

**Political Science 2060**  
**Introduction to Political Theory**  
**Fall 2017**

Professor: John Boersma  
Office: 332 Stubbs Hall  
Class Time: MWF 1:30 – 2:20  
Office Hours: MW 2:30 – 3:30 and by appointment  
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**I. Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce you to the recurring questions and themes of political philosophy. The goal is to explore the theoretical bases of major ideas that have contributed to our current understanding of politics. Particular attention will be paid to the following themes: What is the role of virtue and justice in political life? What is one's purpose in life? How ought one live (Plato and Aristotle)? What is the relationship between the political life and the divine (Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas)? What is sovereignty (Augustine, Aquinas and Machiavelli)? What role do consent and liberty play in politics (Locke and Mill)? How do we maintain the political realm (Burke, De Tocqueville and C.S. Lewis)? Above all, the course will explore the nature of the Good, the True, and the Beautiful, and their relation to political life.

*"LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference."*

**II. Required Texts:**

The following books are available for purchase at the LSU Bookstore and on various sites online. You **must** obtain a copy of these books. Please pay particular attention to the assigned *edition*.

Thomas R. West & Grace Starry West, trans., *Four Texts on Socrates* (Cornell)  
[ISBN 9780801485749]

Robert C. Bartlett, trans., *Plato's Protagoras and Meno* (Cornell)  
[ISBN 9780801488658]

Robert C. Bartlett & Susan D. Collins, trans., *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Chicago)  
[ISBN 9780226026756]

Dino Bigongiari, ed., *The Political Ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Free Press)

[ISBN 9780684836416]

Harvey Mansfield, trans., *The Prince* (Chicago)

[ISBN 978-0226500447]

C.B. Macpherson, ed., *Locke's Second Treatise* (Hackett Classics)

[ISBN 978-0915144860]

J.G.A. Pocock, ed., *Edmund Burke: Reflections on the Revolution in France* (Hackett Classics)

[ISBN 978-0872200203]

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (Dover Publications)

[ISBN 978-0486421308]

C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man* (HarperOne)

[978-0060652944]

### III. Class Room Etiquette:

When evening comes, I return home and go into my study. On the threshold I strip off my muddy, sweaty workday clothes, and put on the robes of court and palace, and in this graver dress I enter the antique courts of the ancients and am welcomed by them. . . . Then I make bold to speak to them and ask the motives for their actions and they, in their humanity, reply to me. And for the space of four hours I forget the world, remember no vexations, fear poverty no more, tremble no more at death: I pass into their world.

- Machiavelli, *Letter to Francesco Vetorri*

### IV. Policies:

**Attendance** – Attendance in class, both physical and mental, is the *sine qua non* of learning. In order to receive a passing grade, students must attend class.

**Cheating** – Students guilty of cheating on exams or plagiarizing their work will be brought to the attention of the dean for disciplinary action. To avoid plagiarism, please make sure to cite your sources accurately and appropriately. Direct quotes must be put into quotation marks. When paraphrasing, the pages being referenced must be cited in a footnote. Please familiarize yourself with the latest volume of the Chicago Manual Book of style, which is available at the Middleton Library's Reference Desk.

**Electronics** – Please do not use your phone in class. Laptops may be used solely for the purpose of taking notes.

## V. Assignments

**Preparation, attendance and participation:** It is critical that prior to each class you undertake a “ruminative reading” of the assigned text. Arriving to class with the text, questions, comments, and notes to facilitate our discussion of the reading is vital for your own education and that of your peers.

**Quizzes:** In order to encourage attendance and participation there will be a daily quiz consisting of questions covering the day’s assigned readings.

**Tests:** This course will have two tests and a cumulative final exam that will cover the substance of our class discussions and readings.

**Paper:** A research paper will be assigned near the middle of the semester. Paper prompts will be provided on the moodle website. Please feel free to consult with me about any aspect of your paper. Due dates for the paper will be as follows:

Paper Assigned – October 30<sup>th</sup>

Paper Due – November 27<sup>th</sup>

## VI. Evaluation

Daily Quizzes – based on the readings:	20%
Paper	20%
In-Class Test One	15 %
In-Class Test Two	15 %
Final	30%

## VII. Grading Scale

<b>A+: 97-100</b>	<b>A: 93-96</b>	<b>A-: 90-92</b>
<b>B+: 87-89</b>	<b>B: 83-86</b>	<b>B-: 80-82</b>
<b>C+: 77-79</b>	<b>C: 73-76</b>	<b>C-: 70-72</b>
<b>D+: 67-69</b>	<b>D: 63-66</b>	<b>D-: 60-62</b>
<b>F: 59&gt;below</b>		

