

**Spring 2026**  
**LDST 101: Historical Foundations of Leadership**  
**Jepson School of Leadership Studies**  
**University of Richmond**

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**Instructor**

**Name:** Dr. Kazi A S M Nurul Huda [I go by Dr. Huda] [He/Him/His]

**Email:** [kazi.huda@richmond.edu](mailto:kazi.huda@richmond.edu)

**Office:** 105A Jepson Hall

**Websites:** a) <https://jepson.richmond.edu/faculty/bios/hhuda/>;  
b) <https://philpeople.org/profiles/kazi-a-s-m-nurul-huda-1>;  
c) <https://www.thedailystar.net/author/kazi-asm-nurul-huda>

**Class Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday: 3.00-4.15 PM

**Class Venues:** 102 Jepson Hall

**Office Hours:** Tuesday and Thursday: 2.00-3.00 PM and by appointment

I prefer that you use email for **questions about procedural matters, appointments, and similar concerns**. I usually reply promptly. If you don't receive a response within 24 hours, please understand that something beyond my control may be happening in my life. However, if the issue you're facing is **substantive or complex**, I strongly encourage you to meet me during office hours. It is often difficult to communicate effectively, especially when we don't yet have a clear understanding of the situation, through writing alone.

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**Course: Description, Objectives and Outcomes**<sup>1</sup>

LDST 101: *Historical Foundations of Leadership* examines leadership as a **historical and interpretive problem**, rather than as a set of timeless traits or managerial techniques. The course asks how different societies have understood leadership and authority, why these understandings emerged in particular historical contexts, and how they continue to shape political and social life. Drawing on texts from political philosophy, history, literature, and public speech, the course explores how leadership has been justified, challenged, and reimagined across diverse periods and regions, including classical Greece, early South Asia, early modern Europe, colonial and postcolonial South Asia, and the modern democratic world.

As a **Historical Inquiry** course, this course emphasizes close engagement with **primary sources** and careful attention to historical context. Students analyze influential texts and speeches that address questions of rule, legitimacy, obedience, crisis, moral responsibility, and the limits of authority. Rather than evaluating leadership in purely contemporary or normative terms, the course focuses on understanding what specific models of leadership were intended to accomplish within the political, social, and cultural conditions of their time.

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- analyze questions about past events, ideas, and human worlds (political, cultural, social, economic, and/or physical).
- demonstrate historical thinking by contextualizing and analyzing primary sources and evaluating the nature and limits of historical evidence.

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<sup>1</sup> Enrollment in this course constitutes agreement to all course policies outlined herein.

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- apply interpretations and methods employed in the given area of historical study.
- formulate, advance, and properly document historical arguments, drawing on a combination of primary sources, secondary sources, and other research materials appropriate to the given area of historical study.

### Course Materials

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You **do not need to purchase any books** for this class, as they can be quite expensive. Instead, all required readings, including peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, blog posts, and newspaper columns, will be **posted on Blackboard**. You are required to bring a printed copy of each assigned reading to class. Having the material in front of you will help you follow the lecture more effectively, as I will often refer to specific paragraphs, sentences, or concepts during our discussions.

### Course Expectations

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- 1) **Attend Class:** *Attendance is mandatory and contributes to your grade.* I won't call you out if you miss a class, but if you want to learn and earn a decent grade, you need to show up. If you must miss class for a legitimate reason—such as a medical emergency or a legally required activity—please let me know in advance if possible, or as soon as you can. This helps me make arrangements to support your learning. Please note that absences for discretionary reasons, such as travel you chose to schedule during class time, will not be excused.
- 2) **Complete the Readings Before Class:** *You are required to read the assigned material before the class in which it will be discussed.* Lectures will build on the readings, so your familiarity with the material is essential for understanding and engaging with the discussion.
- 3) **Participate Actively:** *Class participation is key to making this course meaningful, and your well-behaved, thoughtful participation contributes to your grade.* Your contributions, questions, and observations, especially when the material is confusing, help everyone learn better, including me. I will regularly ask for your thoughts and feedback during lectures, and I hope you'll respond generously. If you're unsure about something, chances are someone else is too, so don't hesitate to speak up.
- 4) **Approach This Class as a Collaborative Project:** *This course is not just mine, nor is it just yours; it's ours.* We are co-investigators in a shared exploration of philosophical ideas. We will support one another in making sense of the materials, questions, and challenges we encounter. Think of our classroom as a space where collaborative learning and mutual respect guide our discussions and understanding.

