

Senior Thesis
HIST 400 – AS01
Winter 2017

Instructor: Sean Hannan, PhD

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Office Hours: R 11:00 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Lecture Time: By appointment.

Lecture Room: 7-352H

Course Credits: 3

Course Pre-requisite: Consent of the Department.

Course Description: In this individual study course, students write a major essay and make a conference-style presentation on a specific topic of their choice. This course is only open to History Majors. NOTE: Students may receive credit for only one of HIST 400 and HIST 401. Students desiring HIST 400 must consult with the History Coordinator to select a primary and secondary supervisor.

The topic of this reading course is the foundations of early modern political theory. Special attention is paid to the late Middle Ages, with the goal of tracing the emergence of modern political ideals out of deeply medieval debates. Our discussion aims to focus on primary texts from the late thirteenth through early sixteenth centuries, so that we can do justice to the complexity and specificity of the arguments found in these works. By consulting secondary sources, as well, we can situate these primary sources in their proper contexts, thereby understanding them in ways that are both theoretically rich and historically grounded.

Course Objectives:

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- Find, identify and analyze documentary evidence and/or secondary sources related to a specific topic;
- Ask historical questions, work independently, and develop research strategies to address issues of historical significance;
- Find and utilize interpretative works to provide context for understanding documentary evidence and analytical presentations;
- Prepare and deliver a conference-style presentation on a specific topic;
- Critique analytical writing effectively;
- Write an analytical essay of advanced depth and clarity.

Textbooks:

Unless otherwise noted, readings will be drawn from the following works:

Alighieri, Dante. *De Monarchia*. Ed. Edward Moore and W. H. V. Reade. Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 1916.

Aquinas, Thomas. *On Law, Morality, & Politics*. 2nd Ed. Trans. Richard J. Regan. Indianapolis: Hackett, 2002.

Burns, J. H., and Mark Goldie, eds. *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450–1700*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991

De Pizan, Christine. *The Book of the Body Politic*. Trans. Kate Langdon Forhan. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Hooker, Richard. *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity: Preface, Book I, Book VIII*. Ed. Arthur Stephen. McGrath. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1989.

Luther, Martin and J. M. Porter. *Selected Political Writings*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.

Luther, Martin, *On Government Authority* (1523), in *The Protestant Reformation*. Ed. Hans J. Hillerbrand. New York: Harper & Rowe, Publishers, 1968.

Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*. Trans. Harvey Mansfield & Nathan Tarlov. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Marsilius of Padua. *The Defender of the Peace*. Trans. Annabel Brett. Cambridge UP, 2005.

More, Thomas, and Desiderius Erasmus. *Utopia With Erasmus's The Sileni of Alcibiades*. Translated by David Wootton. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1999.

Nicholas of Cusa. *The Catholic Concordance*. Trans. Paul E. Sigmund. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991.

Pagden, Anthony R., ed. *The Languages of Political Theory in Early-Modern Europe. Ideas in Context Series*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*. 2 vols. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1978.

Stuart, James The I and VI. *Political Writings*. Ed. J. P. Sommerville. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Grade Evaluation:

Historiographical Paper	20%
Seminar Presentation	30%
Research Paper	50%
	100%

Assignment Dates:

Historiographical Paper: Friday, February 17.

Seminar Presentation: TBD in light of presentation opportunities (e.g., HIST 401; *History Bites*).

Research Paper (7 000 – 10 000 words): Finals period (Friday, April 14).

Assignment Descriptions:

Historiographical Paper: Students are required to write an historiographical paper of approximately 2000 words. An historiographical paper requires you to evaluate the secondary literature that examines/explores a particular historical theme, issue, problem or question. The topic is usually limited by geographical focus and time period. The purpose of your paper is to evaluate this literature in order to arrive a clear understanding of the established opinions, debates and schools of thought on your subject. Do not concern yourself with assessing every book or article you have read on the subject. Rather, pull out the central arguments, approaches and conclusions that will help you ground your own thesis. You will need to introduce your thesis topic and provide some context. However, the focus of this paper should be on the arguments historians have made in regards to your thesis topic. Your assessment of these arguments, opinions, and conclusions should be in relation to your own ideas on the subject.

Seminar Presentation: Each student will be responsible for a 20-minute, academic-style presentation to the entire group of students enrolled in HIST 401 or in an equivalent forum. This should be a polished presentation of your research findings. Grades will be based upon the clarity of the presentation, the quality of the argument, and the organization of the information. Special attention will be paid to the contextualization of the material. Presentations will be scheduled in light of venue (History 400 session or *History Bites*) and faculty availability.

Research Paper: Students, in conjunction with their supervisor, will determine a research topic and prepare an essay of 7 000 – 10 000 words and of ‘advanced depth and clarity.’ Students must use primary sources and be able to situate their thesis within the established historiography. It is expected that students will incorporate their historiographical paper into this larger research essay. All papers handed in for this class must be typed, double-spaced, 1” margins all around, no smaller than size-10 font and no larger than size-12 font (Times, Garamond, or Arial). Please include a title page that includes your name, student ID #, course name and number, professor’s name, and date submitted. All references must be in either footnote form (no parenthetical references), conforming to the *Chicago Manual of Style*. No assignments will be accepted past the due date unless accompanied by a note from a physician. If there is a pressing concern about your inability to make the deadline YOU MUST CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR IN ADVANCE to arrange for a later deadline with applicable late penalties. Late research assignments will be penalized at a rate of 5% per day. NOTE: no papers will be accepted if handed in later than one week past the due date!