## VIII. Format

### Opinion and Knowledge

- August 21 – Introduction to the Course  
Syllabus; Political Philosophy and History
- August 23 – What is Political Philosophy?  
Read: Leo Strauss, “What is Political Philosophy” pg. 343 - 355 (on *Moodle*)
- August 25 – Plato’s *Euthyphro*  
Read: Euthyphro – Entire Dialogue
- August 28 – Plato’s *Euthyphro/Apology*  
Read: Apology – Entire Dialogue
- August 30 – Plato’s *Apology*  
Read: Apology – Review Dialogue
- Sept. 1 – Plato’s *Apology/Crito*  
Read: Crito – Entire Dialogue
- Sept. 4 – NO CLASS → Labor Day

### Virtue

- Sept. 6 – Plato’s *Protagoras*  
Read: Protagoras – 309a – 339a
- Sept. 8 – Plato’s *Protagoras*  
Read: Protagoras – 339a – 362a4
- Sept. 11 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book I
- Sept. 13 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book II
- Sept. 15 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book III
- Sept. 18 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book IV
- Sept. 20 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book V
- Sept. 22 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book VI

- Sept. 25 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book VII
- Sept. 27 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book VIII
- Sept. 29 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book IX
- October 2 – Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*  
Read: Book X
- October 4 – **TEST ONE**

### Early Christian/Medieval Thought

- October 6 – Greek and Christian Thought  
Read: Tertullian – “Prescription Against Heretics” (*On Moodle*)  
Read: St. Basil the Great – “Address to Young Men on the Right Use of Greek Literature” (*On Moodle*)
- October 9 – Augustine’s Two Cities  
Read: Pope Gelasius I – “Famuli Vestrae Pietatis” (*On Moodle*)  
Read: Augustine’s City of God, Part 1 (*On Moodle*)
- October 11 – Augustine’s Two Cities  
Read: Augustine’s City of God, Part 2 (*On Moodle*)
- October 13 – Thomas Aquinas On Law  
Read: *The Political Ideas of Thomas Aquinas*:  
Question 90, art. 1 – 4 (p. 3 – 10)  
Question 91, art. 1 – 4 (p. 11 – 18)  
Question 93, art 1 – 2 (p. 29 – 33)  
Question 94, art. 1 – 6 (p. 42 – 54)  
Question 95, art 1 – 2 (p. 55 – 59)

October 16 – Thomas Aquinas On Law  
Read: *The Political Ideas of Thomas Aquinas*:  
Questions 96; 97; 104

October 18 – Aquinas on Regime Type  
Read: Thomas Aquinas – Political Writings:  
Question 95 art. 4  
Question 105 art. 1  
On Kingship

October 20 – NO CLASS → Reading Break

### **New Modes and Orders**

October 23 – Machiavelli's *Prince*  
Read: Ch. Epistle Dedicatory – Ch. 8

October 25 – Machiavelli's *Prince*  
Read: Ch. 9 – 17

October 27 – Machiavelli's *Prince*  
Read: Ch. 18 – 26

October 30 – Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*  
Read: The Leviathan: Ch. 13-14; 17-18  
- **Final Paper Assigned**

November 1 – Thomas Hobbes's *Leviathan*  
Read: The Leviathan: Ch. 21; 29

### **Liberalism and It's Limits**

November 3 – John Locke's *Second Treatise*  
Read: Ch. 1 – 5

November 6 – John Locke's *Second Treatise*  
Read: Ch. 7 – 12

November 8 – John Locke's *Second Treatise*  
Read: Ch. 13 – 19

November 10 – **TEST TWO**

November 13 – Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*  
Read: pg. 8 – 35

November 15 – Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France*  
Read: "Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen" (*On Moodle*)  
Read: 43–56; 67–70; 73–78

November 17 – J.S. Mill's *On Liberty*  
Read: Ch. 1 (Introductory Chapter)

November 20 – J.S. Mill's *On Liberty*  
Read: Ch. 2

November 22 – NO CLASS – Thanksgiving

November 24 – NO CLASS– Thanksgiving

November 27 – Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*  
Read: Part 1 (*On Moodle*)  
- **Final Paper Due**

November 29 – Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*  
Read: Part 2 (*On Moodle*)

December 1 – C.S. Lewis's *Abolition of Man*  
Read: Entire Book

December 9 (Saturday) @ 3:00-5:00pm –  
**CUMULATIVE FINAL**