### Classroom Environment

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This is an “**equal opportunity to learn**” classroom, guided by the values of open communication and mutual respect. Everyone deserves a fair and supportive learning environment, and I am committed to fostering that. If you have suggestions on how we can better ensure such a space for all, I am always open to hearing them.

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This course will involve discussion of serious and sometimes controversial questions—topics on which people may have strong disagreements. It is important to clarify how these discussions should unfold to ensure a respectful and inclusive classroom.

By emphasizing discussion, I am affirming that you are responsible not only for your own learning but also for contributing to the learning experience of your peers. The value of open, thoughtful dialogue lies in the fact that any student's comment may unlock an idea for someone else. Likewise, you never know when another student's insight might be the key to your own understanding of the material.

For this reason, I will make every effort to ensure that each student feels welcome and empowered to share ideas that enrich our collective learning. In that same spirit, **I will not tolerate any behavior that compromises the learning environment for others.**

This includes—but is not limited to—interrupting others, responding with snide or dismissive remarks, or making comments that could reasonably be perceived as disrespectful based on another person's race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, disability status, or any other personal characteristic. If I observe or learn of behavior that suggests another student's ideas are being dismissed or disrespected, I will intervene and take appropriate action.

Let me be clear: **this policy is not about enforcing false politeness** or avoiding disagreement. On the contrary, **critical, sincere, and passionate debate is welcome and encouraged**. The aim is to ensure that no student feels unwelcome, unheard, or unentitled to contribute. Everyone in this classroom is capable of making valuable contributions, and I want each of you to feel empowered to do so.

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#### **Class Entry and Attendance Policy**

**You are expected to enter the classroom before the instructor**—for example, by 3:00 PM on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

I will call the roll every day. **Your attendance will be considered when posting grades for Participation and Engagement.**

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#### **Technology in the Classroom**

**The use of electronic devices—such as mobile phones, laptops, tablets, e-readers, etc.—is strictly prohibited during class time**, unless you have received prior accommodation from me due to a documented disability.

This policy is in place for several reasons:

- 1) Multitasking is a myth. Research consistently shows that multitasking reduces focus and comprehension. Even if you believe you can multitask effectively, your device use is likely to distract those around you and disrupt the learning environment.

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- 2) [Handwritten notes are more effective.](#) Studies show that taking notes by hand improves retention and understanding better than typing. If you prefer a digital version of your notes, you can scan or type them up after class.

If you require the use of technology for accessibility reasons, please let me know **by January 14, 2026**, so we can make the necessary arrangements.

Also, please note that **I may minimize the use of classroom technologies**, such as PowerPoint presentations, in order to keep our discussions more focused and engaged.

### **Assignments**

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Assessment in this course is designed to evaluate students' ability to engage in **historical inquiry about leadership**, with particular emphasis on interpreting primary sources in context, constructing historically grounded arguments, and exercising judgment about the limits of leadership models.

#### ***Primary-Source Analysis Papers (3 papers × 10% = 30%)***

Students will write **three short analytical papers** (500–600 words each), each focused on **one primary source** from the course.

Each paper responds to the same prompt:

1. What leadership problem is this text responding to?
2. How does it justify authority or leadership?
3. What are the limits of this leadership model, given its historical context?

Papers should demonstrate accurate historical contextualization, close engagement with the assigned text, a clear and well-structured argument, and attention to the limits of historical claims. No outside research is required.

Students must submit each paper in the **designated section of Blackboard**.

#### **Due dates:**

- Primary-Source Paper 1: **February 3**
- Primary-Source Paper 2: **March 5**
- Primary-Source Paper 3: **April 9**

#### ***In-Class Source Exercises (2 exercises × 15% = 30%)***

Students will complete **two in-class source exercises**, written during class time. Each exercise is based on a **short excerpt (1–2 pages)** from a text already discussed in the course. **No additional reading is required for these days.**

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Students will be asked to identify the leadership problem addressed in the text, explain the kind of authority being claimed, situate the excerpt historically using internal clues, and note assumptions, silences, or limitations.

**Dates:**

- In-Class Source Exercise 1: **February 17**
- In-Class Source Exercise 2: **March 24**

***Oral Exam (15%)***

Each student will complete a **short oral examination** (approximately 8–10 minutes). The oral exam evaluates **conceptual understanding and historical judgment** rather than memorization.

Students will be asked to explain:

- the historical problem addressed by a course text,
- how that text understands leadership or authority,
- and what is at stake in that historical context.

Oral exams will be conducted over two regular class days. Students are required to attend class only on the day they are scheduled for their oral exam; they do not need to come to class on the other oral-exam day.

