

Classics//Political Science/Philosophy 3434

The Ancient Origins of Political Thought: From Homer to Aristotle

Instructor: Dr. Larissa Atkison
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Lectures: T/TH/F 2:35-2:25 LSC psychology P5208
Office Hours: T/TH 3:45-5 in Henry Hicks 354, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This class will study the beginnings of political thought with Greek poets, historians and educators, culminating in a careful investigation of the political writings of Plato and Aristotle. We will consider philosophical questions about the origin of the state, the purpose of political community, the different kinds of regimes or constitutions, the common good, individual freedoms, revolution, war, wealth, poverty, and slavery.

ASSIGNMENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----|
| Attendance and seminar participation: | 10% |
| Reading Responses | 25% |
| Exams | 30% |
| Paper Proposal | 5% |
| Term paper | 30% |

This grading scheme is approximate: all final letter grades are subject to the instructor's discretion in order to reflect the grade scale as included below.

1. **Participation and Attendance (10%):** You are expected to attend every class having completed the reading, with the text in hand, and ready for class discussion. Undocumented absences, excessive lateness, and other indiscretions, such as texting, talking, or surfing the internet during class-time, will cost you a penalty of 2% a day up to 10%.
2. **Short reading responses (25%):** Students will submit six (500 word) critical reading responses throughout the term (see reading list for due dates). In these responses you will write a short reflection on any reading assigned during the unit. The reflection should focus on specific passages or issues identified during class or in our online reading questions. These assignments should be grammatically polished, demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the reading, and **entirely your own**. At the end of your response you will include at least one substantive question in response to the reading. Your questions and reading responses will help prepare you for the exams and will inform our review

sessions. It is imperative that you submit your responses to the Brightspace folder by **10 am** the day they are due. You should also bring a hardcopy of your response to class. Late responses will not be accepted. I will count your best five responses toward your grade.

3. **Exams (30%):** There are two exams: each is worth 15%. The first, on 06/02, covers material up to and including Aeschylus's *Furies*. The second, on 28/02, covers Thucydides and Aristophanes.
4. **Paper Proposal (5%):** Students will submit their paper topic and a short (no more than 500 words) outline of their intended argument.
5. **Term paper (30%):** Students will write one 3000 paper due the last day of class on Plato and/or Aristotle. While you should feel free to consult secondary literature, the principal engagement will be with the text(s) you are treating. I will post essay questions online two weeks before the paper topic is due. If you would like to propose your own topic you may do so in writing the Friday BEFORE paper topics are due. Papers should be submitted on Brightspace and in hard copy at the BEGINNING of class the day of the deadline.

Late Policy: For the papers, one fraction of a grade will be deducted per day (excluding Saturday and Sunday). For example, an 'A' paper due Monday but submitted 2 days late on Wednesday would be given a B+.

On the Brightspace website you will find a folder entitled "READING QUESTIONS." For each text I have posted a series of questions to keep in mind as you are reading the text, to help focus your attention on the kinds of questions we will be considering in class. You may use these to guide your Reading Responses, if you so choose.

PLAGIARISM AND INTELLECTUAL HONESTY

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on plagiarism and academic honesty as referenced in the Undergraduate Calendar at <http://registrar.dal.ca/calendar/ug/UREG.htm#12>. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations. Plagiarism and self-plagiarism are forms of academic fraud; complaints or allegations of such are subject to the adjudication of the Senate Discipline Committee. The Dalhousie website has a special page devoted to Academic Integrity, including definitions of plagiarism and techniques for avoiding it: <http://plagiarism.dal.ca/>.

NB: This class focuses on PRIMARY texts (texts written by the authors being studied). You do not need to consult any secondary literature in writing your papers, though you should feel free to do so. If you do, be sure to cite any sources you have consulted.

GRADES

The grading scale for the course can be found below:

| | Grade Submission On Line | |
|------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 4.3 | 90-100 | A+ |
| 4 | 85-89 | A |
| 3.7 | 80-84 | A- |
| 3.3 | 77-79 | B+ |
| 3 | 73-76 | B |
| 2.7 | 70-72 | B- |
| 2.3 | 65-69 | C+ |
| 2 | 60-64 | C |
| 1.7 | 55-59 | C- |
| 1 | 50-54 | D |
| 0 | 0-49 | F |

COURSE TEXTS:

Please find below a list of the texts we will be treating in class. The editions listed are the translations I will be referring to in lecture, but as long as you have an edition and translation with ancient line numbers in the margins, you can feel free to use any translation. Regardless of which edition you choose, I do ask that you bring a copy of the book we are studying to each class.

