

PT 171 Aristotle's *Politics*: a complete reading

Tue/Thu 15:45-17:15, SR 5

Seminar Leader: Ewa Atanassow

Guests: David Hayes (BCB); David McNeill (Dallas IHC); Michael Weinman (BCB/Iowa)

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Office Hours: Tu/Th 14:00-15:00, or by appointment

Among most influential works ever written, Aristotle's *Politics* is an indispensable reference today not only for political theorists and intellectual historians but also for empirical social scientists, students of comparative politics, as well as for engaged defenders of democratic self-government and civic participation. Our main purpose in this course will be to read through the entire work and gauge its enduring appeal. Taking note of its complex history, uncertain composition, and diverse traditions of interpretation, we'll seek to understand the text on its own terms and evaluate its central claims. Alongside its seminal theory of democratic government, the *Politics* includes a comprehensive view of human sociality; analysis of slavery as a principle and social and political institution; a theory of economics; a typology of political regimes; an account of the interrelation between ethics and politics; and a sustained reflection on the gap between theory and practice, or how and why an ideal political order differs from the best practicable.

Required Texts

Aristotle *Politics* (Tr. Carnes Lord) ISBN 9780872201774; or

Aristotle, *Politics* (Tr. C.D.C. Reeve) ISBN 9781624665578; or

Aristotle *Politics* (Tr. Peter L. Phillips Simpson) ISBN 9780872201774

Additional Readings

Ahmed Alwishah (ed.), *Aristotle and the Arabic Tradition*, ISBN 9781107499225

Thomas Aquinas, *Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*, ISBN 9780872208698

Michael Davis, *The Politics of Philosophy*, ISBN 780847682065

Thornton Lockwood (ed.) *Aristotle's Politics: A Critical Guide*, ISBN 9781107631007

Thomas Pangle, *Aristotle's Teaching in the Politics*, ISBN 9780226213651

Plato, *Republic*

Peter L. Phillips Simpson, *A Philosophical Commentary on Aristotle's Politics*, ISBN 9780807853573

Susan Collins, *Aristotle and the Rediscovery of Citizenship*, ISBN 9780521110211

Library and Book Purchase Policies

Students are expected to have at their disposal a hard copy of the required text. Copies of the additional readings are available on loan from the library. Additional readings can be found on the library reserve shelf.

Requirements

Attendance and Participation

Careful preparation, regular attendance and active participation are essential to the success of this course. Absences beyond two will affect the seminar grade.

Please note: arriving late or leaving in the middle of a session will count as half-absence. Bard College Berlin does not offer credit for any course in which a student has missed more than 30% of classes. The full attendance policy can be found in the Student Handbook, Section 2.8.

SPRING '22 ARRANGEMENTS: If conditions allow, the seminar will meet in person. Guest seminars and special events will take place on zoom.

Writing

Reflection paper and presentation: over the course of the semester, students will take turns to reflect on the proceedings of each week, and present these reflections at the beginning of the following week. The reflection paper should offer a concise (up to 1000-word) account of the week's reading and discussions that recapitulates its main themes, probing deeper one important issue and articulating questions for further discussion. The reflection papers should be posted on google classroom by midnight on Mondays.

Project Proposal and Final Essay: at the end of the semester students will write a substantial final essay of 3000 words on one aspect of the course material. Students are expected to devise their own final essay topic and submit (by Sunday, May 8) a 500-word proposal to be discussed with the instructor. The deadline for the final essay is Friday, May 20, 2021.

Assessment

Assessment will be based on **seminar participation** (30%); **reflection paper and presentation** (20%); a project **proposal** (20%) and **final essay** (30%).

Late Submission and Academic Integrity

Late papers will be downgraded in light of the policy outlined in the Student Handbook. Bard College Berlin maintains the staunchest regard for academic integrity and expects good academic practice from students in their studies. Instances in which students fail to meet the expected standards of academic integrity will be dealt with under the Code of Student Conduct, Section 14.3 (Academic Misconduct) in the Student Handbook.

Deadlines at a glance

The schedule for the reflection papers will be set up by Friday, February 4, 2022

Proposal for final essay due Sunday, May 8, 2022

Final Essay deadline: Friday, May 20, 2021

Schedule

Week of	Tu 15:45-17:15	Th 15:45-17:15
Jan 31	NO CLASS	Opening session – “Should we Cancel Aristotle?” by Agnes Callard
Feb 7	<i>Ethics</i> , book 1.1-5,7	<i>Ethics</i> book 2.1, 5-6; book 3.6-9 + Special session with David Hayes @ 19:30 on zoom (make-up for Feb 1)
Feb 14	<i>Ethics</i> , book 5; book 10.7-9	<i>Politics</i> , book 1
Feb 21	<i>Politics</i> , book 1	Special session with David McNeill
Feb 28	Book 2	Book 2
Mar 7	NO CLASS	Book 3
Mar 14	Book 3	Book 3
Mar 21	Book 4	Book 4
Mar 28	Book 4	Book 5
Apr 4	Book 5	Book 5
Apr 11	Spring Break	
Apr 18	Book 6	Book 6
Apr 25	Book 7	Book 7
May 2	Book 8	Book 8
May 9	Special session with Michael Weinman	Wrap up