Significant portions of each class will be devoted to understanding, discussing, and applying concepts from the assigned texts. Prior to each meeting, you must read and actively think through the assigned text(s) at least once.

**Submissions:** Essays/Assignments must be submitted to the OWL course site by 11:59 pm on the day that they are due.

**Materials for class meetings:** Unless otherwise stated, each student must bring: (1) a hardcopy of the week's readings; (2) a notebook and pen/pencil; and (3) 3-5 bullet points from the assigned readings (this may include questions, insights, reflections, comparisons to previous readings, etc. NOTE: While I recommend pen and paper, laptops may be used (only) for the purposes of taking notes. Please silence and store your cellphones while in the classroom.

## **Additional Department Rules and Regulations**

**Late Penalties:** It is the policy of the Department of Political Science to exact a penalty of 2 marks (i.e., 2 per cent of the grade on the assignment) per day (including weekends) for late papers. Papers will not be accepted by instructors if they are more than two weeks late.

**Class Attendance:** You are strongly advised not to miss any class meetings. Important material, detailed instructions, information and insights on course themes, examinations, written work, course objectives and other essential matters will be presented in these hours.



### **Appendix to Course Outlines: Academic Policies & Regulations Fall/Winter 2022**

#### **Pandemic Contingency**

Huron will continue to follow the guidance of public health and government officials. It is anticipated that there will be no further disruptions to in-person instruction. This is subject to change.

#### **Student Code of Conduct**

Membership in the community of Huron University College and Western University implies acceptance by every student of the principle of respect for the rights, responsibilities, dignity and well-being of others and a readiness to support an environment conducive to the intellectual and personal growth of all who study, work and live within it. Upon registration, students assume the responsibilities that such registration entails. While in the physical or online classroom, students are expected to behave in a manner that supports the learning environment of others. Please review the Student Code of Conduct at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/sites/default/files/Res%20Life/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20-%20Revised%20September%202019.pdf>.

#### **Prerequisite and Antirequisite Information**

Students are responsible for ensuring that they have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that they have not completed any course antirequisites. Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

#### **Attendance Regulations for Examinations**

A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:

- 1) A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- 2) Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course (after due

warning has been given). On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course. The Dean of the Faculty offering the course will communicate that decision to the Dean of the Faculty of registration.

Review the policy on Attendance Regulations for Examinations here: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)

### **Statement on Academic Offences**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following website: [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#). The appeals process is also outlined in this policy as well as more generally at the following website:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/appealsundergrad.pdf).

### **Turnitin.com**

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

### **Statement on Use of Electronic Devices**

It is not appropriate to use electronic devices (such as, but not limited to, laptops, tablets, cell phones) in the classroom for non-classroom activities. Such activity is disruptive and distracting to other students and to the instructor, and can inhibit learning. Students are expected to respect the classroom environment and to refrain from inappropriate use of technology and other electronic devices in class.

### **Statement on Use of Personal Response Systems (“Clickers”)**

Personal Response Systems (“clickers”) may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning. Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else’s clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence.

### **Academic Consideration for Missed Work**

All students pursuing academic consideration, regardless of type, must contact their instructors no less than 24 hours following the end of the period of absence to clarify how they will be expected to fulfill the academic responsibilities missed during their absence. **Students are reminded that they should consider carefully the implications of postponing tests or midterm exams or delaying submission of work, and are encouraged to make appropriate decisions based on their specific circumstances.**

Students who have conditions for which academic accommodation is appropriate, such as disabilities or ongoing or chronic health conditions, should work with Accessible Education Services to determine appropriate forms of accommodation. Further details concerning policies and procedures may be found at: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>.

### **Policy on Academic Consideration for a Medical/ Non-Medical Absence**

**(a) Consideration on Medical Grounds for assignments worth *less than 10%* of final grade: Consult Instructor Directly and Contact Academic Advising**

When seeking consideration on **medical grounds** for assignments worth *less than 10%* of the final course grade, the student should contact the instructor directly. The student need only share broad outlines of the medical situation. The instructor **may** require the student to submit documentation to the academic advisors, in which case she or he will advise the student and inform the academic advisors to expect documentation. If documentation is requested, the student will need to complete and submit the [Student Medical Certificate](#). The instructor may not collect medical documentation. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation.

