

Intro to Political Thought Midterm Spring 2018

Midterm Instructions:

Respond to two of the questions or tasks listed below. Each of your responses must be at least 500 words (two double-spaced pages). Since this exercise is designed to test your knowledge, rather than inviting you to engage in analysis and evaluation, you should not include your opinion. Instead, summarize central points to demonstrate your understanding of the readings.

Translate points made in the readings or background materials into your own words. If you copy any part of your exam from any source without attribution, you will receive an "F" on the midterm, and you will almost certainly fail the course.

You will be graded according to your ability to convey information in college-level prose. Consequently, your work should be carefully organized and free of grammatical errors. You must consult the [Term Paper Checklist](#) to make sure that you have corrected common mistakes before you submit your work. If your essay indicates that you failed to proofread and polish your essays, your grade will be significantly lower than you might have expected.

Many students, including those who usually earn high marks on written assignments, benefit from bringing their midterms to the Writing Center for help with correcting and improving their work.

In contrast to homework assignments, your midterm must be emailed as an attachment and formatted in Microsoft Word (with a .doc or .docx extension). If your midterm is not formatted in Word, I may not be able to open it. Please do not use Google docs or any other program to send me a link rather than an attachment.

Note: I have provided links to background materials, but you must indicate that you have read and understood the required readings. Do not rely solely on supplementary sources.

Choose two tasks from the list below.

◆ Compare Plato's conception of government with Aristotle's view of politics.

Background: [Classical Wisdom Standoff: Epistemology of Plato and Aristotle, Parts 1 & 2.](#)

◆ Describe how Plato's epistemology is expressed in his "Allegory of the Cave."

Background: Richard Kraut, "[Plato](#)," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Describe how Aristotle's epistemology is expressed in his approach to government.

Background: Fred Miller, "[Aristotle's Political Theory](#)," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize Machiavelli's approach to preserving political power.

Background: Cary Nederman, "[Niccolò Machiavelli](#)," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize Thomas Hobbes's rationale for absolute government.

Background: Garrath Williams, "[Thomas Hobbes: Moral and Political Philosophy](#)," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize John Locke's conception of the state of nature.

Background: Danny Scoccia, "[Notes on John Locke's Second Treatise of Government](#)," New Mexico State University.

◆ Summarize John Locke's conception of the social contract.

Background: Celeste Friend, "[Social Contract Theory](#)," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize John Locke's conception of property.

Background: Alex Tuckness, "[John Locke's Political Philosophy](#)," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize J.J. Rousseau's conception of the social contract.

Background: Celeste Friend, "[Social Contract Theory](#)," *Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize Adam Smith's views on the causes and consequences of the division of labor.

Background: E. G. West, "[Adam Smith's Two Views on the Division of Labour](#)," *Economica*, 31 (1964). (121), 23–32.

◆ Summarize Adam Smith's conception of natural tendencies of human behavior.

Background: Patricia H. Werhane, "[The Role of Self-interest in Adam Smith's Wealth of Nations](#)," *The Journal of Philosophy* 86 (11): 669–80.

◆ Summarize Adam Smith's labor theory of value.

Background: P.J. McNulty, "[Adam Smith's Concept of Labor](#)," *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 34(3) (1973), 345–366.

◆ Summarize the role of the invisible hand in Adam Smith's vision of the modern economy.

Background: Emma Rothschild, "[Adam Smith and the Invisible Hand](#)," *The American Economic Review* 84 (1994), 319–22.

◆ Summarize the theory of factions that James Madison presented in Federalist #10.

Background: Rakove, J. N., "[James Madison in Intellectual Context](#)," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 59(4) (2002), 865–868.

◆ Describe the parallels between Adam Smith's vision of free markets and James Madison's conception of factional competition.

Background: S. Fleischacker, "[Adam Smith's Reception among the American Founders, 1776-1790](#)," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 59 (4), (2002): 897–924.

◆ Summarize Karl Marx's labor theory of value.

Background: David L. Prychitko, "[Marxism](#)," *Concise Encyclopedia of Economics*, Library of Economics & Liberty.

◆ Summarize Karl Marx's theory of class struggle.

Background: Jonathan Wolff, [Karl Marx](#), *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.

◆ Summarize Karl Marx's doctrine of historical materialism.

Background: Kaleb Shimp, "[The Validity of Karl Marx's Theory of Historical Materialism](#)," *Major Themes in Economics* (Spring 2009).

◆ Summarize Henry David Thoreau's justification of civil disobedience

Background: Wendy McElroy, "[Henry Thoreau & Civil Disobedience](#)," Thoreau Reader

◆ Summarize Henry David Thoreau's arguments on the political consequences of slavery

Background: Sandra Petrulionis, "[Thoreau Transforms his Journal into "Slavery in Massachusetts](#)," Thoreau Reader.

◆ Summarize John Stuart Mill's defense of individual liberty

Background: C. Clausen, [John Stuart Mill's "Very Simple Principle](#), *Wilson Quarterly* (Spring 2009).