

University of Texas at Dallas
PSCI 4396.001
Machiavelli and American Founding Thought
Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Brian Bearry
Office: GR3.230 x4966
Office hrs: TBD; and by appointment
Email: brian.bearry@utdallas.edu

Course Description:

Over the last 50 years or so there has been scholarly agreement that Machiavelli has had a possible major impact on Western political development; and there is further agreement/controversy regarding his possibly substantial influence on the American founding thought. Whatever the case may be, there is no doubt that Machiavelli did teach those philosophers/commentators/writers that the founding generations of the United States studied. With this in mind, we are going to examine certain aspects of Machiavelli's republican teachings with a view to the desirability of recovering and reincorporating some of his political theory. To be sure, much of his thought is violent and aggressive, however, we are going to discount this aspect of his teaching, and we are going to focus on his view regarding human nature and its use for constitutional/institutional design in order to maintain liberty in government and political life.

The objective of this course is to gain understanding of the possible effect of Machiavelli's political theory on American constitutional development. Additionally, the course will examine Machiavelli's thought with a view to the desirability of incorporating parts of his republican teaching in contemporary American political evolution.

Required text and reading:

Niccolo Machiavelli; *Discourses on Livy*. University of Chicago Press, ISBN 0226500365

Niccolo Machiavelli; *Prince*. This may be found at: <http://www.constitution.org/mac/prince15.htm>

Hamilton, Madison, Jay, *Federalist Papers*. These papers may be found at: <http://www.law.ou.edu/hist/federalist/>

Gordon, Thomas; Trenchard, John. *Cato's Letters*. These letters may be found at: <http://classiclberal.tripod.com/cato/>

The letters of Brutus may be found at: <http://www.constitution.org/afp/brutus00.htm>

The letters of Cato (Anti-federalist) can be found at:
<http://www.teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?subcategory=73>

Course Requirements and Policies:

There will be three exams. Each exam will count as 30% of the final grade. Regular class attendance is expected and required. Please bring to class each day the text under discussion – we will be referring to particular passages regularly. Each student is expected to have completed the day's readings *prior to* class. Lecture notes or summaries will not be provided for missed classes. There will be in-class quizzes to insure that students are keeping up with the readings. These quizzes may be given at the beginning, middle or end of class. ***There will be no make-ups for missed quizzes.*** Failure of 4 quizzes will cause the loss of 5% of your final grade; failure of 6 quizzes will result in the loss of 10% of your grade (one full-letter grade.) An absence on a quiz day counts as a quiz failure; also, an absence on a day a quiz is not given goes against your quiz failure total. You will lose 5% of your final grade for every 2 quiz failures or absences thereafter. Should you miss a quiz due to an absence or *tardy*, a grade of "F" will

be assigned and will stand; the only exception will be for a previously determined *excused* absence. You may use **handwritten** outlines of your reading when taking a quiz. Cell phones, pagers, palm pilots and any other electronic device that rings, beeps, clicks, whirrs, etc.; turn them off.—should a student need to be reminded more than once, it is possible that he or she could lose his class participation grade or face dismissal from the course. **NO LAPTOP COMPUTERS MAY BE USED IN THIS CLASS.** The instructor reserves the right to alter the syllabus at any time.

Grading scale:

A: 94-100	B-: 80-83	D+: 67-69
A-: 90-93	C+: 77-79	D: 64-66
B+: 87-89	C: 74-76	D-: 60-63
B: 84-86	C-: 70-73	F: below 60

Class rules and grades:

These rules are based on experience and are nonnegotiable.

1. email: You must put your *full name* on all email correspondence. Emails sent without a name will not be answered.
2. You may not reschedule an exam for any reason—except for a documented medical emergency.
3. In order for you to receive an excused absence, you **must** notify me or the Teaching Assistant **prior** to class and it **must** concern a documented medical emergency or university sanctioned function; otherwise, all absences and tardies will be considered unexcused.
4. Attendance is expected and required. Failure of 4 quizzes will cause the loss of 5% of your final grade; failure of 6 quizzes will result in the loss of 10% of your grade (one full-letter grade.) An absence on a day a quiz is given counts as a quiz failure; an absence on a day that a quiz is not given also goes against your quiz failure total. There will also be a further grade reduction of 5% for each additional 2 quiz failures/absences. Should you miss a quiz due to an absence or **tardy**, a grade of “F” will be assigned and will stand. There are **no** make-up quizzes or exams.
5. All grades are final (unless there is a mistake when determining a grade—this does happen). The time to be concerned with a grade is during the semester, not after. When challenging a grade, it is the responsibility of the student to produce the requisite materials. There is no extra credit given in this class.

University Policy on Scholastic Dishonesty:

It is the policy of the University of Texas at Dallas that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Violations will result in immediate disciplinary action to the fullest extent of the policy, which can range from automatically failing an exam to dismissal from the University. See the University catalog for a detailed explanation. You should allow yourself ample time to complete the reading prior to class. You should expect each week’s reading to take anywhere from six to twelve hours (the academic rule of thumb for weekly reading is to assign approximately 3 hours of reading for each class hour.)

Reading Schedule

Jan 13—first day of class
Jan 15--*The Prince*; ch 15
Jan 17--*The Prince*; 16, 17, 18
Jan 20—MLK day, no class
Jan 22--*The Prince*; 19, 20, 21, 22
Jan 24--*The Prince*; chs 23, 24, 25, 26
Jan 27-- *Discourses*; Translator's Introduction, Dedicatory Letter and Author's Preface
Jan 29-- *Discourses*; BK I, chs 1-4
Jan 31-- *Discourses*; BK I, 5, 6, 7
Feb 3--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 8, 9, 10
Feb 5--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 11-15
Feb 7--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 16-19, 24,25
Feb 10--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 29-35
Feb 12--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 37-40, 42,44
Feb 14--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 47-53
Feb 17--*Discourses*; BK I, chs 53-58
Feb 19--exam #1 review
Feb 21—***EXAM #1***
Feb 24--*Discourses*; BK II Preface, chs1-2
Feb 26--*Discourses*; BK II chs 3, 5, 8, 9,10
Feb 28--*Discourses*; BK II chs 13-15, 19
Mar 3--*Discourses*; BK II chs 22, 23, 26, 28
Mar 5--*Discourses*; BK II chs 29, 30 , 31, 33
Mar 7--*Discourses*; BK III chs 1-5
Mar 10-14—Spring Break
Mar 17--*Discourses*; BK III ch 6
Mar 19--*Discourses*; BK III chs 8-12, 16
Mar 21--*Discourses*; BK III chs 19-25
Mar 24--*Discourses*; BK III chs 27-32
Mar 26--*Discourses*; BK III chs 34, 35, 43, 44, 49
Mar 28--exam #2 review
Mar 31--***EXAM #2***
Apr 2--Cato's Letters # 13, #15, #17
Apr 4--Cato's Letters #18, #19, #20
Apr 7--Cato's Letters #32, #33
Apr 9--Cato's Letters #37, #38
Apr 11--Cato's Letters #62
Apr 14--Cato's Letters #96 & 115
Apr 16--Federalist #10 & #45
Apr 18--Federalist #49 & #51
Apr 21--Federalist #57 & #62
Apr 23—*Brutus Letters* #3 & #6
Apr 25—*Cato Letters* #4 & #5
Apr 28--exam #3 review
May 2—***Exam #3***