

POL 3021: Western Political Thought
Spring 2021
Dr. Linda Beail
MWF 12:15 – 1:20 pm, Taylor Hall 105

Getting in touch with me: For short questions – email me at lbeail@pointloma.edu. As a general rule, I answer emails during the work day (9-4), and I try to answer emails within 24 hours, except on weekends. If I happen to miss your email, please follow up again with me. I want to make sure I get back to you! For everything else – come to office hours or make an appointment. Office hours are a chance for you to get help on class assignments; go over material covered in class; talk about connections between class material and other ideas; talk about the political science major/possible careers/vocation; and so on. I would love to get to know each of you better and help you succeed in this course, so I encourage you to take advantage of this time.

This semester, school policy prohibits face-to-face meetings in faculty offices. However, I am more than happy to meet with you via Zoom or phone.

To [make an appointment](#) with me, see my appointment calendar in Google.
To Zoom with me for that appointment, use my [personal meeting link](#).

PLNU MISSION: To Teach – To Shape – To Send. Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Course Description:

Politics is often described as the “art of the possible,” and many political scientists are concerned with the pragmatic realities of how to gain, keep, and use power – whether in global relationships between states, in war, in policy choices, or even in an election campaign. But all political actions and choices are grounded in theory – whether conscious or more implicit. Our shared (and contested) notions -- of legitimate and illegitimate power, of justice, of who should lead, of the possibilities and limits of human nature and freedom, of the importance of the individual vis-a-vis the community -- all shape the practical choices and evaluations we make concerning how to vote, or when war is justified, or if human rights have been violated, or if a particular public policy is feasible & desirable. As we analyze, describe, predict and judge the political events happening around us, we are relying on our often unspoken understandings of how political life *should* work. This course is an opportunity for those of us who love politics to think deeply and deliberately about the ideas and values that shape our political worldviews. We can not only better evaluate and critique current political systems, leaders, events and realities – we can better imagine those we need or want to bring into reality. Through close readings of primary texts, as well as analysis of commentary and critique of those texts, we will be able to discover the interaction of theory and praxis in the evolution of political life in the West. By delving into the ideas about politics that many people have embraced and debated over centuries in Western civilization, we will be better prepared to understand contemporary political rhetoric and dilemmas, and to clarify our own political values and commitments.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of this course, you will be able to

- Identify important theorists in the Western political tradition, from Plato to the present, and describe their major contributions to political thought.

- Compare and contrast political theorists' answers to essential questions of political thought and action, such as: What is justice? What is freedom? What is the goal of politics? How can we attain these things? Are humans virtuous? Who should lead? When is power legitimate? What is the best form of government? What is the relationship between the community, the individual, and the state? What role should religion play in political life?
- Engage in the imaginative work of normative political theorizing through the Thought Experiment assignment.
- Be better critical and reflective readers of difficult texts, locating main points, arguments and counterarguments within texts and overarching themes in a series of texts.
- Demonstrate skill in speaking with others about political ideals and practices, evaluating others' arguments and challenging ideas in a fruitful, civil and productive manner.

PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- Construct and evaluate analytical, comprehensive arguments (essays).
- Demonstrate oral communication abilities, particularly to convey complex ideas, recognize diverse viewpoints, and offer persuasive evidence of an argument (developed in daily class discussion, demonstrated in oral final exam).

COURSE CREDIT HOUR INFORMATION

In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 4-unit class delivered over 15 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 150 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes.

INCOMPLETES AND LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be submitted/turned in by the beginning of the class session when they are due (or the due date specified on Canvas & the syllabus)—including assignments posted in Canvas. Incompletes will only be assigned in extremely unusual circumstances.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

While all students are expected to meet the minimum standards for completion of this course as established by the instructor, students with disabilities may require academic adjustments, modifications or auxiliary

aids/services. At Point Loma Nazarene University (PLNU), these students are requested to register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC), located in the Bond Academic Center (DRC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). The DRC's policies and procedures for assisting such students in the development of an appropriate academic adjustment plan (AP) allows PLNU to comply with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Section 504 prohibits discrimination against students with special needs and guarantees all qualified students equal access to and benefits of PLNU programs and activities. After the student files the required documentation, the DRC, in conjunction with the student, will develop an AP to meet that student's specific learning needs. The DRC will thereafter email the student's AP to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester. The AP must be implemented in all such courses.

If students do not wish to avail themselves of some or all of the elements of their AP in a particular course, it is the responsibility of those students to notify their professor in that course. PLNU highly recommends that DRC students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester about the applicability of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not desire to take advantage of some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all **synchronous** class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (virtual or face-to-face), the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university drop date or, after that date, receive the appropriate grade for their work and participation. In some courses, a portion of the credit hour content will be delivered **asynchronously** and attendance will be determined by submitting the assignments by the posted due dates. See [Academic Policies](#) in the Undergraduate Academic Catalog. If absences exceed these limits but are due to university excused health issues, an exception will be granted.

Asynchronous Attendance/Participation Definition

A day of attendance in asynchronous content is determined as contributing a substantive note, assignment, discussion, or submission by the posted due date. Failure to meet these standards will result in an absence for that day. Instructors will determine how many asynchronous attendance days are required each week.

