

Political Theory

(updated February 2009)

This reading list is meant to help students prepare for their comprehensive exams in political theory. Students need to demonstrate a thorough knowledge of four subfields of political theory on the comprehensive examination.

Alterations to these lists

With the permission of the theory field faculty, a student may devise one reading list of their own choosing, e.g., in feminism or democratic theory, which is not currently offered as such. In order to be approved, the list must be:

- comparable in magnitude and significance to the existing lists;
- internally coherent and comprehensive for the topic;
- useful in preparing the student for his/her professional development, including dissertation writing and teaching;

There must also be at least one faculty member willing to advise the student about his or list and to be on the comprehensive grading committee.

Students may also apply to the theory field to replace one author or text from each of the existing lists with another, if he or she can provide a sound justification for this substitution.

Students who wish to apply for permission to alter the list in either way must contact the theory field chair to initiate the process. Students writing at the start of the Fall semester must have their request for alterations submitted by the last week of the Spring semester in that calendar year; Students writing at the start of the Spring semester must apply to have alterations approved by the first week of the Fall semester of that academic year; Students writing at the end of the Spring semester must have their request submitted by the end of the Fall semester in that academic year.

Ancient

Plato: *Apology*

Crito

Republic

Aristophanes: *The Clouds*

Aristotle: *Nicomachean Ethics*

Politics

Cicero: *Republic*

Laws I, II (1-23);

On Duties

Thucydides: *The History of the Peloponesian Wars* Book I entire: Book II, sections 1-70; Book III sections 1-85; Book IV, sections 1-41,58-135; Book V, sections 1-28, 43-47, 84-116; Books VI and VII entire: Book VIII,sections 45-99.

Medieval

Augustine: *City of God* Book 1, 2, 4-8, 11, 14, 19, 22 (ch. 1-7).

Aquinas: *Summa Theologica* I-II, 49-52, 55-64, 90-108; II-II 47-80, 120.

Commentary on the Ethics of Aristotle Book I, Lesson 1, introduction (in Lerner and Mahdi, *Medieval Political Philosophy* pp. 274-276)

Commentary on the Politics of Aristotle, Proemium (in Lerner and Mahdi, pp. 298-300).

Maimonides: *Guide of the Perplexed*: Part I ,ch. 31-31, 38-46, 54, 71. Part II, ch. 25, 32, 36-40, 45. Part III, ch. 18, 27-28, 31-34, 51 . (Shlomo Pines trans.)

Marsilius of Padua: *Defensor Pacis* Discourse 1, ch. 1-13. Discourse 2, ch. 12.
(In Lerner and Mahdi, *Medieval Political Philosophy*, pp. 439-492.)

Alfarabi: *The Enumeration of the Sciences*, Chapter V (in Lerner and Mahdi, *Medieval Political Philosophy*, pp. 24-30)

The Political Regime, Part II. (In Lerner and Mahdi, pp. 31-57).

William of Ockham: *A Letter to the Friars Minor and Other Writings* (Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy)

Early Modern 1500-1800

Niccolo Machiavelli: *The Prince*

Discourses on the First Ten Books of Livy

Thomas Hobbes: *Leviathan*, Part I-II

John Locke: *Two Treatises of Government* (Second Treatise Only)

The Letter Concerning Toleration

Montesquieu: *The Spirit of the Laws* (Cohler translation, Cambridge)

Authors Preface, Foreword, Books 1-5, 9-12, 14-16, 19, 20-22, 24-25, 29

Jean-Jacques Rousseau: “Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality Among Men”

The Social Contract

Mary Wollstonecraft: *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (Dedication, Introduction,

Chapters 1-3, 6-7, 9-12)

Immanuel Kant: *Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals* ; "Idea for a Universal History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose"; "What is Enlightenment?"; "On the Proverb: That May be True in Theory but Is of No Practical Use"; "Perpetual Peace"

Giambattista Vico: *The New Science* Book I, Section 2-4; Book II, Section 3-6; Book IV; Book V; Conclusion.

Later Modern 1800-1950

G.W.F. Hegel: *Philosophy of Right* part III
Philosophy of History (Introduction only)

John Stuart Mill: *On Liberty*;
On the Subjection of Women

Karl Marx: *The Communist Manifesto*;
"Alienated Labor" from the *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* ;
"On The Jewish Question"

Friedrich Nietzsche: "On the uses and disadvantages of history for life

Beyond Good and Evil

Max Weber: "Science as a Vocation"
"Politics as a Vocation"

Martin Heidegger: *Being and Time*, Introduction and Part I, Division I
"The Letter on Humanism"
"The Question concerning Technology"

Contemporary (1950- present)

Isaiah Berlin: 'Two concepts of liberty'

Leo Strauss: *An Introduction to Political Philosophy: 10 Essays by Leo Strauss* Hilail Gildin ed.

Hannah Arendt: *The Human Condition*
The Origins of Totalitarianism Part III

John Rawls: *A Theory of Justice* Sections 1-4, 8 , 11-17, 20-30, 33-35, 39-40, 66-67, 77-79, 82, 85-86.

Justice as Fairness Revisited

The Law of Peoples Introduction, sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 15, 17.

Jurgen Habermas: *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* Parts 1-11
Between Facts and Norms

Michael Oakeshott: *Rationalism in Politics* (title essay plus “Political Education,”
“Tower of Babel,” “The Voice of Poetry in the Conversation of Mankind”)

Charles Taylor: “The Politics of Recognition”
Modern Social Imaginaries

Alasdair MacIntyre: *After Virtue*

Catharine MacKinnon: *Toward a Feminist Theory of the State*

chs. 2-4, 7-8, 12-13

Susan Okin: *Justice, Gender, and the Family*, chs. 1, 2, 5, 7, 8.

Yves Simon: *The Philosophy of Democratic Government*

American

Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution

The Federalist Papers: 1, 2, 6, 9, 10, 14-17, 23, 31, 35-37, 39, 46-47, 49, 51-53, 62-66,
70-72, 78, 85

Notes of the Debates of the Federal Convention of 1787 Reported by James Madison, ed.
Adrienne Koch (Ohio University Press)

The Portable Thomas Jefferson

The Anti-Federalist, ed. Herbert J. Storing (one volume University of Chicago Press)

Tocqueville: *Democracy in America* (Lawrence trans. or Mansfield / Winthrop
translation)

Author’s Introduction, Vol. I, Pt. I, Ch. 1-4, 5 (pp. 61-68, 87-98), 8 (151-70 only);
Vol. I, Pt. II, Ch. 1, 2, 5 (189-202, 208-12; 220-30 only), 7-10 (395-400), conclu.
to Vol. I (408-13)

Vol. II, Pt. I, Ch. 1-6, 8, 10, 13-14, 17, 20; Pt II, Ch. 1, 2, 4-5, 8-15, 17, 19-20
Pt. III, Ch. 1, 4, 7-12, 17-26; Pt. IV entire.

The Lincoln-Douglas Debates Lincoln Speech at Springfield, June 16 1858 (“House
Divided Speech”).

First Joint Debate Ottawa August 21, 1858

Second Joint Debate Free Port, August 27

Seventh Joint Debate Alton, October 15, 1858

Herbert Croly, *The Promise of American Life*

Mercy Otis Warren "Observations on the New Constitution,"

Sarah Grimke's *Letters on the Equality of the Sexes*

Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton "Declaration of Sentiments";

Elizabeth Cady Stanton's "Solitude of Self."