

# Machiavelli

<b>POLI 459</b> <b>Winter 2017</b>  <b>RPHYS 115</b> <b>M/W 2:35-3:55</b>	<b>Professor Yves Winter</b> email: <a href="mailto:yves.winter@mcgill.ca">yves.winter@mcgill.ca</a> twitter: @whywinter <b>Office:</b> 418 Ferrier <b>Office hours:</b> T/Th 2:00-3:00 or by appointment
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## Description

This is an advanced political theory seminar on Niccolò Machiavelli's work. Over the course of the semester, we will do close readings of Machiavelli's two major political works (The Prince and the Discourses), and we will also acquaint ourselves with his dramatic oeuvre as well as his history of Florence. The objective of the course is to learn how to engage in close textual interpretation, to acquire an in-depth understanding of Machiavelli's political thought and an appreciation of the interpretive problems his work poses.

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527) is one of the most controversial and idiosyncratic thinkers in the tradition of European political theory. His political and historical works emerged during the tumultuous Italian crises of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, which Machiavelli observed not only from the vantage point of a writer and historian but also as secretary and ambassador in the Florentine chancery. His texts have given rise to widely divergent interpretations: he is viewed by some as the first political scientist, a theorist of the modern state and one of the founder of political modernity, and he is regarded by others as a medieval mind, ensconced in cosmological mythology and nostalgic attachments to ancient Rome. Some regard him as a dispassionate and objective political realist while others view him as a fervent Italian patriot; some see him as a theorist of the absolutist state or even an adviser to tyrants; for others he was an advocate of republican freedom, participatory government, equality, revolutionary politics, and democracy.

## Prerequisites & Restrictions

This is an advanced course in political theory, and as per departmental regulations, this means that students must have taken at least one upper-level (300-level or higher) political theory course.

## Required Texts

The following books are available for purchase from **The Word Bookstore, 469 Milton Street** (cash or cheque only). They will also be on reserve in the Humanities & Social Sciences Library.

Niccolò Machiavelli. The Prince. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.

Niccolò Machiavelli. Discourses on Livy. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield, and Nathan Tarcov. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Niccolò Machiavelli. Florentine Histories. Translated by Laura F. Banfield, and Harvey C. Mansfield. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988.

The following two books are recommended but not required:

Titus Livy. The Early History of Rome. Translated by Aubrey de Sélincourt. London: Penguin, 2002.

Titus Livy. Rome and Italy. Translated by Betty Radice. London: Penguin, 1982.

All other readings (starred \*) will be available on myCourses.

Students are encouraged to read texts in the original languages. Contact me for bibliographic information.

### Assignments and Grades

Written assignments for this course will consist of (i) **five short (1-2 page) reflection papers**; (ii) a **paper proposal**; and (iii) a **15-20 page paper** due at the end of the semester.

Further instructions for both paper outlines and papers will be made available later in the course.

Reflection papers are short interpretive-analytical pieces of writing about the assigned readings. They are neither summaries of the readings nor opportunities for rambling narratives based on free association. As the name suggests, reflection papers demand that you demonstrate your understanding of the material and your ability to analyze it. Analysis may involve identifying: (1) the main problems/questions an author raises; (2) the central claims and arguments; (3) explicit and implicit assumptions; and (4) the evidence presented. It may also include (5) assessing the strengths and weaknesses of an argument; and/or (6) examining possible counterarguments. Note that reflection papers are not primarily concerned with your reading experience, your feelings about the readings, or your opinions.

Students have the option to write a sixth reflection paper, in which case the lowest grade of their reflection papers will be dropped.

All assignments are due on the dates indicated in the syllabus. They are to be submitted in hard copy at the beginning of class. Reflection papers are due without exception at the beginning of class on the date of the assigned reading covered in the paper. **No late reflection papers will be accepted under any circumstances.**

**Late papers** will be docked one third of a letter grade for every day late, including weekends. **Extensions** are available only for serious and documented reasons, and they must be requested ahead of time. No extensions will be granted on (or after) an assignment's due date. Do not send assignments via email unless otherwise instructed.

