



UNIVERSITÀ
CATTOLICA
del Sacro Cuore

History of political thought

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Course aims and intended learning outcomes

The main purpose of this course is to provide students with the following knowledge and abilities.

- Knowledge: the proper lexicon of the history of political ideas; the main problems of political theory, focusing on the main authors and their works; in-depth analysis of a specific topic in political thought.
- Abilities: to analyze and interpret the sources and texts of political theory; to critically orientate in the complexity of theoretical debates; to understand political and institutional processes in a comparative historical perspective.

The course expects students to achieve the following results:

- a good knowledge of the main authors and currents in the history of political thought;
- a conscious and independent use of the acquired analytical skills, in order to deal with the main questions of political culture and political ideas, and to put them into the historical and theoretical frames, using an appropriate lexicon.

Course content

The course aims to provide students with interpretive tools to acquire the basic features of the history of Western political thought, starting from the original thought formulations dating back to classical Greek political thinkers until modern and contemporary age reflections. The course is divided into two parts: a first part (fall semester) of thirty hours, and a second part (spring semester) of thirty hours.

The first part of the course deals with the greatest and most influential Ancient and Medieval political thinkers – from the ancient Greek monarchy to the doctrines of the Hellenistic principality, the origins of the Christian conception of power, from Middle Ages universalism to the emergence of territorial States.

The second part of the course will explore the origins and the development of modern and contemporary political thought – Hobbes, Locke, Hume, Montesquieu, Rousseau, Burke, Bentham, J.S. Mill, Hegel, Marx, Nietzsche, Weber.

Reading list

Students will be required to prepare on:

- Course notes;
- G. KLOSKO, *History of Political Theory: An Introduction. Volume I: Ancient and Medieval*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2012;
- G. KLOSKO, *History of Political Theory: An Introduction. Volume II: Modern*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2013.

Other reference essays and readings will be assigned by the lecturers during the class. Power points presentations of the lectures will be available on blackboard.



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Teaching method

Traditional lectures. Active participation is strongly encouraged: students are expected to participate constructively with comments and questions. Attendance, although not compulsory, is strongly recommended.

Assessment method and criteria

The final written exam will be held during the official Appelli, starting from June 2020. Students' proficiency will be evaluated through a written examination: 6 open questions, two hours allowed. This exam will include questions related to two parts of the course and each part will include three open questions. Each question requires an answer (30 lines). The evaluation is expressed with a grade of out of 30. Answers are graded up to 5.

Otherwise, students can take two intermediate exams at the end of each module (i.e. January and May 2019), weighting respectively 50% of the final grade.

These intermediate tests, willing to verify ongoing student's knowledge of the main topics of the course, will include three open questions.

The final grade will be a weighted average of these two marks. Students failing one of the two partial written-tests will be allowed to take the failed part during any exam during the official sessions, from June 2020 to February 2021.

Students that, for any reasons, will not take both the intermediate written tests will be required to take the final written exam on the whole program during the official Appelli, as described above.

Notes and prerequisites

No particular requirements needed.

Further information and office hours can be found on the lecturers' webpage at

http://docenti.unicatt.it/eng/pietro_luca_azzaro

http://docenti.unicatt.it/eng/luca_gino_castellin

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