

GVPT 241
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SPRING, 2006
Office hours: 5:00-6:30 Mon & Wed
Tydings 1149, tel. 301 405 4110

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 inquire how they talk to one another across the ages, and to investigate what each one has to tell us about how we should live as responsible human beings and citizens.

Classes will be conducted according to two formats, lecture plus small discussion. Guiding both the lectures and the discussion sessions 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.

For success in this course, it will be necessary to read the assigned reading before coming to class, to attend every class, and to be on time for class.

Requirements: Evaluation for credit will be based on three very short essays (750-1000 words or 3-4 double-spaced pages), two essay type in-class examinations, and intelligent participation in the discussion sections.

The very short essays are to provide an answer to a question that will be given in lecture on the Monday before the essay is due, and the essay must be handed in at the start of discussion section on the day noted on February 17, April 7, and April 28. Late papers will receive a deduction of 1/3 letter grade per day after due date (e.g., from A to A-). No paper will be accepted seven days after the due date.

The first in-class examination will be on March 10, and the second – a final examination – will be on May 16, 1:30-3:30 (University schedule).

Grades are assessed as follows: 60-69 = D, 70-79 = C, 80-89 = B, and 90+ = A. The essays and examinations count for 90% of the grade and intelligent participation in class for another 10%. More than 3 un-excused absences will result in a failing grade.

Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of office hours to make contact with the course instructor and TAs. In addition to posted hours, the instructor and TAs 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 February 13, 2006.
4. To be excused for absence due to illness or other compelling circumstance, provide written documentation of the reason for the absence upon returning to class.

READING SCHEDULE

CLASS 1, Jan 25	INTRODUCTION
CLASS 2 & 3, Jan 30 & Feb 1	Aeschylus, <i>Agamemnon</i>
CLASS 4 & 5, Feb 6 & 8	Plato, <i>Euthyphro</i>
CLASS 6 & 7, Feb 13 & 15*	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book 1
CLASS 8, Feb 20*	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book 5
CLASS 9, Feb 22*	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book 10
CLASS 10 & 11, Feb 27 & Mar 1	Alfarabi, <i>Book of Letters</i> , Part Two
CLASS 12 & 13, Mar 6 & 8	Maimonides, <i>Eight Chapters</i>
CLASS 14, Mar 13	Thomas Hobbes, <i>The Citizen</i> , Epistle Dedicatory & Preface
CLASS 15, Mar 15	Thomas Hobbes, <i>The Citizen</i> , I-IV, Of Liberty

SPRING BREAK!! NO CLASS

CLASS 16, Mar 27	Thomas Hobbes, <i>The Citizen</i> , V-IX, Of Dominion
CLASS 17, Mar 29	Thomas Hobbes, <i>The Citizen</i> , X-XII, Of Dominion
CLASS 18, Apr 3	Thomas Hobbes, <i>The Citizen</i> , XII-XIV, Of Dominion
CLASS 19, Apr 5	Thomas Hobbes, <i>The Citizen</i> , XV-XVIII, Of Religion
CLASS 20-21, Apr 10 & 12	Jean-Jacques Rousseau, <i>Letter to D'Alembert</i> Recommended: Molière, <i>The Misanthrope</i>
CLASS 22, Apr 17	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>The Genealogy of Morals</i> , Preface
CLASS 23, Apr 19	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>The Genealogy of Morals</i> , Essay I
CLASS 24, Apr 24	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>The Genealogy of Morals</i> , Essay II
CLASS 25, Apr 26	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>The Genealogy of Morals</i> , Essay III
CLASS 26, May 1	Friedrich Nietzsche, <i>The Genealogy of Morals</i> , Overview
CLASS 27, May 3	Martin Heidegger, <i>What is Philosophy?</i>
CLASS 28, May 8	Leo Strauss, "Liberal Education and Responsibility" Recommended: "What is Liberal Education?"
CLASS 29, May 10	CONCLUSION

Books to Order

Aeschylus *The Oresteia*, intro and trans David Grene, Wendy Doniger O'Flaherty, and Nicholas Rudall (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), ISBN 0-226-00772-3. Paper \$15.00.

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

Maimonides, *Eight Chapters in Ethical Writings of Maimonides*, ed. Raymond L. Weiss with Charles Butterworth (New York: Dover, 1983). ISBN 0-486-24522-5. Paper \$11.95.

Thomas Hobbes, *Man and Citizen (De Homine and De Cive)*, ed. Bernard Gert (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 1991). ISBN 0-87220-111-2. Paper \$12.95.

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Politics and the Arts: Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre*, trans. and intro. Allan Bloom (Agora Editions; Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1968). ISBN: 0-8014-9071-5. Paper \$14.50.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals*, trans. Francis Golffing (New York: Anchor Doubleday) ISBN 0-385-09210-5. A81. Paper \$9.95.

Martin Heidegger, *What is Philosophy?*

Available as xerox or pdf file

Plato, *Euthyphro*

www.perseus.tufts.edu

Molière, *The Misanthrope*

<http://www.bibliomania.com/0/6/4/1967/26182/1/frameset.html>

Note: click the "next page" link rather than the "next chapter" link to proceed through the text.

Alfarabi, *Book of Letters*, Part Two

Leo Strauss, "What is Liberal Education?" and "Liberal Education and Responsibility," in *An Introduction to Political Philosophy: Ten Essays by Leo Strauss*, ed. with an introduction, Hilail Gildin (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989), pp. 311-345. ISBN 0-8143-1901-7.

<http://www.ditext.com/strauss/liberal.html>

Note: the paragraphing is not consonant with the printed text. This needs to be corrected.

Martin Heidegger, *The Self-Assertion of the German University, The Rectorate 1933/34: Facts and Thoughts*, trans., with an Introduction, by Karsten Harries, *Review of Metaphysics* 38 (March, 1985), 467-480 and 481-502. (Recommended).

Alternatives

Aeschylus, *Agamemnon in Oresteia*, trans. with notes, Peter Meineck, intro Helene P. Foley (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 1998), ISBN 0-87220-390-5. Paper \$9.95.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals/Ecce Homo*, trans. R.J. Hollingdale & Walter Kaufmann (New York: Random House, 1989). ISBN: 0-679-72462-1. Paper \$12.95.

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality and Other Writings*, ed and trans. Keith Ansell-Pearson and Carol Diethe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). ISBN 0-52140-6102. Paper \$14.00.