Your written work will be graded on originality, reasoning and argument, organization, clarity of exposition, and style. Essays will be graded on the letter grade scale (A to F) where the individual letters correspond to the following grade points.

Grade	Grade Points
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3

B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
D	1.0
F	0

A detailed grading rubric will be posted on myCourses.

Final grades are calculated according to the following schedule. Students must receive a passing grade (D) in each of the following four grade categories to receive a passing grade for the course.

Reflection papers	20%
Paper proposal	10%
Seminar paper	50%
Class participation	20%

Evaluation is a central part of education, and much effort goes into ensuring the fairness of academic grades. Assessments, grading scales and rubrics are designed to measure how well students meet the course objectives. Students have a right to expect impartiality, consistency, respect, integrity, and feedback from their instructors.

Students may ask for a review of their grade and a re-read of any assessment for this course. The [Department of Political Science's Assessment and Re-Read Policy](#) applies. Requests for review and re-reads should normally be made within two weeks following the return of a graded assessment. If an assessment was graded by the TA, students should first discuss their request for a review with the TA. All requests for grade review must be accompanied by the **original assessment** including the grades, comments, and annotations made by the TA or the professor as well as by **a brief one-paragraph explanation** why the student deems the grade inappropriate.

### Classroom Policies

As this is an upper-level course that will be run seminar-style, **attendance** is critical. Everyone gets two free passes for absences. Use them wisely! Starting with the third absence, your participation grade will be affected. Students with five or more absences should not expect a passing grade.

You are responsible for having read the assigned texts prior to the class meeting. Prepare for class by taking notes and by thinking about questions, ideas, or problems that arise in your reading. Be sure to bring books and hard copy printouts of readings to class.

Please let me and your fellow students know your preferred pronoun. Your preferred name should appear on the class list if you have entered it in Minerva ([more info](#)).

McGill University values **academic integrity**. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#). Please note that I take plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty seriously, and your work will be reviewed for potential plagiarism issues by means of text-matching software.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l'étudiant de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant-e a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.

[Research](#) shows that students who take notes by hand significantly outperform students who take notes on mobile computing devices (even when the devices are offline and used exclusively for note-taking). While **laptops and tablets** are not prohibited in this class, for your own educational benefit, I strongly urge you to leave them at home or stowed away in your bags. Needless to say, any use of electronic equipment may only be used for note-taking. Any other use is distracting to fellow students and not permitted during class time.

As the instructor of this course I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#) (514)398-6009.

### **Class Schedule**

Jan 4	Letter to Vettori*; <u>The Prince</u> , DL
Jan 9	<u>The Prince</u> , chs. 1-5
Jan 11	<u>The Prince</u> , chs. 6-9
Jan 16	<u>The Prince</u> , chs. 10-14
Jan 18	<u>The Prince</u> , chs. 15-20
Jan 23	<u>The Prince</u> , chs. 21-26
Jan 25	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , DL, Bk 1: P, chs. 1-10
Jan 30	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 1: chs. 11-27
Feb 1	No class. Read Livy, <u>The Early History of Rome</u> , books 1-5
Feb 6	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 1: chs. 28-44
Feb 8	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 1: chs. 45-60
Feb 13	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 2: P, chs. 1-15
Feb 15	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 2: chs. 16-27
Feb 20	No class Read Livy, <u>Rome and Italy</u> , books 6-10
Feb 22	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 2: chs. 28-33; Bk 3: chs. 1-6
Feb 27-Mar 3	Reading Week
Mar 6	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 3: chs. 7-24
Mar 8	<u>Discourses on Livy</u> , Bk 3: chs. 25-49
Mar 13	<u>Mandragola</u> *
Mar 15	<u>Clizia</u> *
Mar 20	<u>Discourse on Reforming the Government of Florence</u> *

Mar 22      Florentine Histories, DL, P, Bks 1-2

Mar 27      Florentine Histories, Bks 3-4

Mar 29      Florentine Histories, Bks 5-6

Apr 3        Florentine Histories, Bks 7-8

**Paper proposals due**

Apr 5        Review

Apr 10       No class

Apr 18       **Papers due** by 12pm in 418 Ferrier

## Secondary Literature

*Machiavelli and His Friends: Their Personal Correspondence*. Translated by James B. Atkinson, and David Sices. DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996.

