

University of TX at Austin – Department of History – Fall Semester 2018

His 350L: Machiavelli: Politics and Culture

Meets T/Th 9.30-11am in GAR 0.132

HIS 350L (39185) / AHC 330 (33470) / EUS 346 (36185) / LAH 350 (30315) / RS 357 (43291) / CTI 375 (29550)

Professor Alison K. Frazier

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Office: GAR 2.109

Office hours T 11-12am / W 9-10am / by apptmt

Description

This upper-division, honors, research seminar focuses on the life, writings, and influence of Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527), one of the most controversial writers in the Western canon. How did this man—who was in his own eyes a poet—become a byword for ‘might makes right’ power politics? In what sense was he at once a philosopher, a politician, a classicist, a military strategist, an ethicist, and a no-account “ribald” (as his contemporary enemies called him)? How did his reputation get reduced to the clichéd term “machievellian”? What was his effect on early modern Europe and its colonies, on the global emergence of the nation-state, on the phenomena of constitutional democracy and fascism, on the histories of ethics, gender, and religion? And what can his writings teach us about the Renaissance and about ourselves?

To answer these questions (and many others), we’ll read and discuss as much of his work as we can manage. We’ll write in different formats—as Machiavelli himself did—to explore the challenges of his legacy. You’ll also have the opportunity to learn about efforts to understand and apply his ideas, from the sixteenth century to the twenty-first. In-class writing and small group projects will prepare you to choose a topic for individual research. As a student-historian, you’ll conclude the semester with a research project, which might take the form of an academic paper, a public history poster, a digital platform, or another sort of project worked out with your professor.

By the end of the course, you will understand

- * basic historical methods for reading primary sources.
- * a range of scholarly disagreements about fundamental points of interpretation.
- * the critical importance of arguing from evidence.
- * and be able to articulate the four key stages of a history research project: define a question; select evidence; manage and analyze evidence; and present a clear and persuasive argument.

His 350L courses are **capstones** in the History Department: expect at least 30% of your final grade to come from writing assignments, and 30% from research assignments.

Seminars are not lecture courses. It is imperative that you prepare the reading carefully and come to class ready for conversation about the reading. Any writing we do in class is aimed at supporting that conversation. If you cannot contribute **regularly, thoughtfully, and collegially** to our conversation, you cannot get an “A” in this course. Because our conversation is so important, missing class is especially serious: I expect you to be on time for every class meeting.

There are no **prerequisites** for this course, but His 343g “Italian Renaissance” and other medieval or early modern history, art, philosophy, and literature classes are strongly recommended.

This course carries three flags

1.) Independent Inquiry.

Independent Inquiry Flag courses engage you in the process of inquiry, providing opportunities for investigation of questions, problems, and projects related to your major and your life. A substantial portion of your grade will come from information literacy assignments, independent investigation, and class presentation of your work.

2.) Writing.

Writing Flag courses give you experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this history class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive helpful feedback from your peers and your instructor. You will revise one or more assignments, and you will read and discuss your peers’ work. You should expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from your written work.

3.) Ethics.

Ethics Flag courses aim to equip you with skills that are necessary for making ethical decisions in your adult and professional life. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from assignments involving ethical issues and the process of applying ethical reasoning to real-life historical situations.

Class Readings: Buy at University Coop or Read on Reserve at PCL

Required:

Machiavelli, *The Prince*, tr. & comm. Atkinson
____. *The Discourses*, tr. Bondanella & Bondanella
____. *Art of War*, tr. Lynch
____. *Mandragola*, tr. Flaumenhaft
____. *Clizia*, tr. Gallagher
____. *Florentine Histories*, tr. Mansfield and Banfield

Optional:

Najemy, ed., *Cambridge Companion to Machiavelli* (2010)
Najemy, *A History of Florence, 1250-1575* (2006)
Machiavelli, *Machiavelli and His Friends: Their Personal Correspondence*, ed. Atkinson & Sices (1996)

Required: Everyone reads a biography of Machiavelli: Robert Black (most scholarly), Ross King (best for beginners), Niccolò Capponi (good for beginners), Erica Benner (newest), Maurizio Viroli (good for beginners). Please ask me about others: there are many bios of NM out there and some are terrible. If you read Italian, Francesco Bausi.

