

## *Leadership and the Humanities*

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Class Room: Jepson 102

Class Time: 1:30pm to 2:45pm on Wednesday and Friday

Office Hours: [I post a sign-up sheet for my office hours online](#). Please sign up for office hours there.

### **Overview**

In this course, we'll examine leadership by engaging with the humanistic fields: literature, history, art, and philosophy. Here are some of the big questions that we'll explore together:

- *What is leadership?* What does it mean for someone to be a leader or follower? How do we identify who falls into these categories? What factors determine whether a leader is effective or not? How does persuasion and influence relate to leadership?
- *Who should lead?* Who counts as a good or bad leader? What qualities should leaders have and how can we know who has these qualities? How should we select leaders?
- *How should leaders and followers act?* Should leaders violate moral norms and "play dirty" in order to promote the common good? When, if ever, should leaders sacrifice their self-interest to serve others? Should followers ever resist leaders? If so, how?

### **Immersive Historical Simulations**

This course will explore these questions through historical simulations. You'll first learn about major ideas and debates about leadership. You'll then apply what you've learned by playing the roles of important actors during pivotal events in history, such as diplomatic crises, military conflicts, and revolutions.

Why learn about leadership through historical simulations? First, these simulations will deepen your understanding of the major ideas and questions that we will explore throughout this class. You'll need to debate concepts related to leadership and apply them to concrete historical situations. Second, the simulations develop your abilities to successfully engage in argumentative writing, oral communication, negotiation, and teamwork. You won't just learn *about* leadership in this class. You will also *practice* leadership.

Finally, these games are simply a lot of fun. Some students are nervous about the idea of participating in historical roleplaying games because they've never done anything like this. But the majority of students find participating in these simulations to be an enjoyable and exciting experience. To get a sense of what this class will be like, you should read the [past student evaluations](#), [watch this video](#), or [read this FAQ on the class](#). If you're still unsure about this class, I recommend that you come to the first week. During the first week, we'll be playing a short historical roleplaying game and you can see whether this approach to learning appeals to you after you've experienced it.

In addition to shorter games, we'll play the following historical simulations over the course of this semester:

- Threshold of Democracy-Athens in 403 BCE: After nearly three decades of war, Sparta crushed democratic Athens, destroyed its great walls and warships, occupied the city, and installed a brutal regime, "the Thirty Tyrants." The excesses of the tyrants resulted in civil war and, as the game begins, they have been expelled and the democracy restored. But doubts about democracy remain. Will Athens retain a political system where all decisions are made by an Assembly of 6,000 or so citizens? Will leaders continue to be chosen by random lottery? These and other debates are informed by Plato's Republic, as well as excerpts from Thucydides, Xenophon, and other contemporary sources.
- Machiavelli and the Florentine Republic, 1494-1512. At the height of the Italian Renaissance—when conceptions of history, art, religion, and human freedom were being interrogated and transformed—the

city-state of Florence underwent a radical political crisis. In this new era, Florence faced multiple and interconnected challenges to its new republic: the religious fervor of the apocalyptic Savonarola; the military menace of Cesare Borgia and his father Pope Alexander VI; and the machinations of the vengeful Medici seeking to reclaim the city they saw as their family's birthright and possession. Niccolò Machiavelli—Secretary to the Second Chancery and Secretary to the Ten of War—was witness to it all, and it is this tumultuous era that provided the raw material for Machiavelli's classics of political philosophy, *The Prince* and the *Discourses on Livy*.

I have chosen these simulations because they both center on classic texts on leadership—*Plato's Republic* and Machiavelli's *The Prince*—and they will force us to confront the big questions of the class. To some degree, each of these simulations incorporate all of the humanities – literature, history, art, and philosophy.

### **Supporting Your Learning**

I care about your success in this class and I'm willing to help you in any way possible. If you'd like to meet with me, you can sign up for my office hours [here](#) (note that I update my office hours for the coming week on Saturday or early Sunday).

If you'd like to leave me an anonymous comment with any questions or concerns, please see [this form](#).

### **Course Requirements**

There is a total of 1000 possible points in this class. The points will be distributed as follows:

#### *Description*

#### **Class Participation (200 points)**

For each historical simulation, there are two components: a more academic setup and the actual simulation. For the setup, you're expected to listen attentively to other students, participate in

Click on the above link to see a rubric for each assignment!

class discussions, and complete in-class activities and assignments. For the simulations, I would like you to enthusiastically participate in the game and try hard to achieve your objectives and remain faithful to your character's biography.

### **Annotations (200 points)**

We will use an online social program for the readings called [Persuall](#). Persuall is a collaborative annotation tool that helps students to do the readings in a more effective and thorough way. I will typically assign readings through Persuall and you'll annotate them before class begins. To do this, you'll write comments on the readings and respond to other students' comments.

### **Written Assignments (600 points)**

For each historical simulation, you will need to complete writing assignments. But the nature of your specific assignments will depend on your character in each simulation. You'll learn more about the details of your assignments after I assign you a character. But you can expect to write four short papers over the course of this class.