Each student will be assigned two paper readers. Both readers will read and evaluate the final paper. The grade awarded will reflect the average of the two grades. In the rare circumstance where the two evaluations differ by more than a grade point, a third reader will be asked to evaluate the paper. Students should submit paper copies to both readers, as well as provide an electronic copy to the primary supervisor.

Final Grade:

The official grading system at MacEwan University is the 12-point letter grade system. While instructors may use percentages to aid in their grade development, percentages are not part of MacEwan University's official grading system. Policy [C2020: Grading](#).

Grade	Percentage	Grade Point	Descriptor
A+	96-100	4.0	Outstanding
A	88-95	4.0	
A-	82-87	3.7	Excellent
B+	78-81	3.3	
B	74-77	3.0	Good
B-	71-73	2.7	
C+	66-70	2.3	
C	63-65	2.0	Satisfactory
C-	58-62	1.7	
D+	53-57	1.3	Poor
D	48-52	1.0	
F	0-47	0.0	Fail

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

Students are expected to be aware of their academic responsibilities as outlined in Policy [E3101: Student Rights and Responsibilities](#). Policies are available online at [MacEwan.ca/policymanual](#).

- 1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:** Policy [C1000: Academic Integrity](#). All incidents of academic dishonesty, as outlined in the policy, are reported and recorded by the [Academic Integrity Office](#).
- 2. SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:** Policy [E3400: Student with Disabilities](#). Students who require special accommodation in this course due to a disability are advised to discuss their needs with [Services to Students with Disabilities \(SSD\)](#).
- 3. PREREQUISITES:** Students who do not have the appropriate prerequisite may be removed from the course and may be responsible for any tuition costs up to the date of removal.
- 4. FINAL EXAMS:** Policy [C2005: Final Assessment](#) and Policy [C2020: Grading](#). Students are responsible for confirming the date, time, duration and location of the final exam. Students may apply for a deferred final exam to the [Faculty of Arts and Science Program Services Office](#). **Applications must be received within two business days of the final exam** (\$50 per exam to a maximum of \$100 per scheduled exam period).

5. APPEALS: Policy [E3103: Student Appeals](#). Students may contact [Student Affairs](#) for assistance.

INSTRUCTOR COURSE POLICIES:

Students must communicate with their instructors using their myMacEwan email accounts.

- 1. Late penalties/policy:** Students must submit all assignments by the stated deadlines in order to for their grade to receive full consideration. Late submissions will have their grades docked at a rate of 5% per day. No assignments will be accepted more than one week after their stated deadline. Exceptions may be made in the case of compelling medical circumstances. In that case, it will be necessary to provide documentation in the form of a doctor's note.
- 2. Attendance:** Attendance at and attention during class are expected of all students in this course. Failure to attend will put students at a disadvantage when it comes to understanding the material and succeeding with their assignments. This is especially true of in-class presentations!
- 3. Use of Digital Resources:** While it will be a goal of this class to encourage students to use digital tools and resources to further their study of the ancient and medieval worlds, we must be careful not to rush too quickly into our use of online sources. Before you rely on an online source for academic use, please ensure that that source is academically reliable. That means: It is not okay to cite Wikipedia in your research paper, but it may be useful to consult online maps and sources posted by other faculty or universities. (Hint: Look for websites ending in .edu!) There is a lot of nonsense written about history on the internet; our goal will be to dilute the intensity of that nonsense, rather than adding to it.

DISCLAIMER:

The information in this course outline is subject to change and any changes will be announced in class or in writing.

COURSE TOPICS AND SCHEDULE

Individual meetings will be scheduled periodically on the basis of both instructor and student availability. If additional sessions are required to cover the relevant material, they may be added to the schedule at a later date.

Session I

Aquinas, *Law, Morality, & Politics*. (200 pp.)

Dante, *De Monarchia*. (90 pp.)

Rubinstein, “The History of the Word *Politicus*,” in Pagden, p. 41-56.

Session II

Marsilius of Padua, Selections from *Defensor Pacis*. (550 pp.)

Christine de Pizan, *Body Politic*. (100 pp.)

Skinner, “Origins of the Renaissance,” in Skinner, Vol. I, p. 3-68.

Session III

Nicholas of Cusa, Selections from *Catholic Concordance*. (320 pp.)

Machiavelli, Selections from *Discourses on Livy*. (300 pp.)

Grafton, “Humanism & Political Theory,” in Burns, p. 9-29.

Rubinstein, “Italian Political Thought,” in Burns, p. 30-65.

Session IV

Thomas More, *Utopia*. (120 pp.)

Desiderius Erasmus, *The Sileni of Alcibiades*. (20 pp.)

Martin Luther, Selections from *Selected Political Writings*. (190 pp.)

Oakley, “Christian Obedience & Authority,” in Burns, p. 159-192.

Kingdon, “Calvinism & Resistance Theory,” in Burns, p. 193-218.

Session V

Richard Hooker, Selections from *Ecclesiastical Polity*. (280 pp.)

James I & VI, Selections from *Political Writings*. (380 pp.)

Skinner, “Sir Thomas More’s *Utopia*,” in Pagden, p. 123-158.

Sommerville, “Absolutism & Royalism,” in Burns, p. 347-373.