Assignments and Grading

1. Individual work	
In-class writing of many different kinds, including Information Literacy projects, map quizzes, and reading responses	20%
2. Small group project JSTimeline	
Each group develops a timeline specific to its members. Include not only events within NM's lifetime, but before and after as well	10%
4. Individual research project (choose format in consultation with professor)	
Proposal – brief oral presentation + 1 page proposal (Week 9)	5%
Prospectus – substantive improvement of proposal (Week 10), with annotated bibliography CMS – at least five items, no more than one website	10%
First drafts (due 16 November) for peer reviews (16-23 November)	10%
Project workshops: oral presentations (Weeks 13-14)	15%
Final draft (15-30pp) – Thursday 6 December	30%

*Because this class is a seminar, I reserve the right to raise or lower your final grade to reflect

- 1.) your regular, thoughtful, and collegial contribution to the class in individual & group work, and
- 2.) your progress across the semester.

Grading scale. A 93-100; A- 90-92; B+ 87-89; B 83-86; B- 80-82; C+ 77-79; C 73-76; C- 70-72; D+ 67-69; D 63-66; D- 60-62; F 59 or lower.

How to Succeed in this Course:

- 1.) Come to class with the assignment prepared.
- 2.) Participate in discussion. Ask questions. Try out hypotheses. Insist on clarifications. Put yourself out there. Keep the faith.
- 3.) Be a good listener and a supportive colleague. Do unto others...
- 4.) Go forth bravely. Machiavelli is not “solved” and *you can* make a real contribution.

PRACTICE GOOD STUDENTSHIP

EXPECTATIONS AND POLICIES

Attendance. *By registering for this seminar, you expressed your intention to attend regularly and participate fully.* Absences require a written excuse; unexcused absences are likely to affect your final grade. In general, quizzes and in-class writing cannot be made up, as they are specific to that day's work.

Keep in touch! If you are having difficulty with the course or must be absent for a period due to personal issues, email for an office hours appointment. Your professor sincerely wants you to succeed.

Email and e-doc etiquette:

- 1.) Open your email with a salutation (Dear Dr. Frazier; Hi Prof. Frazier) and close with your full name.
- 2.) In the email subject line, state clearly the topic of your communication.
- 3.) In any e-docs that you send me via email or post to Canvas, put at the top
 - a. your full name,
 - b. the date,
 - c. the name of the course,
 - d. and the title of the assignment.

Honor Code. The core values of the University of Texas at Austin are learning, discovery, freedom, leadership, individual opportunity, and responsibility. Each member of the University is expected to uphold these values through integrity, honesty, trust, fairness, and respect toward peers and community. *Plagiarism* (the unacknowledged use of others' words or ideas) *is dishonest, unfair, and disrespectful, as well as being grounds for failure in the course.* See www.utexas.edu/depts/dos/sjs

Classroom Expectations. I use the CANVAS information management system to record grades, post readings, and make announcements. It is your responsibility to keep your email address up-to-date with the University so that Canvas notifications reach you on time.

Every student has the right to learn in a supportive environment. During class, restrict your electronic devices to course materials only. Failure to comply with this UT Austin policy will hurt your final grade

Many of you will be doing the course reading online. We will have some DH assignments, and will use the CANVAS online system for submitting assignments and communicating in groups. Clearly laptops and other devices will be part of our course. Aside from that, the class will decide the role of devices in our day to day work.