FINAL EXAM POLICY

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination **on its scheduled day**. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Class Schedules](#) site. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

SPIRITUAL CARE

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If students have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact the [Office of Spiritual Development](#).

USE OF TECHNOLOGY

In order to be successful in the remote or hybrid environment, you'll need to meet the minimum technology and system requirements; please refer to the [Technology and System Requirements](#) information. Additionally,

students are required to have headphone speakers compatible with their computer available to use. If a student is in need of technological resources please contact student-tech-request@pointloma.edu.

Problems with technology do not relieve you of the responsibility of participating, turning in your assignments, or completing your class work.

CAMPUS RESOURCES

The **PLNU [Tutoring Center](#)** offers support with everything you need to succeed — whether it's learning study strategies and test-taking techniques, getting help from a tutor, using technology to read and write, or editing a research paper. They also offer individual or small group tutorial sessions and special review sessions before exams for several courses. These services are **free** for PLNU undergraduate students. Some helpful **study strategies** that may assist you in this course can be found [here](#).

Research librarians are available to help you with your research papers and projects in Ryan Library. You can reach them by phone at (619) 849-2337, by text at (619)592-8884, or by [email](#). To search the library's databases for books and articles, or to find quick and easy reference to our citation style guide and resources in political science, please visit our department's excellent [research guide](#) from Ryan Library.

The Wellness Center is available for medical, counseling and nutrition services to students. Many college students experience strained relationships, stress, anxiety, depression, physical health challenges, and other barriers to learning. The Wellness Center offers help and resources to deal with these kind of issues. T

Title IX at PLNU: As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep any information you share private to the greatest extent possible. You should know that I have a mandatory reporting responsibility under PLNU policy and federal law, and am required to share any information I receive regarding sexual harassment, discrimination, and related conduct with PLNU's Title IX Coordinator.

PLNU strives to provide a learning and living environment that promotes safety, transparency, personal integrity, civility, mutual respect, and freedom from unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment. [Detailed information on discrimination, harassment, and sexual assault policies](#) and processes for getting help are available [this link](#). PLNU's Title IX Coordinator is Dr. Caye Smith, Vice President for Student Development (619-849-2479, Room 303 Nicholson Commons). The Title IX office will seek to maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible, but cannot guarantee absolute confidentiality. Students can receive *confidential* support (with the exception of a few critical situations) from the Wellness Center (619-849-2574) or campus pastors in the Office of Spiritual Development (619-849-2655).

STYLE GUIDELINES

In political science, the most common form of citations is the **"author-date" format** from the [Chicago Manual of Style](#). Please use this style if using citations in this class – examples are available at the hyperlink. For our short response papers and in-class exams, if you are referring to something from our shared syllabus, simply indicate the author's name or title and where to find the idea/quote in your text – you do not need formal footnotes or works cited. For example: "As Plato says in the *Apology*, "it really is the greatest benefit for a person to converse every day about goodness" (paragraph 38a, p. 19).

Language can be tricky, as it is always evolving in its usage. Some observations might be helpful. Because of the changing standards of English usage, language that refers appropriately to all persons (inclusive of gender) should be used whenever possible. Some simple guidelines include replacing "man" or "mankind" with "humanity," "humankind," "persons," or "people." "He," "him" and "his"--when not referring to an actual male person--can be replaced with "he or she," "him or her," or "hers or his," or the singular "they," "them," and "their" is also grammatically appropriate. Gender specific terms may be replaced by their current alternatives: for example, "Congressman" has been correctly replaced by "Congressperson" or "member of Congress," etc. As it is becoming more prevalent and considerate to refer to persons by the gender pronouns they prefer, I appreciate your kindness in using gendered language that feels respectful and hospitable to each person when possible.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The **main work** of this course is the **careful reading, thoughtful consideration, and engaged discussion of the canonical texts** of Western political thought. Therefore, it is essential that you attend class each day, and that you come prepared to discuss the readings at hand. **Quality** of participation is as important to your grade as quantity; the best participants are not necessarily those that talk the most, but that regularly engage in our conversation with something meaningful and helpful to contribute. Sometimes that may be an insightful question that provokes thoughtful reaction, rather than a profound answer. Making space for others' voices and perspectives, as well as bravely and wisely offering your own, are good political skills that we will practice.

