

PL215 Machiavelli's Arts

M/W 9:00-10:30, SR 5

Instructor: Ewa Atanassow

Guests: Christopher Lynch (Missouri State University); Vickie Sullivan (Tufts)?

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Office Hours: M/W 10:30-11:30, or by appointment

A brilliant figure of the Florentine Renaissance, Machiavelli has gone down the centuries as the epitome of manipulation, callousness, and the immoral pursuit of power. But who was this man? And what did he do - and write - to deserve this notoriety? Indeed, does he deserve it? In this course we shall grapple with the life and thought of Niccolò Machiavelli by attending both to his famous, indeed infamous, political writings and to his often-neglected literary works. We shall thus seek to probe and engage with the arts – of rule, of war, of love, and not least of writing – that Machiavelli's work proposed to teach, arguably by example. We'll pose questions about the unity and variety of Machiavelli's writings and the meaning of art in them: whether and how the rules that govern politics and war apply to love and to intimate human relationships; and the extent to which Machiavelli's trenchant political vision and tragi-comic view of private life endure today.

Required Texts

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield (University of Chicago Press, 1998), ISBN: 9780226500447

Niccolò Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*, trans. Harvey C. Mansfield & Nathan Tarcov (University of Chicago Press, 1996), ISBN: 9780226500362

Course Reader

Additional Readings

Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Art of War*, trans. Christopher Lynch (University of Chicago Press, 2003)

Niccolò Machiavelli, *Florentine Histories*, trans. Laura F. Banfield & Harvey C. Mansfield (Princeton University Press, 1988)

Library and Book Purchase Policies

Students are expected to have at their disposal a hard copy of the required text. Multiple copies of the *Prince* are available on loan from the library. The 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.

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 by recapitulating the main themes, probing one important issue, and articulating questions for further discussion. The reflection papers should be posted on google classroom by midnight on Saturdays.

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, April 27) a 500-word proposal to be discussed with the instructor. The deadline for the final essay is Friday, May 17, 2024.

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

Proposal for final essay due Saturday, April 27

Final Essay deadline: Friday, May 17

Schedule

Week	1 st session	2 nd session	Notes
1: Jan 29, Feb 1	Letter to Vettori	Prince, Letter Dedicatory Prince I-III	
2: Feb 5, 7	Prince IV-V	Prince VI	
3: Feb 12, 14	Prince VII	Prince VIII	
4: Feb 19, 21	Prince IX-XI	Prince XII-XIV Special session on David	
5: Feb 26, 28	XV-XVII	NO CLASS	
6: Mar 4, 6	Prince XVIII-XIX	Prince XX-XXIII	
7: Mar 11, 13	Prince XXIV-XXVI	Castruccio	
8: Mar 18, 20	Art of War, selections	Art of War, selections Guest talk by Chris Lynch on zoom 19:30	
9: Mar 25-29	SPRING BREAK		
10: Apr 1, 3	NO CLASS	Discourses, Dedicatory Letter; Book I: Preface Book I, Ch. 1 - 2	
11: Apr 8, 10	Discourses, Book I, Chs. 8-10 (§§ 1-3, 6), 11-12, 14, 18,	Discourses, Book I, Chs. 25-27, 29-30, 37 (§ 2), 43	
12: Apr 15, 17	Discourses, Book II Preface, Chs. 1, 2 (§§ 2, 5); 24 (§§ 1-2); 29	Discourses, Book III, Chs. 1 (§§ 1-4), 9, 30-31, 35, 40-42	
13: Apr 22, 24	Belfagor	Clizia	FE Proposal
14: Apr 29-May 1	Clizia	NO CLASS	
13: May 6, 8	Mandragola	Mandragola	
14: May 13-17	Final Essay due: Friday, May 17, 23:59		