POLITICAL SCIENCE 2060: INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY

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Office Hours: MW 12:30-1:30; TH 12:00-1:00 and by appointment

COURSE OVERVIEW
Political philosophy is the study of the nature of man and the nature of political human society. It seeks to answer fundamental questions, many of which cannot be answered with absolute certainty. In spite of this, the pursuit of knowledge is valuable and necessary for political development and progress. One of the primary issues for political philosophy is the relation of man to the divine. What is man? What is the Divine? How do man and the Divine interact? What is the relationship between revelation and reason? What is the relationship between thought and action? The answers to these questions determine the ways in which man acts in the realm of political reality. Thus, the purpose of this course is to introduce the students to political theory, from ancient Greece to modern Europe, by investigating various theories of human nature and the political consequences arising from these theories.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENT
This course can be applied towards completion of the General Education requirement for courses in the Social Sciences. As such, we will incorporate the learning goals of general education courses in the social sciences. LSU describes these goals as such:

The social sciences inquire systematically into the nature of human association, the bonds and interactions among human beings. The goal of the general education requirement in the social sciences is to introduce students to this systematic inquiry, so that they better appreciate the complexity of the social world and act as free and responsible citizens, able to make informed choices in governing their own lives and participating in their communities. As there is a diversity of associations – both in that everyone associates with others in various ways (for example, as members of families and as citizens of states), and that these associations take a variety of forms (for example, the different forms of government) – so there is a diversity of method and approach to the study of human society.

I encourage all students to keep these goals in mind throughout the course. Many of these thoughts form the basis for the study of political philosophy, and they are essential to a well-rounded education.

GRADES
Class participation: 10%
Response Papers: 20%
Midterm Exam: 35%
Final Exam: 35%
ASSIGNMENTS
Class Participation: Active involvement in the course is essential to learning, as well as a good grade. Students are expected to come to class prepared to contribute to the discussion of the day's topic. Students will be required to submit one discussion question per week via e-mail. These questions can result from the previous class meeting or from the readings for the next class. They will serve as the basis for our class discussions. Students are encouraged to submit more than one question per week, as this will not harm the participation grade.

Response Papers: Each week students will be required to write a brief response to any of the reading assignments. Papers should be no less than half a page and should not exceed one page in length. Students can turn in a response any day of the week. However, responding to a reading after it has been discussed in class is not allowed. For the first two weeks, prompts for response papers will be provided for guidance. Students are encouraged to speak with me about their responses throughout the semester.

Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will be a take home essay exam to be distributed prior to midterm exam week. Students will write on two questions; however, they will have a choice between four questions. Students are expected to use proper grammar and spelling in their answers.

Final Exam: The final exam will be comprehensive and will be taken in class without notes. Students will be required to write on two questions, one required, one from a list of choices.

REQUIRED TEXTS
The following books are required and may be purchased at the LSU bookstore:
Aeschylus I, translated by Richmond Lattimore, Chicago
The Dialogues of Plato Volume 1, translated by R.E. Allen, Yale
Aristotle, The Nicomachean Ethics, translated by Martin Ostwald, Library of Liberal Arts
The Federalist Papers, edited by Clinton Rossiter, Signet Classic
Basic Writings of Nietzsche, translated by Walter Kaufmann, Modern Library Classics

READINGS
***Readings not included in the required texts (indicated by an *) will be available on Moodle. Students can read these online or print a paper copy. It is recommended that the readings be printed, as this will be helpful for class and as a reference when studying for exams.***

Week 1
January 12: Course Introduction;
January 14: Aeschylus, Agamemnon pp. 35-58
January 16: Aeschylus, Agamemnon pp. 59-90

Week 2
January 19: Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday
January 21: Aeschylus, The Libation Bearers pp. 93-131
January 23: Aeschylus, The Eumenides pp. 135-171

Week 3
January 26-28: Plato, The Apology
January 30: Plato, The Crito

Week 4
February 2-6: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

**Week 5**

February 9-13: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*

**Week 6**

February 16: Pass out midterm exam; *Old Testament, Genesis, chapters 1-22*


February 20: *Old Testament, Exodus, chapter 32; Deuteronomy, chapters 4-17 and 27-30; I Samuel, chapter 8*

**Week 7**

February 23-25: Mardi Gras holiday

February 27: Review for Midterm Exam

**Week 8**

March 2: Midterm Exam due


**Week 9**

March 9: *Al-Farabi, Directing Attention to the Way to Happiness*

March 11-13: *Al-Farabi, On the Perfect State, ch.15*

**Week 10**

March 16-18: *Ibn Rushd, The Decisive Treatise*

March 20: *Ibn Tufayl, Hayy Ibn Yaqzan*

**Week 11**


March 27: *Maimonides, The Guide of the Perplexed, Part III ch.27, 51-54*

**Week 12**

March 30-April 3: Machiavelli, *The Prince*

**Week 13**

April 6-10: Spring Break

**Week 14**

April 13-15: Machiavelli, *The Prince*

April 17: Class cancelled

**Week 15**

April 20: *The Federalist Papers 1, 2, 6, and 9*

April 22: *The Federalist Papers 10, 14, and 35*

April 24: *The Federalist Papers 51, 72, and 85*

**Week 16**

April 27-May 1: Nietzsche, Readings TBA

**Final**

A review for the Final Exam will be held prior to May 7 at a time to be announced.

May 7: Final Exam, 5:30-7:30