Weekly reading responses – may be discussion boards, Flipgrid videos, group Google doc, or 1-page essay practice and peer review. Will be assigned in each week’s Canvas module and will generally be due Tuesdays at 11:59 pm.	15% of final course grade
Attendance and Participation in Class Discussions (Wednesday and Friday, live via Zoom or face-to-face)	15%
“Thought Experiment” Paper – Theorizing Political Community (Draft and Final)	25%
Three “Theory Analysis” Essays	25%
Final Exam	20%

Grading Scale:

A	93-100%	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	0 -59

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Steven M. Cahn, ed. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*. 3rd edition. Oxford University Press, 2014.
 Wendell Berry, *Jayber Crow*, Counterpoint 2001.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision by instructor):

	DATE	PREPARATION FOR CLASS	ASSIGNMENTS DUE
WEEK 1 Introduction	March 1		
	March 3	Read through syllabus – especially course description and objectives, and course requirements.	
	March 5	<i>Plato's Apology (Defence of Socrates)</i> Cahn, 5-22	
WEEK 2 Plato	March 8	<i>Crito</i> Cahn pp. 22-30	
	March 10	<i>Republic</i> Book I (327a-354c) Cahn pp. 31-51	
	March 12	<i>Republic</i> excerpts from Book II (357a -377b), Books III-IV (412b – 421c) Cahn pp. 51-71	First Draft of Thought Experiment Due in Canvas no later than 11:59 pm, Sunday March 14
WEEK 3 Plato	March 15	<i>Republic</i> Book IV (427d - 441e) and Book V (451c - 466d) Cahn pp. 71-90	
	March 17	<i>Republic</i> Book VI (484 – 511e) and Book VII (514a – 521b) Cahn pp. 90-110	
	March 19	<i>Republic</i> Book VIII (543a – 569c) and Book IX (571a – 580c) Cahn pp. 110-136	
WEEK 4 Aristotle	March 22	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Cahn 142-165	
	March 24	<i>Politics</i> , excerpts from Books I-III Cahn 165-197	
	March 26	<i>Politics</i> , excerpts from Books IV-VII Cahn 197-222 Watch short video lecture by Dr. Beail on medieval political thought	

WEEK 5 The Middle Ages and the Pivot toward Modernity	March 29	Work on first theory analysis essay	First “Theory Analysis” essay due in Canvas no later than 11:59 pm, Tuesday March 30
	March 31	*Mental Health Break – No Class Wednesday March 31*	
	April 2	<i>The Prince</i> , dedication and chapters I – XV Cahn 273 - 283	
WEEK 6 Machiavelli	April 5	<i>The Prince</i> , chapters XVI – XXVI Cahn 283 - 292	
	April 7	<i>The Discourses</i> Cahn 293-308	
	April 9		
WEEK 7 Hobbes	April 12	<i>Leviathan</i> , Part 1: Introduction – Chapter 12 (excerpts) Cahn 309-319	
	April 14	<i>Leviathan</i> , Chapters 13-15 Cahn 319 - 330	
	April 16	<i>Leviathan</i> , Part 2: Chapters 17-21, 29 Cahn 330-343	
WEEK 8 Locke	April 19	<i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 1-5 Cahn 360-374	
	April 21	<i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 7-10 Cahn 374-380	
	April 23	<i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 11-12, 26-29 <i>Letter Concerning Toleration</i> Cahn 380-400	Second “Theory Analysis” essay due in Canvas no later than 11:59 pm, Sunday April 25
WEEK 9 Rousseau	April 26	<i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> Cahn 418-428	
	April 28	<i>Discourse on the Origin of Inequality</i> Cahn 429-436	

	April 30	<i>Of the Social Contract</i> , Parts I & II Cahn 437-449	
WEEK 10 Burke and Wollstonecraft	May 3	Edmund Burke, <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France</i> Cahn 603-618	
	May 5	*Mental Health Break – No Class Wednesday May 5*	
	May 7	Mary Wollstonecraft, <i>Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i>	
WEEK 11 Marx and Engels	May 10	<i>Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</i> and <i>The German Ideology</i> Cahn 696-713	
	May 12	<i>Manifesto of the Communist Party</i> and <i>Value, Price and Profit</i> Cahn 714-737	
	May 14	No new reading for class today – we will wrap up our discussion of Marx in class Work on essay (due Sunday night) and begin reading Wendell Berry’s novel <i>Jayber Crow</i> for next week	Third “Theory Analysis” essay due in Canvas no later than 11:59 pm, Sunday May 16
WEEK 12 Embodying Theory and Praxis: Berry	May 17	<i>Jayber Crow</i> chapters 1-9 (pp. 3-106) Watch Bill Moyers’ profile of and interview with Berry (40 minutes)	
	May 19	<i>Jayber Crow</i> chapters 10-22 (pp. 109-243)	

	May 21	<i>Jayber Crow</i> chapters 23-32 (pp. 247-363) Poems: "Mad Farmer Liberation Front" "The Country of Marriage"	
WEEK 13 Postmodernism: Nietzsche and Foucault	May 24	Work on Final Drafts of Thought Experiment (due this coming Sunday)	
	May 26	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> Cahn 825-840	
	May 28	Michel Foucault, <i>Power/Knowledge</i> Cahn 970-987	Final "Thought Experiment" paper due in Canvas no later than 11:59 pm, Sunday May 30
WEEK 14 Hannah Arendt	May 31	Listen to Lyndsey Stonebridge, The Moral World in Dark Times: Hannah Arendt for Now (49 minutes)	
	June 2	<i>The Origins of Totalitarianism</i> Cahn 841-856	
	June 4		
WEEK 15 Final Exam	Monday June 7, 10:30 am – 1 pm		Final Exam – Two Parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral discussion – three groups, 7 students each, 50 minutes each • Written reflection (2 pages)