**Dates:** April 16 and April 21

***Final Synthesis Essay (15%)***

The final synthesis essay (700–900 words) asks students to reflect on leadership **across historical contexts** rather than evaluating leadership in purely normative or contemporary terms.

**Prompt:**

1. Choose two leadership models from different historical contexts studied in the course.
2. Explain how viewing them historically changes how we judge leadership.

Students must submit the essay in the designated section of Blackboard.

**Due date:** April 27

***Participation and Engagement (10%)***

Participation in this course emphasizes **active, curious, and creative engagement** with ideas about leadership in their historical contexts. Students are expected to come to class prepared and to take part in the shared work of interpreting, questioning, and occasionally play-testing the texts we read.

Participation credit may be earned through a variety of low-stakes activities, including:

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- contributing to class discussion by asking questions, offering interpretations, or responding to others' ideas;
- submitting brief discussion questions or prompts that highlight puzzles, tensions, or ambiguities in a reading;
- taking part in short in-class activities that involve comparison, role-taking, or imaginative reconstruction (for example, asking what advice Plato, Ashoka, or Weber might give in a specific historical situation);
- helping to open or guide discussion for part of a class session (individually or with a partner);
- making thoughtful connections between different texts, traditions, or historical moments studied in the course.

Participation values **intellectual risk-taking and experimentation**. Students are encouraged to try out ideas, propose interpretations, and revise their views in light of discussion. Careful listening and respectful engagement with others are as important as speaking.

Attendance is expected and **will be considered when posting grades for Participation and Engagement**. Students are not evaluated on confidence, eloquence, or extroversion. The aim of participation is to make the classroom a space where historical arguments about leadership can be explored seriously **and with a sense of enjoyment**, through shared inquiry rather than performance.

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## **Grades**

### ***Grade Distribution***

The various assignments are weighted as follows:

Primary-Source Analysis Papers (3)	10%*3=30%
In-Class Source Exercises (2)	15%*2=30
Oral Exam	15%
Final Synthesis Essay	15%
Participation	10%

### ***Grade Scale***

For course grades, the [grading policies](#) followed by the University of Richmond will be used.

On each assignment, students will receive a letter grade corresponding to the university registrar's scale: **A (excellent), B (good), C (average), D (poor), or F (failure)**. Grades will be assigned **without pluses or minuses**.

Letter grades will be converted to the university's **4.0 grading scale**, and the weighted average of these grades will determine the final course grade. Grade averages will be **truncated to one decimal place (not rounded)**.

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Students must meet the minimum threshold for a given grade to earn it (for example, a **B corresponds to a numerical average between 3.0 and 3.2999**).

**Late Work and Make-ups**

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In-class activities are designed to be completed **during class time** and generally **cannot be made up**. If you must miss an in-class activity due to a **legally required obligation, medical emergency, or comparably serious reason**, you must inform me **in advance and as soon as possible**. Failure to notify me beforehand will result in **forfeiture of the points** for that activity.

If the reason for your absence is sufficiently serious and appropriately documented, I may allow a rescheduled activity at my discretion. Please note that **avoidable or discretionary absences**—such as scheduling travel during class time—**will not be excused**, and make-ups will not be permitted in such cases.

**Late submissions** of take-home assignments are not guaranteed to be accepted and may be penalized unless prior arrangements have been approved for serious reasons.

**Important:** The **Final Synthesis Essay** will **not** be rescheduled under any circumstances. The due date falls during final exam week and must be strictly observed, as grades must be submitted on time after careful evaluation of all essays.

**Academic Integrity**

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I take academic integrity very seriously—I truly hate cheating. It is expected that all work submitted for this course reflects your own academic effort.

The University of Richmond has clear policies regarding academic integrity. You are responsible for reviewing these policies [here](#). Before submitting any written work, make sure you are familiar with the different forms of plagiarism. A helpful resource is: “[Nine Things You Should Already Know About Plagiarism](#).”

Please don’t cheat. If you’re struggling, confused, or falling behind, reach out to me. I would much rather help you than see you compromise your integrity.

**Helpful Resources**

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[Ten Easy Tips for Reading Philosophy Texts](#)

[Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

[Guidelines on Writing a Philosophy Paper](#)

[Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#)

**Common Course Policies: Jepson School of Leadership Studies**

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***Awarding of Credit***

To be successful in this course, a student should expect to devote 10-14 hours each week, including class time

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and time spent on course-related activities. Please see [registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html](https://registrar.richmond.edu/services/policies/academic-credit.html)

***Disability Accommodations***

Students with a Disability Accommodation Notice should contact their instructors as early in the semester as possible to discuss arrangements for completing course assignments and exams. For details, visit [disability.richmond.edu/](https://disability.richmond.edu/)

***Honor System***

The Jepson School supports the provisions of the Honor System. The shortened version of the honor pledge is: "I pledge that I have neither received nor given unauthorized assistance during the completion of this work." Please see <https://studentdevelopment.richmond.edu/student-handbook/honor/index.html>.