All texts are available at the **University of King's College Bookstore**. This list is also posted on the King's Bookstore under the **CLAS/PHIL/POLI 3434** tab:

- * Homer. *The Iliad*. Trans. Robert Fagles. Penguin Classics, 1998.
- * Hesiod. *Theogony*. Trans. Richard Caldwell. Focus Classical Library, 1987.
- * Aeschylus. *Oresteia*. Trans. Peter Meinecke. Hackett, 1998.
- * Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*. Trans. Jeffrey Henderson. Focus Publishing/R. Pullins Co., 1988.
- * Plato, *Republic*. Trans. G.M.A. Grube and C.D.C. Reeve. Hackett, 1992.

- * Plato, *Statesman*. Trans. Eva Brann, Peter Kalkavage, Eric Salem. Focus Classical Library, 2012.
- * Aristotle. *Politics*. Trans. Joe Sachs. Focus Classical Library, 2012.

Any additional readings will be posted to the Brightspace site..

Brightspace Course Page

There is a Brightspace page for this course, and students are expected to consult it regularly for important announcements. On this page you will find the syllabus, any course handouts, a calendar with important dates for the class, reading questions, as well as a discussion board for discussing the material with your colleagues.

For assistance outside of class with Brightspace, contact the Computer Centre Help Desk located in the basement of the Killam Library at helpdesk@dal.ca or (902) 494-2376. Please report any other problems or concerns with Brightspace to your instructor.

STATEMENT ON ACCESSIBILITY

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers experienced related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic protected under Canadian human rights legislation.

Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation form.

A note taker may be required as part of a student's accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 902-494-2836 for more information or send an email to notetaking@dal.ca

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to fully participate in the class.

TENTATIVE WEEKLY SCHEDULE (Please Note: This schedule may be periodically adjusted or corrected as required)

| Week | Date | Topic | Reading | Assignment |
|------|-------|--|--|--|
| 1 | 07/01 | Introduction | | |
| | 09/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | Books I-II (Bk 1 complete, Bk 2 focus on 1-454). | |
| | 10/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | Books III-V | |
| 2 | 14/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | CANCELLED | |
| | 16/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | Books V-IX | |
| | 17/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | Books XXI, XII (310-28), XVI, XVIII | 1st RR due *Last day to add/Last day to drop without fees |
| 3 | 21/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | Books XXII-XXIII | |
| | 23/01 | Homer's <i>Iliad</i> | Book XXIV | |
| | 24/01 | Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i> | <i>Theogony</i> (complete) | |
| 4 | 28/01 | Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i> | <i>Theogony</i> (complete) | |
| | 30/01 | Aeschylus' <i>Oresteia</i> | <i>Agamemnon</i> | |
| | 31/01 | Aeschylus' <i>Oresteia</i> | <i>Libation Bearers</i> | 2nd RR due |
| 5 | 4/02 | Aeschylus' <i>Oresteia</i> | <i>Furies</i> | |
| | 6/02 | First exam | | |
| | 7/02 | Munro Day – No Class | | |
| 6 | 11/02 | Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War - Book Two 34-65 | Readings on Brightspace | |
| | 13/02 | Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War - Book Three 25-50 and 8283; Book Five 84-116; Book Six 7-31T | Readings on Brightspace | |
| | 14/02 | Thucydides and the Peloponnesian War - Book Seven 72-87 | | 3rd RR due |

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|----|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| 7 | 18/02 | Winter Study Break | | |
| | 20/02 | Winter Study Break | | |
| | 21/02 | Winter Study Break | | |
| 8 | 25/02 | Aristophanes, <i>Lysistrata</i> | complete | |
| | 27/02 | Aristophanes, <i>Lysistrata</i> | complete | 4th RR due |
| | 28/02 | Exam | | |
| 9 | 03/03 | Plato's <i>Republic</i> | Book I | |
| | 05/03 | Plato's <i>Republic</i> | Books II-III | |
| | 06/03 | Plato's <i>Republic</i> | Books IV-V | |
| 10 | 10/03 | Plato's <i>Republic</i> | Book VI-VI | |
| | 12/03 | Plato's <i>Republic</i> | Books VIII-IX | |
| | 13/03 | Plato's <i>Republic</i> | Book X | 5th RR due |
| 11 | 17/03 | Plato's <i>Statesman</i> | complete | |
| | 19/03 | Plato's <i>Statesman</i> | complete | |
| | 20/03 | Plato's <i>Statesman</i> | complete | |
| 12 | 24/03 | Aristotle's <i>Politics</i> | Book I | |
| | 26/03 | Aristotle's <i>Politics</i> | Book II-III | |
| | 27/03 | Aristotle's <i>Politics</i> | Books IV-VI | 6th RR due |
| 13 | 31/03 | Aristotle's <i>Politics</i> | Books VII-VIII | Paper proposal due |
| | 02/04 | Aristotle's <i>Ethics</i> | Selections TBD, on Brightspace | |
| | 03/04 | Aristotle's <i>Ethics</i> | Selections TBD, on Brightspace | |
| 14 | 06/04 | Conclusion | Selections TBD, on Brightspace | Final paper due in class and on Brightspace |
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