

Carleton University  
Winter 2022  
Department of Political Science  
<https://carleton.ca/polisci/>

**PSCI 6301W - POLITICAL THEORY II**  
**POLITICAL MODERNITY AS THE CONQUEST OF NATURE**  
**WEDNESDAYS 11:35 am - 2:35pm**  
**Course delivery: On-line synchronous via Zoom.**

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**Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:00 PM - 2:00 PM via Zoom.**

In this course we will examine how the modern political project can be expressed as the conquest of nature. We will begin with classical political philosophy and its battle against the Sophists. Plato and Aristotle argued that human beings and their communities should live *within* the order of nature. The Sophists believed we can assert our mastery *over* nature to achieve power and wealth through exploiting others. We then turn to the theological concept of a Creator God and how it altered the classical understanding of freedom and necessity and introduced a new conception of the will. Machiavelli inaugurates the full-blown modern project for the conquest of nature to create power and prosperity for princes and peoples, which both was and was not a return to the Sophists because of Machiavelli's transferal of the power of the Creator God to the secular agency of the Prince. Machiavelli's prescription for the modern state is carried forward by his successors including Bacon, Hobbes and Harrington, until it is forced to a screeching halt by the great protest of the Philosophy of Freedom begun by Rousseau, which sought to restore the holism of the classical political community on the basis of the modern account of nature, actualized through historical progress. The debate about the meaning of historical progress unfolds through Hegel and culminates in Heidegger, whose identification of the modern project entirely with global technology takes us back to the beginning by arguing that modern technology is grounded in ancient Greek *techne* but constitutes a radical modification of it. We conclude with some critical engagements with Heidegger's assimilation of political modernity to global technology by political thinkers including George P. Grant and Leo Strauss.

**REQUIREMENTS AND BASIS OF GRADING:**

- a) Students will make presentations on an equally rotating basis on the readings assigned for each class. There is no written component. The aim is to lead the seminar group through the readings and generate a collective discussion of them. Worth 50% of grade.
  
- b) A term paper on the textual exegesis of one or more of the assigned readings. Suggested topics will be provided. You are welcome to use your seminar presentation as a dry run for the term paper, but you are also free to write on something else entirely. Length: 20 thesis pages double-

spaced typed. E-submissions please. Due on the last day of classes, April 12. Worth 50% of grade.

**TEXTS:** These texts are readily available as PDFs on line. Because in a number of cases we are not reading them in their entirety, I don't want it to be necessary for you to buy them. The exceptions are the readings from Strauss and Grant, which will be on reserve in the Library.

Martin Heidegger. BEING AND TIME Bk. 1; ESSAY CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY; THE ANAXIMANDER FRAGMENT.

Sophocles. OEDIPUS THE TYRANT.

DIEHL'S FRAGMENTS OF THE PRE-SOCRATICS (selections).

Plato. THEAETETUS (selections); REPUBLIC (selections).

Aristotle. PHYSICS Bk. 2; POLITICS Bks. 1-3.

Cicero. ON FATE.

St. Augustine. THE CITY OF GOD (selections)

St. Thomas. SUMMA THEOLOGICA (selections).

Machiavelli. THE PRINCE; DISCOURSES Bk. 1.

Francis Bacon. THE NEW ORGANON (selections)

Thomas Hobbes. LEVIATHAN (selections);

James Harrington, OCEANA (selections).

Jean-Jacques Rousseau. TWO TREATISES

G.W.F. Hegel. Preface to THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT.

Leo Strauss, ON TYRANNY with response by Alexandre Kojève and re-statement by Strauss.

George P. Grant, IN DEFENSE OF NORTH AMERICA; ENGLISH-SPEAKING JUSTICE.

### **SCHEDULE OF READINGS:**

Week 1:       Introductory remarks.

Week 2.       Heidegger, BEING AND TIME book 1; ESSAY CONCERNING TECHNOLOGY; THE ANAXIMANDER FRAGMENT.