***Religious Observance***

Students should notify their instructors within the first two weeks of classes if they will need accommodations for religious observance. Details can be found here: [registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html](https://registrar.richmond.edu/planning/religiousobs.html)

***Addressing Microaggressions on Campus***

Microaggressions are the everyday verbal, nonverbal, and environmental slights, snubs, or insults, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative messages to target persons based solely upon their marginalized group membership.<sup>2</sup> Recent research has found that, when professors do not address microaggressions in class, microaggressions foster alienation of marginalized groups.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, both students and faculty that are exposed to microaggressions more often are more likely to have depressive symptoms and negative affect (a negative view of the world).<sup>4</sup> A comfortable and productive environment where meaningful learning happens can be collectively created through actions, words, or environmental cues that promote the inclusion and success of marginalized members, recognizing their embodied identity, validating their realities, resisting sexism, ableism, and racism.<sup>5</sup>

The University of Richmond is committed to building an inclusive community. To this end, the Student Center for Equity and Inclusion (SCEI) was created in 2021 and offers ongoing support and assistance for a diverse

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<sup>2</sup> Sue, S., Zane, N., Nagayama Hall, G. C., & Berger, L. K. (2009). The Case for Cultural Competency in Psychotherapeutic Interventions. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 60(1), 525–548. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev.psych.60.110707.163651>

<sup>3</sup> Bergom, I., Wright, M.C., Brown, M.K. and Brooks, M. (2011), Promoting college student development through collaborative learning: A case study of *hevruta*. *About Campus*, 15: 19-25. <https://doi.org/10.1002/abc.20044>

<sup>4</sup> Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Wong, Y., Hamit, S., & Rasmus, M. (2014). The Impact of Racial Microaggressions on Mental Health: Counseling Implications for Clients of Color. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 92(1), 57–66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/j.1556-6676.2014.00130.x>

<sup>5</sup> Rolón-Dow, R. (2019). Stories of Microaggressions and Microaffirmation: A Framework for Understanding Campus Racial Climate. *NCID Currents*, 1(1). <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/currents.17387731.0001.106>

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student body.<sup>6</sup> With this in mind, as a community member at the University of Richmond, I pledge to address microaggressions in the classroom by holding myself, other students, and faculty accountable for what is said and being receptive to criticism when perpetuating these slights, snubs, or insults.

### **Updated Policies**

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#### ***Artificial Intelligence and Honor Code***

All assignments are expected to be the student's original work. The Jepson School follows the provisions of the Honor System as outlined by the School of Arts and Sciences. This means that no student is to use, rely on or turn in work that was paid-for, copied, excessively summarized without citation, created in collaboration (without permission), produced by AI, or is otherwise not the original work of the student for the specific assignment (without explicit permission).

#### ***Disability Services***

The University of Richmond's office of Disability Services strives to ensure that students with disabilities and/or temporary conditions (i.e., concussions & injuries) are provided opportunity for full participation and equal access. Students who are approved for academic accommodations must complete the following steps to implement their accommodations in each class:

- 1) Submit their Disability Accommodation Notice (DAN) to each of their professors via the Disability Services Student Portal available at this link: [sl.richmond.edu/be](http://sl.richmond.edu/be).
- 2) Request a meeting with each professor to create an accommodation implementation plan. Disability Services is available to assist, as needed.

It is important to complete these steps as soon as possible because accommodations are never retroactive, and professors are permitted a reasonable amount of time for implementation. Students who are experiencing a barrier to access due to a disability and/or temporary condition are encouraged to apply for accommodations by visiting [disability.richmond.edu](http://disability.richmond.edu). Disability Services can be reached at [disability@richmond.edu](mailto:disability@richmond.edu) or 804-662-5001.

### **Weinstein Learning Center**

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The Weinstein Learning Center is your go-to destination for academic support. Our services are tailored to help you achieve your academic goals throughout your time at the University of Richmond. To learn more and view service schedules and appointment times, visit [wlc.richmond.edu](http://wlc.richmond.edu). Available services are outlined below.

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<sup>6</sup> [https://inclusion.richmond.edu/](http://inclusion.richmond.edu/)

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***Academic Coaching***

Meet with a professional staff member who will collaborate with you to assess and develop your academic and life skills (e.g., critical reading and thinking, information conceptualization, concentration, test preparation, time management, stress management, and more).

