In spite of a remarkable increase in scholarly production over the last twenty years, the *Laws*, Plato’s last and longest dialogue, remains a relatively unfamiliar work. Thus, it is appropriate to navigate through the whole dialogue rather than to focus on some particular book(s). This does not mean sacrificing close reading of manageable textual units, on the contrary. For it so happens that, given the peculiar way in which the *Laws* is composed, which we will analyze, it makes sense to read the work anthologically, as Plato himself recommends to proceed in certain circumstances. The main passages we will consider are listed below (with additional references to other dialogues that we will consider). The headings for the six sessions are indicative and do not include all that will be discussed. Given that topics overlap in many passages, we will also have to talk, among other, about justice, goods and happiness, theology and religion.

The bibliography that follows is general. I shall provide more specifically related to each of the sessions before the spring break.

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**Week 1 : General introduction**

The place of the *Laws* in Plato's corpus. Doctrinal change vs change of perspective. General plan of the *Laws*. The reception of Plato's *Laws*: introduction to the Ancients/Moderns divide and to its actuality.

*Laws* 1. 624a1-650b10 (The aim of legislation)

*Laws* 8.809b1-812b3 (Anthological reading)

*Laws* 10. 890c6-891a; *Phaedrus* 274b6-278b6 (Writing)

**Week 2 : Second best and third cities**

*Laws* 5.739a-740a (City for gods, city for man. ‘Private’ property)

*Laws* 8.835c1-842a10 (Sexual relationships)

*Laws* 9.874e7-875d6 (Corruption by power)

*Politicus* 293e-302b (Law as second best)

*Republic* 5.472a8-473e3 (Possibility of the just city)

**Week 3 : Mixtures and means**

*Laws* 3.683c8-701e4 (History of Doric cities)

*Laws* 6.712b4-715a5 (Classification of constitutions)

*Laws* 6.772c2-774a3 (Mariage)

*Politicus* 305d5-311c (Political weaving)

*Philebus* 23c1-27c2 (Fourfold ontological division)

**Week 4 : Persuasion and obedience, threat and punishment**

*Laws* 4.718a6-723b2 and 9.857c1-e7 (Medecine and legislation 2 : the theory of preambles)

*Laws* 4.715e7-718a + 5.726a-737d5 (General preamble)

*Laws* 10.893b4-896d9 or 899d3 (Preamble to the law about atheism)

*Laws* 9. 860c4-864c9, esp. 863a7-864b7 (Voluntary and involuntary injustice)
Politicus 293a6-e9 (Medicine and legislation 1)

**Week 5 : Psychology**
- *Laws* 1.644d-645c; 7.803c2-8 (Puppets)
- *Laws* 3.689a-b (Soul and city)
- *Laws* 9.863a3-c12 (Injustice and damage)
- *Laws* 9.9.874e7-875d6 (Knowledge and power)
- *Laws* 10. 896e8-897b5 (cf. 896c5-d3) (Principle of movement)
- *Timaeus* 69c5-d6; 70a6-7;72d, 77b3-6 (Mortal kind of soul)
- *Philebus* 39a1- 40c6 (The painter in the soul)
- *Republic* 4.435b9-436b6; 6. 504a4-d8; 4.439c2-444a9
- *Republic* 8.554c11-d3; 9.571d6-572b1; 10. 603a1-2
- *Republic* 9.580d10-581a1
- *Republic* 10.608d2-612a6

**Week 6 : Plato on time and ‘history’**.
- *Laws* 3 (Origin of cities and history of Doric cities)
- *Laws* 4. 713a6-714b2 (Time of Cronos)
- *Politicus* 268d-274e (The myth)
- *Timaeus* 19b3-27c8 (+Critias)
- *(Republic 8-9)*

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**General bibliography.**

*Translations.*

We will use T. Griffith's translation:


*Commentaries*

The authoritative running commentary is in German:


England's older, classical commentary is still helpful:


*Greek Text*


*General studies*

The most comprehensive account in


Introductive studies, overviews, collections of articles.
Bobonich, Ch. (ed.), *A Critical Guide to Plato's Laws*, 2010
Bobonich, Ch., *Plato's Utopia Recast. His Later Ethics and Politics*, 2002
Horn, Ch. (ed.) *Platon. Nomoi*, 2011
Lisi, F. (ed.), *Plato's Laws and its Historical significance*, 2001