

Political Theory

In this field the student will be expected to demonstrate graduate-level mastery of thinkers and themes from the history of political thought and contemporary political theory and philosophy. Graduate-level mastery presumes but means more than a basic acquaintance with each text's basic argument; students taking the examination will be expected to offer their own arguments about the questions addressed by the texts, drawing on them but not limited to them. They will also be expected to offer arguments about how to interpret and synthesize the texts themselves.

The comprehensive exam requires students to choose **four lists** from the following categories. One category must be the Core list, and at least one category should be an HPT list.

- **Core List (required)**
- **HPT1: Ancient & medieval political thought**
- **HPT2: Early modern political thought**
- **HPT3: Late modern political thought**
- **Contemporary political theory**

The choice of categories (and lists, where relevant) will be made by the student in consultation with the supervisor. Students should contact the subfield coordinator for the list of texts in each category. Students should consult with the subfield coordinator at least six months before taking their exam.

In order to prepare for these examinations, 1) Students should normally take the proseminar in political theory. 2) Students are very strongly encouraged to attend or (if possible) TA for the courses in the undergraduate sequence in the history of political thought: POLI 333, ancient political thought POLI 334, medieval and Renaissance political thought POLI 433, early modern (17th and 18th century) political thought POLI 434, 19th and early-20th century Political thought as needed to fill in gaps in their preparation. Philosophy offers several similar courses which may be useful in the event of schedule conflicts. 3) Students should take at least three additional courses at the 500-level or above in political theory. 4) Students are encouraged to consult with the subfield coordinator about secondary texts, and additional primary texts, that could supplement or synthesize the works from the reading lists on which the student will be examined.