***Content Tutoring***

Peer consultants offer assistance in specific courses and subject areas. They are available for appointments (in person and virtual) and drop-in sessions. See schedules at [wlc.richmond.edu](http://wlc.richmond.edu) for supported courses and drop-in times.

***English Language and Intercultural Learning***

Attend one-on-one or group consultations, workshops, and other services focused on English, academic, and intercultural skills.

***Quantitative and Programming Resources***

Peer consultants and professional staff offer workshops or one-on-one appointments to build quantitative and programming skills and provide statistical support for research projects.

***Speech***

Prepare and practice for academic presentations, speaking engagements, and other occasions of public expression. Peer consultants offer recording, playback, and coaching for both individual and group presentations. Students can expect recommendations regarding clarity, organization, style, and delivery.

***Technology Studio***

Visit our student lab dedicated to supporting digital media projects. Services include camera checkout, video/audio recording assistance, use of virtual reality equipment, poster printing, 3D printing and modeling, and consultation services on a variety of software.

***Writing***

Assists student writers at all levels of experience, across all majors. Meet with peer consultants who can offer feedback on written work and suggest pre-writing, drafting, and revision strategies.

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**Tentative Schedule and Readings<sup>7 8</sup> [Subject to Revision]<sup>9</sup>**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic / Activity</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Jan 13	Course introduction; syllabus; Historical Inquiry	Syllabus	—
Jan 15	Who should rule?	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , V, 473c–480a	—
Jan 20	The statesman	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , III, 1276b–1279a	—
Jan 22	Exceptional leadership & law	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , III, 1283b–1284b	—
Jan 27	Imperial kingship	Abul Fazl, <i>Ain-i-Akbari</i> , Ain 19	—
Jan 29	Realist statecraft	Kautilya, <i>Arthaśāstra</i> , I.19	—
Feb 3	Moral restraint after violence	Ashoka, Rock Edicts, XII & XIII	<b>Primary-Source Paper 1 due</b>
Feb 5	Leadership under moral conflict	<i>Bhagavad Gītā</i> , 2.31–2.38	—
Feb 10	Power without innocence	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> , XV–XVIII	—
Feb 12	Authority & order	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , XVII	—
Feb 17	<b>In-Class Source Exercise 1</b>	<b>No reading</b>	<b>In-Class Source Exercise 1</b>
Feb 19	Moral authority & the general will	Rousseau, <i>Social Contract</i> , I.1–6	—
Feb 24	Democracy & conformity	Tocqueville, <i>Democracy in America</i> , II.7	—
Feb 26	Responsibility & political vocation	Weber, “Politics as a Vocation”	—
Mar 3	Authority after tradition (I)	Arendt, “What is Authority?”	—
Mar 5	Authority after tradition (II)	Arendt, “What is Authority?”	<b>Primary-Source Paper 2 due</b>
Mar 10	<b>Spring Break</b>	—	—
Mar 12	<b>Spring Break</b>	—	—
Mar 17	Leadership pathology	Eco, “Ur-Fascism”	—
Mar 19	Political realism	Williams, “Realism and Moralism in Political Theory”	—
Mar 24	<b>In-Class Source Exercise 2</b>	<b>No reading</b>	<b>In-Class Source Exercise 2</b>
Mar 26	Gender & alternative authority	Rokeya, <i>Sultana's Dream</i>	—
Mar 31	Anti-nationalist leadership	Tagore, “Nationalism in the West”	—
Apr 2	Founding constitutional leadership	Jinnah, August 11, 1947 Speech	—
Apr 7	Charisma & mobilization	Rahman, March 7, 1971 Speech	—

<sup>7</sup> All Readings will be posted on **Blackboard**.

<sup>8</sup> I am open to suggestions regarding the readings. If you believe there is a better reading on the topic for a particular class session, I will gladly take a look. If I find it more suitable, I may replace the original reading with your suggested one.

<sup>9</sup> Whenever I make any changes to class readings, the exam/online submission schedule, or course policies, I will inform you **in advance**.

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Date	Topic / Activity	Reading	Assessment
Apr 9	Political judgment	Berlin, "Political Judgement"	Primary-Source Paper 3 due
Apr 14	Course-wide synthesis & writing workshop	—	—
Apr 16	Oral exams (Group A)	—	Oral Exam
Apr 21	Oral exams (Group B)	—	Oral Exam
Apr 23	Celebration & open discussion / consolidation	—	—
Apr 27	—	—	Final Synthesis Essay due

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