

POLS 4010: Political Philosophy to Machiavelli
Fall 2008
MWF 10:10-11:00, 305 Baldwin

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Office Hours: Tuesday, 9:00-11:00 or by appointment

I. The Scope and Purpose of the Course

This course is a survey of the history of Western political thought to Machiavelli. We will be reading works ranging from selections of Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, written nearly 3,000 years ago in Greece, to Machiavelli's *Prince*, written in 16th century Italy. The scope of the course is thus broad both chronologically and culturally, and our approach will be philosophical, literary, and historical. Given the immense scope of the literature and history from which to choose, as well as the focus on Western (i.e. European) political thought, many thinkers, texts, and traditions were left out, though they might have been included. The course will be organized into seven units: Unit 1: Classical Athens, Democracy, and the Problems of Persuasion; Unit 2: Socrates, Plato, and Athenian Democracy; Unit 3: Aristotle's Political Thought; Unit 4: Cicero and Roman Political Thought; Unit 5: Augustine's Political Thought; Unit 6: Machiavelli and Modernity; and Unit 7: Explorations.

II. Course Objectives

1. To read and analyze some of the most important western political and ethical theories and texts produced prior to the 16th century.
2. To examine and explore the relationship between the ideas and theories developed by different thinkers.
3. To explore the ways in which ideas articulated by previous figures and in prior historical periods can inform and enrich contemporary discussions.

III. Course Requirements

A. Papers

Participants in this course will write one medium length (6-8 pages) paper. This paper will be worth 25% of your course grade. Two sets of paper topics will be provided. Should you choose to write on the first set of topics, that paper will be due on October 6; should you choose to write on the second set of topics, that paper will be due on

December 5. Paper guidelines will be detailed on topic sheets that I will hand out before the papers are due.

There will be no extensions for paper assignments. Papers are to be handed *stapled in class* on the due date. Late papers will be assessed a ½ letter grade penalty if turned in after the class period on the day they are due; for each full day the paper is late, a full letter grade will be deducted. Please do not email me your paper; I will not grade it unless I receive a hard copy, and it will be counted as late if I do not.

B. Exams

In addition to the papers, there will be a midterm exam on October 10, worth 25% of your grade. The final exam will be worth 35% of your grade, and will be held Wednesday, Dec 17, 8:00 -11:00 am

There will be no make-up exams for this course. If you miss the midterm due to illness, family emergency, or religious observance, the grade you receive on the final will be counted as the grade on the midterm. You may not opt out of the midterm, and you may not take the final exam early.

C. Attendance, Participation and Pop Quizzes

Attendance and participation will be worth 15% of your course grade. A significant portion of this is *participation*. If I give pop quizzes, they will be factored into the participation grade.

D. Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All students at the University of Georgia agree to abide by the following code when they sign the admissions application: “I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others.” For more information, check the following link:

http://www.uga.edu/honesty/ahpd/culture_honesty.htm

III. Grading

This course will be graded on the following plus/minus grading scale.

A = 94-100 A- = 90-93 B+ = 87-89 B = 83-86 B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79 C = 73-76 C- = 70-72 D = 60-69 F = <60

IV. Required Texts

The following texts are required for the course. With the exception of Augustine’s *Political Writings*, you may use different versions if you wish. I have ordered the Hackett

versions when available for two reasons: they are good translations, and they are inexpensive.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, translated by Terrence Irwin. Hackett, 2000.

Aristotle, *Politics*, translated by C.D.C. Reeve. Hackett, 1998.

Plato, *Republic*, translated by C.D.C. Reeve. Hackett, 2004.

Augustine of Hippo, *Political Writings*, edited by Ernest Fortin and Douglas Kries. Hackett, 1994.

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated by David Wootton. Hackett, 1995.

Plato, *Gorgias*, translated by Donald Zeyl. Hackett, 1987.

M. Tullius Cicero, *On Duties*, edited and translated by M.T. Griffin. Cambridge University Press, 1991.

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations may occur. Any changes that occur will be reflected on the POLS 4 page on my website.

You are responsible for *reading* and *understanding* the syllabus and keeping track of any changes to the schedule reflected on my website.

Schedule of Lectures and Readings

August 18: Course Introduction; No Reading

Classical Athenian Democracy, Rhetoric, and Philosophy

August 20: Plato, *Gorgias*

August 22: Plato, *Gorgias*

August 25: Plato, *Gorgias*

August 27: Plato, *Gorgias*

August 29: No class

September 1: No class; Labor Day

September 3: Plato, *Gorgias*; Thucydides

Socrates and Athenian Democracy

September 5: Plato, *Apology* (to be available in PDF format at my website)

September 8: Plato, *Apology*, cont'd

September 10: Plato, *Crito* (to be available in PDF format at my website)

Plato's *Republic*

September 12: Plato, *Republic*

September 15: Plato, *Republic*

September 17: Plato, *Republic*

September 19: Plato, *Republic*

September 22: Plato, *Republic*

September 24: Plato, *Republic*

September 26: Plato, *Republic*

September 29: Plato, *Republic*

October 1: Plato, *Republic*

October 3: No Class

October 6: Plato, *Republic*; **First Paper Due Date**

October 8: Review

October 10: **Midterm**

Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics*

October 13: Aristotle, *Ethics*

October 15: Aristotle, *Ethics*

October 17: Aristotle, *Ethics*

October 20: Aristotle, *Ethics*

October 22: Aristotle, *Politics*

October 24: Aristotle, *Politics*

October 27: Aristotle, *Politics*

October 29: Aristotle, *Politics*

October 31: No class; Fall Break

November 3: Aristotle, *Politics*

Cicero and Roman Political Thought

November 5: Cicero, *On Duties*

November 7: Cicero, *On Duties*

November 10: Cicero, *On Duties*

November 12: Cicero, *On Duties*

Augustine's Political Thought

November 14: Augustine, *City of God*

November 17: Augustine, *City of God*

November 19: Augustine, *City of God*

November 21: Augustine, *City of God*

November 24, 26, 28: Thanksgiving

Machiavelli's *Prince*

December 1: Machiavelli, *Prince*

December 3: Machiavelli, *Prince*

December 5: Machiavelli, *Prince*; **Second Paper Due Date**

December 8: Machiavelli, *Prince*

December 9: "The Tuesday that is a Friday"; Course Conclusion, Review

Final Exam: Wednesday, Dec 17, 8:00 - 11:00 am