Religious Holidays. By UT Austin policy, absences for religious holy days require that you notify me at least fourteen days beforehand. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Disabilities. Students with disabilities may request academic accommodations from services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Share your accommodations letter with me early in the semester so that I can respond most effectively. For information, call 512-471-6259 or use this website: <http://ddce.utexas.edu/disability/>

Emergencies & Campus Carry. Behavior Concerns Advice Line (BCAL): 512-232-5050. Information on emergency evacuation routes and procedures: www.utexas.edu/emergency
Campus carry for students: <https://campuscarry.utexas.edu/students>

WRITING HELP

The Sanger Learning Center. All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

The University Writing Center. The University Writing Center offers free, individualized, expert help with writing for any UT student, by appointment or on a drop-in basis. Consultants help students develop strategies to improve their writing. The assistance is intended to foster students' resourcefulness and self-reliance. <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

SCHEDULE OF MAJOR EVENTS & DUE DATES FOR FALL 2018

Th 6 September	Class meets at HRC (Ransom Center)
Th 13 September	Dr. Gustavson from HRC guides set-up of research accounts > bring your laptop / device
Th 25 October 8am	Project proposal first draft due; present to class
T 30 October	Class meets at PCL for research instruction with Shiela Winchester
Th 1 November 8am	Prospectus due; present to class
6-15 November	In-class writing time (hallway consultations)
16 November	Submit first drafts for peer reviewing (16-25 Nov.)
27 Nov. -4 Dec.	Project workshops: presentations & critique
Th 6 Dec.	Projects due!

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SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

You can expect changes to the syllabus as I revise assignments to better support your learning. Such changes are not unusual and will be clearly announced.

C = posted on Canvas

WEEK 1: Introductions

Th 30 Aug. Introductions: info sheet

Handout: Boccaccio *Decameron*, VI.7; Guicciardini, *Maxims* excerpts; Burchiello, "Fried Nominatives"

UNIT I: NM BASICS TO 1515, INCLUDING 'THE PRINCE'

WEEK 2: Epistolarity—Suggested secondary reading: Najemy, *Between Friends*, Ch. 1 (C)

T 4 Sept. Prepare: one basic secondary source = Atkinson, "Niccolò Machiavelli: A Portrait" (C) and one enigmatic primary source = NM, "Letter to a Gentlelady" (C).

Class discussion: Review syllabus. *Information Literacy I*: Primary vs Secondary Sources—and the Questions We Ask Them.

Th 6 Sept. MEET AT HRC (RANSOM CENTER) AT 9.30AM SHARP! Come up the stairs to the second floor, where you will find cubbies for your backpacks.

WEEK 3: The Prince—Suggested secondary source: start reading your biography of NM

T 11 Sept. Prepare: Three letters: (1) NM, 1513 letter to Francesco Vettori, on Canvas; (2) *Prince*, 1515 dedication to Lorenzo

de'Medici in Atkinson ed., pp. 93-95; (3.) *Discourses*, dedication to Buondelmonti and Rucellai in Bondanella, ed., pp. 13-14

Class discussion: how to read a Renaissance letter

Information literacy II: DH for historians Introduction to JSTimeline = <https://timeline.knightlab.com/> Small group formation for JSTimeline work.

Th 13 Sept.

Prepare: *The Prince*, study the table of contents closely; read Chaps. 1-4: what kind of book is this? If your biography of NM has a chapter dedicated specifically to the *Prince*, read that too.

Class discussion: structure, style, and purpose in *The Prince*

Heads up! Class will open with Dr. Gustavson from the HRC helping you set up a research account. HRC worksheet handout (staggered HRC assignments and due dates).

WEEK 4—The Prince: Suggested secondary source: Nederman, “The Mirror Crack’d” (C)

T 18 Sept.

Prepare: NM, *Prince*, chs. 12-14; chs. 15-23.

Class discussion: history, ethics, and religion in the *Prince*

Information Literacy III: Finding & Citing Evidence—Plagiarism; Chicago Style. Due by Monday 25 September (email attachment)

Heads up!: go to the PCL, check out a book about Machiavelli (not by him), and bring it to class. You will need it for an in-class assignment on Thursday.

