

SAMPLE SYLLABUS

Texts and Ideas: Power, Politics, and Leadership

Core-UA 9400 L02

NYU London: Fall 2022

Instructor Information

- Dr Janet Dickinson
- Office hours to be announced via Brightspace and also available by appointment

Instruction Mode: In-person

Course Details

- Tuesdays and Thursdays 13.00-14.15
- Location: Bedford Square Room G03 (Tuesdays) and 106 (Thursdays)

Course Description

Human society has always involved structure, organisation and leadership. But what do these really entail and how can we decide who is best placed to lead and to hold power over the lives of other people? History provides us with multiple examples of different kinds of leaders, suggesting patterns of behaviour and parallels as well as points of difference. Power and authority can never be assumed but are constructed and maintained within systems of politics, governance and influence. This course will focus on a series of core texts and images from antiquity to the Renaissance, several of them interconnected, exerting influence and sharing ideas across time and differing cultures. Students will be encouraged to engage critically with these examples to enhance their own appreciation of the ways in which power is manifested within society, the exertion and ethical dimensions of leadership and the relationship between these ideas to those who hold power as well as those who are subordinated to it. Studying the idea of power within these historical contexts will also help us to understand the limits of power and also to interrogate why and how things go wrong and where power is diminished or lost. Students will emerge with a greater appreciation of the ways in which ideas about power and leadership and the ethical operation of politics have been debated, developed, appropriated or rejected, informing their understanding of our subject and how these ideas continue to play out in the world.

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Examples of some questions we will ask in this course are:

- What is justice and the just society?
- What is the relationship between the state and the governed subject?
- How does the notion of authority change over time?
- What forms can authority take?
- What role should education play in the construction of society?
- How do constructs such as gender affect societal organization?
- How do we situate works of art within their broader socio-political context?

Course Objectives

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

- Understand how ideas regarding power, politics and the expectations and responsibilities of leaders have taken shape over time
- Write persuasive and well-supported essays that elucidate and expand upon the chosen readings
- Analyse arguments about power, politics and leadership in relation to their historical and social contexts

Assessment Components

Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Class participation	Class participation will be graded based upon the student's attendance and willingness to engage regularly and productively in class discussion.	20%	
Paper 1	Short essay, c.1500 words of argument driven analysis addressing one from a list of questions to be circulated via Brightspace.	15%	13 October

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Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Assessed presentation plus meeting with tutor to discuss plans	Meeting with tutor followed by 5-7 minute outline of plans for research project, to be delivered as a presentation to the class. The time limit will be strictly observed. More details to be found via Brightspace.	15%	Individual dates to be confirmed via Brightspace
Paper 2	Extended essay, c.3000 words demonstrating a sustained critical engagement with a selection of the examples and subjects analysed during the course. Title to be agreed between tutor and student.	25%	29 November
Final examination	Details tbc via Brightspace.	25%	TBC

Assessment Expectations

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
A-range	A = 93-100% A- = 90-92%	An A student participates actively in class to the benefit of all involved and writes persuasive essays that expand upon the given texts.
B-range	B+ = 87-89% B = 84-86% B- = 80-83%	A B student participates regularly in class and writes well-informed papers that characterize the readings accurately; however, the student's analyses might lack polish or proper synthesis.

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Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
C-range	C+ = 77-79% C = 74-76% C- = 70-73%	A C student participates occasionally in class and displays understanding of the texts in their writing without attempting sophisticated arguments.
D-range	D+ = 67-69% D = 65-66%	A D-student only participates rarely and writes essays that misrepresent the texts and/or contain no independent analyses.
F	F = below 65%	Conditions for failure include inconsistent attendance, regular disruptions of class, and incomplete or generally poor writing assignments.

Course Materials

Required Text(s) & Materials

Note that I am happy for you to access these texts in the form that is easiest for you, but would advise that obtaining a decent scholarly edition will make your life easier when reading and preparing for classes.

- Plato, *Republic*, trans. Christopher Rowe (London: Penguin Classics, 2012)
- Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*, trans. Victor Watts (London: Penguin Classics, 1999)
- Christine de Pisan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, trans. Rosalind Brown-Grant (London: Penguin, 1999)
- Erasmus, *Erasmus: The Education of a Christian Prince with the Panegyric for Archduke Philip of Austria*, trans. Neil M. Cheshire and Michael J. Heath (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1997)
- Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (London: Penguin Classics, 2015)

Resources

- Access your course materials: [Brightspace](#)
- NYU London and Living in London Info: [LDN](#)
- Databases, journal articles, and more: [Bobst Library](#)
- Assistance with strengthening your writing: [NYU Writing Center](#) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- Obtain 24/7 technology assistance: [IT Help Desk](#)