Week 3.       Sophocles, OEDIPUS THE KING; Diehl's FRAGMENTS OF THE PRE-SOCRATICS (selections).

Week 4.       Plato, THEAETETUS (selections); REPUBLIC (selections).

Week 5.       Aristotle, PHYSICS book 2; POLITICS books 1-3.

Week 6.       Cicero, ON FATE; St. Augustine, CITY OF GOD (selections); St. Thomas, SUMMA THEOLOGICA (selections).

### **WINTER BREAK**

- Week 7. Machiavelli, THE PRINCE; DISCOURSES Book 1.
- Week 8. Francis Bacon, THE NEW ORGANON (selections); Thomas Hobbes, LEVIATHAN (selections); James Harrington, OCEANA (selections).
- Week 9. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, TWO TREATISES.
- Week 10. G.W.F. Hegel, PREFACE TO THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SPIRIT.
- Week 11. Leo Strauss, ON TYRANNY; George P. Grant, IN DEFENSE OF NORTH AMERICA; ENGLISH-SPEAKING JUSTICE.
- Week 12. Concluding remarks.

## **Appendix**

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### **Covid-19 Information**

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow COVID-19 prevention measures and all mandatory public health requirements (e.g. wearing a mask, physical distancing, hand hygiene, respiratory and cough etiquette) When accessing campus you must fill in the [COVID-19 Screening Self-Assessment in cuScreen](#) each day before coming to campus. You must also check-in to your final destination (where you plan on being longer than 15 minutes) within a building using the [QR location code](#).

If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately, self-isolate, and complete the mandatory [symptom reporting tool](#). For purposes of contact tracing, attendance will be recorded in all classes and labs. Participants can check in using posted QR codes through the cuScreen platform where provided. Students who do not have a smartphone will be required to complete a paper process as indicated on the [COVID-19 website](#).

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow guidelines regarding safe movement and seating on campus (e.g. directional arrows, designated entrances and exits, designated seats that maintain physical distancing). In order to avoid congestion, allow all previous occupants to fully vacate a classroom before entering. No food or drinks are permitted in any classrooms or labs.

For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and required measures, please see the [University's COVID-19 webpage](#) and review the [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact [covidinfo@carleton.ca](mailto:covidinfo@carleton.ca)

Please note that failure to comply with University policies and mandatory public health requirements, and endangering the safety of others are considered misconduct under the [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#). Failure to comply with Carleton's COVID-19 procedures may lead to supplementary action involving Campus Safety and/or Student Affairs.

### **Requests for Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

***Pregnancy accommodation:*** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf).

***Religious accommodation:*** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, visit the Equity Services website: [carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf](https://carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf).

***Accommodations for students with disabilities:*** If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more information, please visit [carleton.ca/pmc](https://carleton.ca/pmc).

***Accommodation for student activities:*** Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who engage in student activities at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>.

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: [students.carleton.ca/course-outline](https://students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

### **Sexual Violence Policy**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated. Survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](https://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support).

## **Plagiarism**

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement;
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

More information on the University’s Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

## **Intellectual property**

Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual

property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s).

### **Submission and Return of Term Work**

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

### **Grading**

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

| Percentage | Letter grade | 12-point scale | Percentage | Letter grade | 12-point scale |
|------------|--------------|----------------|------------|--------------|----------------|
| 90-100     | A+           | 12             | 67-69      | C+           | 6              |
| 85-89      | A            | 11             | 63-66      | C            | 5              |
| 80-84      | A-           | 10             | 60-62      | C-           | 4              |
| 77-79      | B+           | 9              | 57-59      | D+           | 3              |
| 73-76      | B            | 8              | 53-56      | D            | 2              |
| 70-72      | B-           | 7              | 50-52      | D-           | 1              |

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

### **Carleton E-mail Accounts**

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via official Carleton University e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and university information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton University email accounts and Brightspace.

### **Carleton Political Science Society**

The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

## **Official Course Outline**

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.