

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO
Department of Political Science
POLITICAL THEORY COMPREHENSIVE EXAM

The required texts below represent key interventions in the history of political thought spanning from the Ancients to the twentieth century. While this list is by no means exhaustive, students seeking qualification in political theory should display a thorough knowledge of these texts as well as the interpretive and theoretical debates they have inaugurated. Students are encouraged to consult faculty about helpful secondary sources for these authors. The appendix to this list provides a broader list of authors and texts to help you in your studying.

1. Plato, *Republic*
2. Aristotle, *Politics*
3. Cicero, *On the Commonwealth* and *On the Laws*
4. Augustine, *City of God*, books IV, 3–4; V, 24; VIII, 1–11; XIV, 28; XV, 1–5; XIX, 4–22, 25–28; XX, 1–2
5. Machiavelli, *The Prince* and *The Discourses on Livy*
6. Hobbes, *Leviathan*
7. Locke, *Second Treatise of Government* and *A Letter Concerning Toleration*
8. Rousseau, *Second Discourse* (Discourse on the Origin of Inequality) and *Of the Social Contract*
9. *The Federalist Papers* (1–2, 6–10, 14–28, 33, 36–58, 62–63, 70, 78–85)
10. Wollstonecraft, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*
11. Kant, the selections in *Toward Perpetual Peace and Other Writings*, ed. Kleingeld
12. Hegel, *The Philosophy of Right*
13. Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
14. Marx, “On the Jewish Question,” “Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844,” “The Communist Manifesto,” and *Capital*, vol. 1
[the selections in *The Marx-Engels Reader* or McLellan’s *Selected Writings* are sufficient]
15. Mill, *On Liberty* and *The Subjection of Women*
16. Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals*
17. DuBois, *The Souls of Black Folk*
18. Weber, “Science as a Vocation” and “Politics as a Vocation”
19. Gandhi, *Selected Political Writings* (ed. Dalton)
20. Schmitt, *Concept of the Political* and *Political Theology*
21. Arendt, *The Human Condition*
22. Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, sec. 1-5, 11-26, 28-44, 46, 48, 50-60, 63, 65, 67, 69, 76-77, 79, 80-82, 87
23. Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*
24. Okin, *Justice, Gender, and the Family*
25. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, chapters 1, 5 & 6; “Actions, Speech Acts, Linguistically Mediated Interactions, and the Lifeworld” in *On the Pragmatics of Communication*; and *Between Facts and Norms*, chapter 7, Afterword, Appendix 1, Appendix 2
26. Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*

APPENDIX

The following lists provide a wider view of central texts in political theory. While not required for the exam, we encourage students to consult these texts in their studying and to pursue coursework that will expose you to these works.

PART 1

Texts that provide an overview of the history of political thought and contemporary theory

Sabine, *A History of Political Theory*

Wolin, *Politics as Vision*

Strauss & Cropsey, *History of Political Philosophy*

Pocock, *The Machiavellian Moment: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition*

Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought*

Okin, *Women in Western Political Thought*

Benhabib, *Critique, Norm & Utopia*

Dryzek, Honig, and Phillips, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*

PART 2

Supplementary Texts in the History of Political Thought

Sophocles, *Antigone*

Thucydides, *The Peloponnesian War*

Plato, *Apology; Crito; Laws*

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

Cicero, *On Duties* [*De Officiis*]

Aquinas, Selections from *Summa Theologica* in *On Law, Morality, and Politics*, trans. Richard J. Regan, ed. William P. Baumgarth and Richard J. Regan (2nd ed.) ST I-II, Questions 90-95 (pp. 10-59) I-II, Q. 96-97 (pp. 59-75); Q. 105 A. 1 (pp. 93-96); II-II Q. 57 A. 2-3 (pp. 100-103); Q. 40 A. 1 (pp. 164-167); Q. 64 A. 6-7 (pp. 167-71); Q. 104 A. 5-6 (pp. 182-185); Q. 42 A. 2 (pp. 188-189)

More, *Utopia*

Luther and Calvin, *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*, ed. Höpfl

Vitoria, "On the American Indians"; "On Dietary Laws, or Self-Restraint" (selection: pp. 217-230, Pagden and Lawrance edition)

Montaigne, "Of Cannibals"; "Of Cruelty"

Grotius, *The Rights of War and Peace*, ed. Tuck, Prolegomena [Preliminary Discourse]; Book I: chs. 1, 2 (sections 1-4); Book II: chs. 1, 22, 24, 25; Book III: ch. 1 (sections 1-5 only), and chs. 7, 8, and 25

Spinoza, *Theologico-Political Treatise*

Montesquieu, *Persian Letters; Spirit of the Laws*

Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, Book III, Parts I and II; "Of the First Principles of Government," "Of the Origin of Government," "Of the Original Contract," "Of Passive Obedience" in *Essays*

Rousseau, "Discourse on the Sciences and Arts"; "Discourse on Political Economy"; "The State of War"

Herder, "Yet Another Philosophy of History"
Smith, *Theory of Moral Sentiments*; *The Wealth of Nations*, Bk I chs. 1-10; Bks III-IV, Book V, chs.1
Bentham, *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*; *Nonsense Upon Stilts*;
"Emancipate your colonies"
Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*; "Speech on Fox's East India Bill" and "Speech in Opening
the Impeachment of Warren Hastings" [selections in Bromwich, ed., *On Empire, Liberty, and
Reform* or J. Welsh and D. Fidler, eds., *Empire and Community*]
Wollstonecraft, *Vindication of the Rights of Man*
Paine, *Rights of Man*
Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns"
Hegel, *The Phenomenology of Spirit*: Preface; Introduction; Lordship and Bondage; Absolute Freedom
and Terror
Tocqueville, "Essay on Algeria"; *The Old Regime and the Revolution*
Mill, "A Few Words on Non-Intervention"; *Utilitarianism*; *Considerations on Representative Government*
Emerson, "Self-Reliance"; "Politics"
Thoreau, "Resistance to Civil Government"
Douglass, "What to the Slave is the Fourth of July"
Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*

PART 3

Supplementary Texts in Twentieth Century and Contemporary Theory

Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*; "The Types of Legitimate Domination"
Schmitt, *Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy*
Dewey, *The Public and its Problems*
Freud, *Civilization and its Discontents*
James, *The Black Jacobins*
Horkheimer and Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment*
Beauvoir, *Second Sex*
Arendt, *Origins of Totalitarianism*; *On Revolution*
Fanon, *Black Skin/White Masks*; *Wretched of the Earth*
Strauss, *Natural Right and History*
Wolin, "Political Theory as a Vocation" and "Fugitive Democracy" in *Fugitive Democracy and other
Essays*
Nozick, *Anarchy, State, Utopia*
Lukes, *Power: A Radical View*
Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars*; *Spheres of Justice*
Jameson, "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture"
Habermas, "What is Universal Pragmatics?" in *Communication and the Evolution of Society*; "Discourse
Ethics: Notes on a Program of Philosophical Justification" in *Moral Consciousness and Communicative
Action*; "The Postnational Constellation and the Future of Democracy" in *The Postnational
Constellation*
Foucault, *History of Sexuality*, vol. 1
Pateman, *The Sexual Contract*
Zizek, *The Sublime Object of Ideology*
Shklar, "The Liberalism of Fear"; *The Faces of Injustice*

Butler, *Gender Trouble*

Rawls, *Political Liberalism; The Law of Peoples*

Mouffe, *The Return of the Political*

Mills, *The Racial Contract*

Pettit, *Republicanism: a Theory of Freedom and Government; On the People's Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy*

Scott, *Conscripts of Modernity*