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Course Schedule

Topics & Assignments

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 1 6 September (note that there will not be a class on Thursday 1 September)	Introduction	Students should have visited the British Museum by this point and come prepared to comment on an 'object of power' that they have identified there. Further instructions to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 2 8 September	Power in antiquity	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 3 13 September	Sophocles	Oedipus Rex	
Session 4 15 September	Sophocles	Antigone	
Session 5 20 September	British Museum, exhibition: 'Feminine Power'		
Session 6 22 September	Plato	<i>Republic</i> Books 1-5	
Session 7 27 September	Plato	<i>Republic</i> Books 6-10	
Session 8 29 September	Boethius	<i>The Consolation of Philosophy</i> Books 1-3	
Session 9 4 October	Boethius	<i>The Consolation of Philosophy</i> Books 4-5	

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Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Session 10 6 October	Christine de Pisan	<i>The Book of the City of Ladies</i>	Paper 1 due 12 October
Session 11 11 October	Christine de Pisan	<i>The Book of the City of Ladies</i>	
Session 12 13 October	The Venetian Empire	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 13 18 October	The Venetian Empire continued		
Session 14 20 October	Renaissance and Reformations	Erasmus, Education of a Christian Prince	
Session 15 22 October	Walking tour: London and the architecture of power	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 16 22 October	Walking tour: London and the architecture of power	As above	
Session 17 25 October	Art and Power in the Renaissance	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 18 27 October	Fashioning Power: Elizabeth I and her bodies natural and politics	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 19 Saturday 29 October	Fashioning Masculinity exhibition	Details TBC via Brightspace	
Session 20 1 November	Benin bronzes	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	

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Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
(note no class on 3 November)			
Session 21 8 November	Guest lecture: Dr Steve Kershaw	Details to be circulated via Brightspace	
Session 22 10 November	Assessed presentations		Individual presentations
Session 23 15 November	Assessed presentations		Individual presentations
Session 24 17 November	Assessed presentations		Individual presentations
Session 25 22 November (note no class on 24 November)	Shakespeare	The Tempest	
Session 26 29 November	Shakespeare	The Tempest	Paper 2 due
Session 27 1 December	Hobbes	Leviathan https://www.gutenberg.org/files/3207/3207-h/3207-h.htm Part 1, chapters 1 and 10-16.	
Session 28 6 December	Hobbes	Leviathan Part 2, sections 17, 18, 25 and 30	

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Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Final Assessment Date TBC			

Course Policies

Classroom Etiquette

Students will be expected to engage in courteous and scholarly debate. Whilst it is fine for students to use laptops and other electronic devices to write and access notes, students are asked not to use the internet during our short classes.

Students who *appear* to be concentrating on material that is not directly relevant to class discussion will be required to close down their technology and revert to written notes instead. Mobile phones should be put away in bags or pockets at the start of class and not removed until we finish. No food should be consumed during class and bathroom breaks should be timed to take place before or after class.

Final exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the London Academics team (nyul.academics@nyu.edu). Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

Academic Honesty, Plagiarism and Late Work

Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the [University and school policies](#). You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL website (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

Attendance

Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

To ensure the integrity of the academic experience, class attendance is required and expected promptly when class begins. These rules apply to class excursions and activities as well.

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Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations, but must follow NYU London's absence reporting procedure. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

Moses Accommodations Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or mosescsd@nyu.edu) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

Inclusivity Policies and Priorities

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert)

You can edit your pronoun and name pronunciation information on your Albert account, making it visible for faculty and staff. Information on how to do this can be found on the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation web page](#).

Bias Response

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community. For more information, including how to report an incident, visit the [Bias Response Line website](#).

Your Lecturer

Janet Dickinson MA PhD is Senior Faculty Advisor and Lecturer at New York University in London and Senior Associate Tutor in History at the Department for Continuing Education at the University of Oxford. Her main research interests focus on elite politics and culture in early modern England and Europe, on which she has published a number of articles and a book, *Court Politics and the Earl of Essex* (2011). Her research interests recently led to a year working on an Anglo-Dutch project focused on the extraordinary objects retrieved from a 17th century shipwreck off the Dutch island of Texel, and in particular a collection of 'drowned books' and 'ghost books'; her article on the books will be coming out soon in 'The Seventeenth Century'. She is now writing an audiobook on a day in the life of the court of Henry VIII. Janet

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is conference secretary for the Society for Court Studies and a member of the steering committee of the Lord Burghley 500 Foundation, celebrating the 500th anniversary of William Cecil, Lord Burghley's birth: www.lordburghley500.org