



Syllabus

Academic Year	2021/2022
Program	Politics: Philosophy and Economics
Course	History of Political Thought (Distributive Justice)
Term	II semester
Year	1
SSD	SPS/02 - Storia delle dottrine politiche
Credits	8

INSTRUCTIONAL GOALS

The main aim of this class is to provide students with a broad view of the historical underpinnings and evolution of classical and modern political thought. This overview will also aim at improving some methodological skills, such as the ability to read historical texts, the ability to pick out conceptual connections, similarities and differences in the arguments dealt with, the awareness of the contextual resonances of political texts. Moreover, the course will also provide basic skills in the management of secondary scholarship and in the discussion, presentation and assessment of the theoretical premises of the main political theories of the modern age.

The basic skills to be assessed are the following ones:

- 1.ability to read historical texts in their context, and in contrast with other texts;
- 2.ability to grasp the connections between premises and arguments, and to find them in the texts;
- 3.ability to put forward and defend one's own interpretations of a given text during guided discussions;
- 4.ability to emphasize similarities and differences between historical approaches and contemporary views and issues.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

They describe what a learner is expected to know, understand and be able to demonstrate after completion of a learning path.

Knowledge and understanding:

The student is able to easily understand the main concepts and issues in the fields of History of political thought.

Applying knowledge and understanding:

By using the concepts developed and tested by history of political thought, the student is able to actively participate and contribute to the choice of social policies in progress, by understanding the historical roots of current issues and theories.

These skills, in addition to being evaluated in the final phase (in written form), will be monitored through intermediate tests.

Moreover, the presence of multimedia contents available on the Moodle platform (videos, slides, exercises, forums, working groups, etc.) will give the possibility to create a permanent



interaction between class and teacher, thereby giving the opportunity to verify competences in real time.

Making judgements:

The student acquires methodological tools useful to develop analyses resting on collection, processing and interpretation of data relating to historical phenomena, texts and notions.

The ability to make independent judgements is conveyed in lessons, workshops and seminars and it is checked in the final exam.

Communications Skills:

The student develops the ability to communicate her/his specific knowledge and to present the results of he/his study and research activities.

Communication skills are tested in exams and during guided discussions.

Learning skills:

The student develops an autonomous ability to study at a higher level, which allows him/her to analyze problems their complexity and specific dynamics. The development of this capacity is stimulated by individual reading and understanding of scientific texts and articles.

Pre-requisites	None.
Course content	This course will provide a view of the evolution of political theories from the ancients to the moderns, with a particular focus on texts by Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and Bentham. The lectures will emphasize the argumentative structure of the texts considered.
Reference Books	Required texts: A. Sources -- S.M. Cahn (ed.), Political Philosophy. The Essential Texts, OUP; -- Plato, The Republic -- Aristotle, Nicomachean Ethics -- Aristotle, Politics -- Machiavelli, The Prince -- Hobbes, The Leviathan -- Locke, Second Treatise of Government -- Hume, A Treatise of Human Nature -- Bentham, A Fragment on Government -- Rousseau, The Social Contract B. Secondary scholarship: -- A. Ryan, On Politics. A History of Political Thought from Herodotus to the Present, Penguin, 2013, chaps. 2, 3, 11, 12, 13, 19 -- J. Annas, An Introduction to Plato's Republic, OUP, 1981, chaps. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 -- R. Kraut, Aristotle. Political Philosophy, OUP, 2002 -- G. Newey, Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Hobbes and Leviathan, 2008, chaps. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7



-- P.J. Kelly, *Locke's Second Treatise of Government. A Reader's Guide*, Continuum, 2007, chaps. 1, 2, 3

-- R. Hardin, *David Hume. Moral and Political Theorist*, OUP, 2007, chaps.

-- G. Pellegrino, • "Bentham, Jeremy (1748-1832)", in *The Encyclopedia of Political Thought*, ed. Michael T. Gibbons, London: Wiley, 2015

The books can be bought on good international bookshops or on www.amazon.com, or borrowed from libraries. The encyclopedia entry on Bentham will be uploaded in the e-learning LUISS website. Classical source can be taken from free texts on Liberty Fund. Any printed edition is accepted. A selection of texts is in the anthology edited by Kahn.

Teaching Methods

The following teaching methods will be used during the course:

- traditional lectures
- individual exercises
- assignments
- mini-polls.

Each module will begin with a video, case or text on which discussion will be conducted. Then, the instructor will provide clarifications, overviews of the theories and will provide some historical contextualisation. The final step of any module will be a guided discussion of another text, in which single students will perform analytical dissection of some pages.

Assessment

Mini-quizzes (10 multiple choice questions on the required texts): 50% of the final grade

Final written exam (5 multiple choice questions and 2 essay questions on the required texts) (50% of the final grade for students who took the mini-quizzes).