### **Extra Credit**

You can earn extra credit in this class by achieving the victory objectives of your characters in the simulations.

### **Laptops**

I want to ask you to not use your laptop, ipad, or phone during class. I ask this because a growing body of research finds that the use of laptops and cell phones in class diminish student learning.

### **The Readings**

All readings are available on the blackboard page for this class. I may make some modifications to the syllabus as the semester progresses. I'll announce

any changes to the syllabus in class and you can always find the updated syllabus on blackboard.

## **Week 1: Introduction and Athens Besieged**

Wednesday, August 24th: Introduction

- No Reading.

Friday, August 26th: Athens Besieged

- Read your role sheet before class.
- Skim: "Historical Background," pp. 21-53.

## **Week 2: Threshold of Democracy**

Wednesday, August 31: Background on the Game

- *Threshold of Democracy*, part 1 and 3.
- Review history of Athens.
- Introduction to Persuall.

Friday, September 2:

- *Plato's Republic*, Part I. This is the first Persuall assignment!
- *From now on, every reading will be a Persuall assignment unless it is marked with an \**

## **Week 3: Threshold of Democracy**

Wednesday, September 7:

- *Plato's Republic*, Part II and III.

Friday, September 9:

- *Plato's Republic*, Parts IV and V.
- Pericles, *Funeral Oration*.

## **Week 4: Threshold of Democracy**

Wednesday, September 14:

- Introduction to Slack.
- Workshop on writing essays & speeches.

- Faction meetings.

Friday, September 16: Reconciliation Agreement

- Game Session 1
- Xenophon's *Hellenica*.
- Speeches by Crito, Lycon, Anytus, Xenophon

### **Week 5: Threshold of Democracy**

Wednesday, September 21: Should Metics and Slaves be Enfranchised?

- Game Session 2
- Plato's *Protagoras*.
- Speeches by Thrasybulus, Archinus, Aristocles, Callias, and Lysias

Friday, September 23: Should Assemblymen and Jurors Be Paid?

- Game Session 3
- Xenophon, *The Estate Manager*.
- Speeches by Simon, Meletus, Theozotides, Aristarchus, Thearion

### **Week 6: Threshold of Democracy**

Wednesday, September 28: Trial Day

- Game Session 4
- Speeches by Crito, Lycon, Anytus, Xenophon

Friday, September 30: Should Laws Be Made by the Assembly?

- Game Session 5.
- Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus*.
- Speeches by Aristocles, Meletus, Archinus, Callias

### **Week 7: Threshold of Democracy and Debrief**

Wednesday, October 5: The Athenian Empire

- Game Session 6
- Thucydides, *Melian Dialogue*.
- Plutarch's *Life of Cimon*.
- Speeches by Simon, Thrasybulus, Theozotides, Aristarchus

Friday, October 7: Debrief on Threshold of Democracy.

- “What Happened in History?”\*

## **Week 8: Machiavelli and the Florentine Republic**

Wednesday, October 12:

- *Machiavelli and the Florentine Republic*, pp. 5-8, 12-49.

Friday, October 14:

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*

## **Week 9: Machiavelli and the Florentine Republic**

Wednesday, October 19:

- Machiavelli, *The Prince*

Friday, October 21:

- Machiavelli, *Discourses on Livy*
  - Dedication letter
  - Book I: preface; chapters 1-6, 9-13, 27, 29, 34, 46, 50, 53, 58
  - Book II, preface; chapters 20, 26 80
  - Book III, chapters 1-3, 6

## **Week 10: Machiavelli, Scenario A**

Wednesday, October 26:

- Savonarola, Sermon: “Do Penance” (Nov. 1494); Letters to his Parents; Canzoni 1-3, 6.
- The Game, pp. 46-79.

Friday, October 28: The Game Begins

- Scenario A, Game Session 1
- Speeches by Landucci, Scarlatti, Soderini, Guicciardini, De’ Pazzi

## **Week 11: Machiavelli, Scenario A**

Wednesday, November 2:

- Game Session 2

- Speeches by Rucellai, Il Popolano, Capponi, Da Pescia, Ficino.

Friday, November 4:

- Game Session 3
- Speeches by Rinuccini, Del Nero, Valori, Ridolfi

### **Week 12: Machiavelli, Scenario A & B**

Wednesday, November 9:

- Game Session 4, final session of scenario A

Friday, November 11:

- Scenario B, Game Session 1

### **Week 13: Machiavelli, Scenario B**

Wednesday, November 16:

- Game Session 2

Friday, November 18:

- Game Session 3

### **Week 14: Thanksgiving Break**

Wednesday, November 23:

- No class.

Friday, November 25:

- No class.

### **Week 15: Machiavelli, Scenario B**

Wednesday, November 30:

- Game Session 4

Friday, December 2:

- Game Session 5, final session of scenario B.
- Prepare for the final session.



## **Final Session**

Tuesday, December 6<sup>th</sup> from 9am to 12pm

- Scenario C.
- Debriefing on Machiavelli & the class as a whole.