Althusser, Louis. *Machiavelli and Us*. Translated by Gregory Elliott. London: Verso, 1999.

Baron, Hans. *The Crisis of the Early Italian Renaissance*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966.

Benner, Erica. *Machiavelli's Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009.

Benner, Erica. *Machiavelli's Prince: A New Reading*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Bock, Gisela, Quentin Skinner, and Maurizio Viroli, (eds.) *Machiavelli and Republicanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Burckhardt, Jacob. *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*. Translated by S.G.C. Middlemore. London and New York: Penguin, 1990.

Chabod, Federico. *Machiavelli and the Renaissance*. Translated by David Moore. New York: Harper & Row, 1958.

Coby, J. Patrick. *Machiavelli's Romans: Liberty and Greatness in the Discourses on Livy*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 1999.

Del Lucchese, Filippo. *Conflict, Power, and Multitude in Machiavelli and Spinoza*. London and New York: Continuum, 2009.

Del Lucchese, Filippo. *The Political Philosophy of Niccolò Machiavelli*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015.

Del Lucchese, Filippo, Fabio Frosini, and Vittorio Morfino (eds.) *The Radical Machiavelli: Politics, Philosophy, and Language*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Falco, Maria J., (ed.) *Feminist Interpretations of Niccolò Machiavelli*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2004.

Gilbert, Felix. *Machiavelli and Guicciardini: Politics and History in Sixteenth-Century Florence*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965.

Hankins, James, (ed.) *Renaissance Civic Humanism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Hörnqvist, Mikael. *Machiavelli and Empire*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Hulliung, Mark. *Citizen Machiavelli*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1983.

Kahn, Victoria. *Machiavellian Rhetoric: From the Counter-Reformation to Milton*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Lefort, Claude. *Machiavelli in the Making*. Translated by Michael B. Smith. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 2012.

Mansfield, Harvey C. *Machiavelli's Virtue*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Mansfield, Harvey C. *Machiavelli's New Modes and Orders: A Study of the Discourses on Livy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001.

McCormick, John P. *Machiavellian Democracy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011.

Najemy, John M., (ed.) *The Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010.

- Parel, Anthony. *The Machiavellian Cosmos*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1992.
- Pettit, Philip. *Republicanism: A Theory of Freedom and Government*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997.
- Pitkin, Hanna F. *Fortune is a Woman: Gender and Politics in the Thought of Niccolò Machiavelli*. 2nd ed. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999.
- Pocock, J. G. A. *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975.
- Rebhorn, Wayne A. *Foxes and Lions: Machiavelli's Confidence Men*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Rubinstein, Nicolai. *The Government of Florence Under the Medici (1434-1494)*. Oxford: Clarendon.
- Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*. Vol. 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978.
- Skinner, Quentin. *Visions of Politics: Renaissance Virtues*. Vol. 2, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Skinner, Quentin. *Machiavelli: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001.
- Sullivan, Vickie B. *Machiavelli's Three Romes: Religion, Human Liberty and Politics Reformed*. De Kalb, IL: Northern Illinois University Press, 1996.
- Vatter, Miguel E. *Between Form and Event: Machiavelli's Theory of Political Freedom*. Dordrecht; Boston, MA: Kluwer, 2000 (reprinted: Fordham University Press, 2014)
- Viroli, Maurizio. *Machiavelli*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
- Viroli, Maurizio. *Niccolò's Smile: A Biography of Machiavelli*. Translated by Anthony Shugaar. New York: Farrar Straus & Giroux, 2000.
- Vivanti, Corrado. *Niccolò Machiavelli: An Intellectual Biography*. Translated by Simon MacMichael. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013.
- Zuckert, Catherine. "Machiavelli's Democratic Republic." *History of Political Thought* 35, no. 2 (2014): 262-94.