# History of Political Thought

## Prof. Chiara Continisio

***COURSE AIMS AND INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES***

***Course aims***

The general aim of the course is to provide students with the knowledge of the main traditions of Western political thought, as well as adequate historical-critical tools for the understanding of the birth and consolidation of modernity. To this purpose, there will be a special focus on the research and study of the equality issue. Indeed, during lectures the different definitions of the concept of equality formulated from ancient Greece to the contemporary era will be connected to the specific historical-political and doctrinal contexts and illustrated using the works of important authors.

***Intended learning outcomes***

KNOWLE DGE AND UNDERSTANDING

At the end of the course, students will be capable of

* distinguishing the main development paths and currents of Western political thought
* using an adequate disciplinary lexicon, discerning meanings accurately and proficiently
* understanding the historical connections linking the past and the present
* establishing multidisciplinary conceptual relationships with other similar competences acquired during the degree course

ability to apply knowledge and understanding

At the end of the course, students will be capable of

* using the acquired knowledge to interpret contemporary political debate
* in-depth self-study of historical-political topics

***COURSE CONTENT***

The lessons will focus on the following core historical topics:

* Equality in the ancient world (and the impact of early Christianity)
* Humanism and the new vision of the human being
* Reform and revolution between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries
* The legal subject, the natural law paradigm and late eighteenth century revolutions.
* Equality in nineteenth century opposites, liberalism and socialism
* Democracy
* Gender equality: the “Wollstonecraft’s dilemma” before and after Mary Wollstonecraft

***READING LIST***

1. Lecture notes and any other complementary material made available on the Blackboard platform or handed out during lectures.
2. Raffaella Gherardi, *La politica e gli Stati. Problemi e figure del pensiero occidentale*, Rome, Carocci, 2022 (PREVIOUS EDITIONS ARE NOT ALLOWED + the anthology of texts used in support of the lectures Nicola Riva (edited by), *Uguaglianza*, Bari, Laterza, 2017.
3. One book selected from the following list by students, in the specified editions:
   1. Hannah Arendt, *Noi rifugiati*, Turin, Einaudi, 2023
   2. Albert Camus, *Riflessioni sulla pena di morte*, Milan, Bompiani, 2018
   3. Mary Wollstonecraft, *I diritti delle donne*, Milan, BUR, 2022

Students without course lecture notes and the complementary material made available on the Blackboard platform or handed out during lectures must also study

1. Aldo Schiavone, *Eguaglianza. Una nuova visione sul filo della storia*, Turin, Einaudi, 2019.

***TEACHING METHOD***

Frontal lectures in the classroom that may be complemented by workshops.

***ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA***

The exam consists in an oral test, divided into two parts, to be compulsorily taken on a single date. Each of the two parts includes approximately three questions, each of which requires an accurate and well-structured reply.

In the first, for which students are awarded 15 points out of 30, they will be assessed on the subject of the History of Political Thought, the topics, issues, as well as the most renowned authors and their works, as presented in the adopted manual (Point 2. of the Reading List). Due to the large number of students enrolled in the examination, this part may also be taken in written form (15 closed-ended questions).

In the second part, for which students are awarded 15 points out of 30, they will be assessed on lecture notes and any other complementary material made available on the Blackboard platform or handed out during lectures, the supplementary material to be studied by students who do not have the former material (Points 1. or 4. of the Reading List, 12 points), and the book to be selected by students (Point 3. of the Reading List, 3 points).

In order to take the second part of the exam, students must have passed the first part with a mark (greater or equal to) ≥ 8.

In both phases, the assessment criteria will be:

* knowledge of the assigned reading list
* ability to correctly place the currents, authors and works in the relevant historical period and in the appropriate general context.

Moreover, the following will be highly appreciated:

* autonomy in reworking of content
* ability to make links
* language proficiency
* accuracy of answers and their coherence and relevance with respect to the questions.

In the month of January 2024 students will take an interim test for attending students, focusing on the topics covered in the lectures held during the 1st semester – October-December 2023. (Points 1. and 2. of the Reading List). It will be divided into two parts that must be taken on the same day: a first written part (15 closed questions, maximum 15 points) and a second oral part (3 questions, maximum 15 points). Only those who have passed the first part with a minimum score of 8 will be admitted to the second part.

***NOTES AND PREREQUISITES***

There are no prerequisites for students to attend the course.

Further information can be found on the lecturer’s webpage at http://docenti.unicatt.it/web/searchByName.do?language=ENGor on the Faculty notice board.