

POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY: WHAT IT IS, HOW IT COMES ABOUT, AND WHY IT MATTERS

This is a survey course on the history of political philosophy: ancient, medieval, and modern. The subject will be approached by reading only primary sources, namely, excellent books written by philosophers representing the period in question (400 BCE -1860 CE). Since it is impossible to read and discuss intelligently more than about 10 works in a semester, the reading list will be limited accordingly. The goal will be to understand each author, to search how authors talk to one another across time, and to investigate what these authors have to tell us about how we should live as responsible human beings and citizens.

Classes will be conducted in a seminar style with discussion being the primary mode of instruction. Guiding such discussions will be the assumption that the authors studied know what they are talking about and have something to teach us if we are willing to learn.

It will be necessary to read before coming to class, to attend every class, and to be on time.

Requirements: Evaluation for credit will be based on five very short analyses (500-750 words or 2-3 double-spaced pages) plus intelligent classroom participation. The very short analyses are to be written on the following authors and are due as noted:

Plato, due Sep 17

Aristotle, due Oct 26

Alfarabi or Machiavelli, due Nov 16

Locke or Rousseau, due Dec 3

Burke or Lincoln, due Dec 15

In this course, grades are assessed on an absolute (that is, no curve) scale according to which 60-69 = D, 70-79 = C, 80-89 = B, and 90+ = A. The very short analyses count for 90% of the grade, and intelligent participation in class for another 10%. Note that more than 3 absences will result in a failing grade.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of office hours to make contact with the course instructor. In addition to posted hours, the instructor will make special appointments.

For the record:

1. The UMD Code of Academic Integrity will be enforced. In short, no cheating.
2. Students with documented disabilities should see the instructor. Their needs will be accommodated.
3. The UMD policy of respecting the religious observances of students or their participation in university activities will be followed. Students must inform the instructor of these absences by September 13, 2004.
4. To be excused for absence in case of illness or other compelling circumstances, students must provide, in writing, documentation of the reason for the absence upon returning to class.
5. Late papers will receive a deduction of 1/3 letter grade per day after due date (e.g., from A to A-). No papers will be accepted after seven days from the due date.

READING SCHEDULE

- SESSION 1: Aug. 30 – INTRODUCTION
- SESSION 2: Sep. 1 – Thucydides, **The Peloponnesian Wars**, 2:35-46, Pericles' Funeral Oration

NOTE WELL! NO CLASS ON SEP 6, LABOR DAY!

- SESSION 3: Sep 8 – Plato, *Menexenus*
- SESSIONS 4-5: Sep. 13 & 15 – Plato, *Apology*

NOTE WELL! VERY SHORT ANALYSIS ON PLATO DUE SEP 17 WITHOUT FAIL!

- SESSIONS 6-7: Sep. 20 & 22 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books 1 and 2
- SESSIONS 8-9: Sep. 27 & 29 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books 3 and 4
- SESSIONS 10-12: Oct. 4, 6, & 11 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books 5 and 6
- SESSION 13: Oct. 13 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 7
- SESSIONS 14-15: Oct 18 & 20 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Books 8 and 9
- SESSION 16: Oct 25 – Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 10

NOTE WELL! VERY SHORT ANALYSIS ON ARISTOTLE DUE OCT 26 WITHOUT FAIL!

- SESSION 17: Oct 27 – Alfarabi, *Enumeration of the Sciences*, Chapter Five
- SESSIONS 18-19: Nov 1 & 3 – Alfarabi, *Book of Religion*
- SESSION 20-22 Nov 8, 10, & 15 – Niccolò Machiavelli, **The Prince**

NOTE WELL! VERY SHORT ANALYSIS ON ALFARABI OR MACHIAVELLI DUE NOV 16 WITHOUT FAIL!

- SESSIONS 23-24: Nov. 17 & 22 – John Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration*

NOTE WELL! NO CLASS ON NOVEMBER 24, THANKSGIVING VACATION!

- SESSIONS 25-26: Nov 29 & Dec 1 – Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *First Discourse*

NOTE WELL! VERY SHORT ANALYSIS ON LOCKE OR ROUSSEAU DUE DEC 3 WITHOUT FAIL!

- SESSION 27: Dec. 6 – Edmund Burke, Conciliation with the Colonies Speech
- SESSION 28: Dec 8 – Abraham Lincoln, Cooper Union Speech

NOTE WELL! VERY SHORT ANALYSIS ON BURKE OR LINCOLN DUE DEC 15 WITHOUT FAIL!

BOOKS TO ORDER

Required

Plato's Menexenus and Pericles' Funeral Oration, Empire and the Ends of Politics, trans., intro., and notes Susan Collins and Devin Stauffer (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 1999), ISBN: 0-941051-70-6 (paper), \$6.95.

Plato and Aristophanes, *Four Texts on Socrates*, trans. Thomas G. West and Grace Starry West (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1984), ISBN: 0-8014-85746 (paper), \$8.50.

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Joe Sachs (Newburyport, MA: Focus Publishing, 2002), ISBN 1-58510-035-8 (paper), \$14.95.

Alfarabi, The Political Writings: "Selected Aphorisms" and Other Texts, trans. Charles E. Butterworth (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2004) ISBN 0-8014-8913-X, (paper) \$14.95.

John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. James H. Tully (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1990), ISBN 0-915145-60-X (paper), \$4.95.

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince*, trans. Harvey Mansfield (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), ISBN: 0226500446 (paper), \$8.00.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *The First and Second Discourses*, trans. Roger and Judith Masters (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1964), ISBN 0-312-69440-7 (paper), \$13.50.

Edmund Burke, Conciliation with the Colonies,

<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch1s2.html>

Abraham Lincoln, Cooper Union Speech:

<http://www.historicaldocuments.com/AbrahamLincoln'sCooperUnionAddress.htm>

Total cost: \$71.80

Recommended:

Plato's Dialogue on Friendship: An Interpretation of the Lysis, trans. David Bolotin (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1989), ISBN: 0-801495-61-X (paper), \$19.95.

Required plus Recommended: \$91.75