Th 20 Sept.

Prepare: NM *Prince*, chs. 24-26. Choose one of these words—*virtue*, *fortune*, *state*—and post a paragraph in Discussion in which you argue its significance for Machiavelli’s last chapter, with reference to at least one earlier chapter. Give your paragraph a descriptive title.

Bring to class: your PCL book about Machiavelli.

Small group work: exchange and discuss one another’s paragraphs.

UNIT II: DEVELOPING YOUR EXPERTISE: NM’S MAJOR WORKS 1515-27

WEEK 5—Discourses—Suggested secondary source:

- T 25 Sept. Prepare: Review NM, *Discourses*, letter of dedication (pp. 3-4); read preface (pp. 5-6); Bk I, chs 1-6 and 9-13.
- Class discussion: *Information literacy III due today!* The Prince vs the *Discourses*?
- Th 27 Sept. Prepare: Continue reading *Discourses*, Bk. I, chs 16-18; ch 27); ch. 29; chs 43-45; chs 57-59.

WEEK 6—Discourses & Art of War—Suggested secondary source:

- T 2 Oct. Prepare: Read *Discourses*, Bk. II, preface (123-25), chs 1-2 (pp. 125-33); ch 16 (pp. 160-68); ch 20 (pp. 175-77); ch 29 (pp. 197-99) and Bk. III, ch 1 (pp. 209-12), chs 6-9 (pp. 218-41), ch 29 (pp. 277-78); ch 31 (pp. 281-84); ch 34 (pp. 287-90); ch 43 (pp. 302-03). Choose one ancient Roman or Greek from the *Discourses* and enter him/her onto your JS Timeline.
- Th 4 Oct. Prepare: Read NM, *Art of War*, pp tba [cf. *Discourses* Bk II, chs. 9-10, 16-18, 20,24 and Bk III chs 33-37, 41]

WEEK 7—Mandragola—Suggested secondary source:

- T 9 Oct. Prepare: NM's *Mandragola*, first half
- Th 11 Oct. Prepare: NM's *Mandragola*, second half

WEEK 8—Biography & History—Suggested secondary source:

- T 16 Oct. Prepare: Read NM, *Life of Castruccio Castracane* (C)
- Th 18 Oct. Prepare: Read NM, *Florentine Histories*, selections tba.

UNIT III. RESEARCH PROJECTS

WEEK 9—

- T 23 Oct Prepare: write down three areas of interest that you might explore for your research project. What kind of project are you contemplating? A traditional paper? Something bolder?
- Handout: assessment rubric for research papers
- Th 25 Oct. Prepare: Individual project proposals—post your draft proposal by 8am; prepare a brief presentation

WEEK 10—From proposal to prospectus

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| T 30 Oct. | Class meets at PCL in Learning Lab 3 for research support.
Please don't be late. |
| Th 1 Nov. | <u>Prepare</u> : Revise your proposal as a prospectus (see prospectus
handout): post by 8am for presentation in class |

WEEK 11— Reading / writing & one-on-one consultations

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| T 6 Nov. | In-class reading/writing time. Individual meetings (hallway) |
| Th 8 Nov. | In-class reading/writing time. Individual meetings (hallway) |

WEEK 12 – Writing & one-on-one consultations

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| T 13 Nov. | In-class writing time. Individual meetings (hallway) |
| Th 15 Nov. | In-class writing time. Individual meetings (hallway) |

WEEK 13 – Peer Reviewing (online)

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| T 20 Nov. | Open office hours |
| Th 22 Nov | THANKSGIVING |

WEEK 14 -- Workshopping

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| T 27 Nov. | Project workshops |
| Th 29 Nov. | Project workshops |

WEEK 15 – from Workshopping to Wrapping up

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| T 4 Dec. | Project workshops |
| Th 6 Dec. | Final drafts due; closing comments |