**b) Medical Grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of final grade: Go Directly to Academic Advising**

University Senate policy, which can be found at [Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#) requires that all student requests for accommodation on medical grounds for assignments worth 10% or more of the final grade be made directly to the academic advising office of the home faculty (for Huron students, the “home faculty” is Huron), with supporting documentation in the form (minimally) of the Senate-approved Student Medical Certificate found at: [https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

The documentation is submitted in confidence and will not be shown to instructors. The advisors will contact the instructor when the medical documentation is received, and will outline the severity and duration of the medical challenge as expressed on the Student Medical Certificate and in any other supporting documentation. The student will be informed that the instructor has been notified of the presence of medical documentation, and will be instructed to work as quickly as possible with the instructor on an agreement for accommodation. The instructor will not normally deny accommodation where appropriate medical documentation is in place and where the duration it describes aligns with the due date(s) of assignment(s). Before denying a request for accommodation on medical grounds, the instructor will consult with the Dean. The instructor’s decision is appealable to the Dean.

**c) Consideration on Non-Medical Grounds: Consult Huron Support Services/Academic Advising, or email [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca).**

Students seeking academic consideration for a **non-medical** absence (e.g. varsity sports, religious, compassionate, or bereavement) will be required to provide appropriate documentation. All consideration requests must include a completed [Consideration Request Form](#). Late penalties may apply at the discretion of the instructor.

Please review the full policy on Academic Consideration for medical and non-medical absence at: [accommodation\\_medical.pdf \(uwo.ca\)](#). Consult [Huron Academic Advising](#) at [huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca) for any further questions or information.

**Support Services**

For advice on course selections, degree requirements, and for assistance with requests for medical accommodation, students should email an Academic Advisor in Huron’s Student Support Services at



[huronsss@uwo.ca](mailto:huronsss@uwo.ca). An outline of the range of services offered is found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/>.

Department Chairs, Program Directors and Coordinators are also able to answer questions about individual programs. Contact information can be found on the Huron website at: <https://huronatwestern.ca/contact/faculty-staff-directory/>.

If you think that you are too far behind to catch up or that your workload is not manageable, you should consult your Academic Advisor. If you are considering reducing your workload by dropping one or more courses, this must be done by the appropriate deadlines. Please refer to the Advising website, <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/academic-advising/> or review the list of official Sessional Dates on the Academic Calendar, available here: <http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/SessionalDates.cfm>.

You should consult with the course instructor and the Academic Advisor who can help you consider alternatives to dropping one or more courses. Note that dropping a course may affect OSAP and/or Scholarship/Bursary eligibility.

Huron Student Support Services: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/> Office of the Registrar: <https://registrar.uwo.ca/>  
Student Quick Reference Guide: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/student-services/#1> Academic Support & Engagement: <http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/>  
Huron University College Student Council: <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life/beyond-classroom/hucsc/>  
Western USC: <http://westernusc.ca/your-services/#studentservices>

### **Wellness and Health Supports at Huron and Western**

University students may encounter setbacks from time to time that can impact academic performance. Huron offers a variety of services that are here to support your success and wellbeing. All Huron staff and faculty have received training on responding to disclosures of Gender-Based Sexual Violence (GBSV); students should know that the Community Safety Office is a resource for survivors, providing support and, if desired, guidance while referring them to the further supports that they may require. Please visit <https://huronatwestern.ca/student-life-campus/student-services/wellness-safety> for more information or contact staff directly:

Wellness Services:

[huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:huronwellness@huron.uwo.ca) Community

Safety Office: [safety@huron.uwo.ca](mailto:safety@huron.uwo.ca)

Additional supports for Health and Wellness may be found and accessed at Western through, <https://www.uwo.ca/health/>.

Western Calendar - Policy Pages -

[Academic Calendar - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](#)