

## Early Political & Social Thought

Humanities 203, Sect. 2

Professor: Frank Lovett

Fall 2011  
Tuesday/Thursday  
1:00 – 2:30 p.m.  
Ridgley 107

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Office Hours: Seigle 282  
Tuesdays, 9:30 – 11:30 am

This course offers a critical survey of the main issues and debates in western political and moral thought from the time of the ancient Greeks through the Renaissance, reading such authors as Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Machiavelli, and discussing topics such as justice, virtue, liberty, democracy, and natural law. Students will be introduced to the basic texts in the intellectual history of Western Europe, which will be studied both as products of a particular time and place and as self-contained arguments that strive to instruct and persuade.

### Requirements

This course is designed to develop skills in the close and careful reading of difficult texts, and in critical reflection and argumentation with respect to political and moral ideas. Accordingly, the two main components of the course will be interactive class discussion, and guided paper writing. Specific requirements are as follows:

1. **Readings.** All the readings listed below are required; the reading load averages about 100 pages per week, adjusted somewhat according to the difficulty of the text. Since class discussion will concentrate on these readings, always bring the book we are reading with you to class.
2. **Attendance and participation.** As a seminar course, regular and active participation is a must, and will count for 30% of your overall grade. Attendance is required. Legitimate grounds for absence are: (a) religious holidays, *if* you inform me in advance; and (b) medical emergency, *if* subsequently demonstrated. In order to receive full credit for attendance, you must be on time.
3. **Three (3) papers, 4–5 pages each.** These three papers will together count for 50% of your overall grade. Paper topics will be provided in advance, along with detailed instructions regarding grading, turning in late papers, and so on. Each paper assignment will be a guided process with several steps, designed to cultivate skills in developing and presenting an argument.
4. **Final exam,** in class on December 8th. This exam will count for 20% of your overall grade. No makeup exams will be offered, barring demonstrable emergencies.

## Course Materials

For this course you will need all the following books, which are available for purchase at the Campus Bookstore:

Aquinas, *On Politics and Ethics* (Norton)  
Aristotle, *Politics* (Hackett)  
Augustine, *City of God* (Penguin)  
Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier* (Penguin)  
Cicero, *The Republic and The Laws* (Oxford)  
Dante, *Monarchy* (Cambridge)  
Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings* (Hackett)  
Plato, *Republic* (Cambridge)  
Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (Penguin)

There are many good editions of all these books, and if you happen to own some already, do not feel obligated to buy these particular editions. However, you may find it easier during class discussion if you have the same edition as your classmates!

Additional readings will be made available online at ARES through the library website (the course password is 'LovettF11').

## Schedule of Readings and Assignments

August 30            Introduction (no assignment)

### I. THE EXPERIENCE OF THE POLIS

September 1        Thucydides, *History*, bk. I: §§ 1, 20–23, 31–45, 56–88, 139–146;  
                              bk. II: §§ 8–14  
                              Plutarch, “Life of Lycurgus” (online)

September 6        Thucydides, *History*, bk. II: §§ 18–23, 34–65; bk. III: §§ 1–19,  
                              25–28, 36–85; bk. V: §§ 13–26

September 8        Thucydides, *History*, bk. V: §§ 84–116; bk. VI: §§ 1, 8–32, 42–52,  
                              60–61, 72–93; bk. VII: §§ 1–18, 42–55, 59–87

September 13      Plato, *Republic*, bks. 1–2

September 15      Plato, *Republic*, bks. 3–4

September 20      Plato, *Republic*, bks. 5–6

- September 22 Plato, *Republic*, bks. 7–8
- September 23 **First Paper Due** (12:00 noon)
- September 27 Plato, *Republic*, bks. 9–10
- September 29 Aristotle, *Politics*, bk. I: chs. 1–2; *Ethics*, selections (online)
- October 4 Aristotle, *Politics*, bk. I: chs. 3–7, 12–13; bk. II: chs. 1–5; bk. III: chs. 1, 4–5, 10–11; bk. VII: chs. 2–4, 14
- October 6 Aristotle, *Politics*, bk. III: chs. 6–7; bk. IV: chs. 1–14; bk. V: chs. 1–4, 8–9

## II. INDIVIDUAL AND EMPIRE

- October 11 Hellenistic Philosophy I: Science and Knowledge (all online)  
 Diogenes Laertius, “Life of Pyrrho”  
 Sextus Empiricus, “General Principles”  
 Epicurus, “Letter to Herodotus” and “Principal Doctrines”  
 Diogenes Laertius on Stoic “Physics” and “Logic”
- October 13 Hellenistic Philosophy II: Ethics and Politics (all online)  
 Epicurus, “Letter to Menoecus”  
 Diogenes Laertius on Stoic “Ethics”  
 Aulus Gellius and Cicero on “Fate”  
 Epictetus, “The Handbook”  
 Seneca, “On the Private Life”
- October 18 Polybius, *Rise of the Roman Empire* (online)  
 Cicero, “The Republic,” bk. II: §§ 1–24, 45–63
- October 20 Cicero, “The Republic,” bk. I: §§ 1–15, 30–70; bk. II: §§ 65–66, 69–70; bk. III: §§ 8–47
- October 21 **Second Paper Due** (at 12:00 noon)
- October 25 Augustine, *City of God*, bk. I: preface, chs. 1–15, 29–36; bk. II: chs. 20–22; bk. III: chs. 1, 9–14, 30–31; bk. IV: chs. 1–7, 33–34
- October 27 Augustine, *City of God*, bk. V: preface, chs. 1, 8–19, 24; bk. VIII: chs. 4–13; bk. XI: chs. 1–8; bk. XII: chs. 1–9, 28
- November 1 Augustine, *City of God*, bk. XIV: chs. 1–6, 11–18, 21–28; bk. XV: chs. 1–2, 4–5; bk. XIX: chs. 1–7, 12–21, 24–28; bk. XXII: ch. 30

### III. THE DEVELOPMENT OF LAW AND STATE

- November 3 Aquinas, *On Politics and Ethics*, pp. 3–13, 30–37, 61–64  
Averroes, “The Decisive Treatise ...” (online)
- November 8 Aquinas, *On Politics and Ethics*, pp. 37–60, 64–83
- November 10 Aquinas, *On Politics and Ethics*, pp. 14–29  
Dante, *Monarchy*, bk. I: chs. i–xvi
- November 15 Dante, *Monarchy*, bk. III: chs. i–iv, viii–x, xiii–xvi  
Marsilius, *Defender of the Peace*, selections (online)
- November 17 Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*, pp. 39–64, 87–101, 281–289,  
296–300, 306–315
- November 18 **Third Paper Due** (12:00 noon)
- November 22–24 No class (Thanksgiving)
- November 29 Machiavelli, “The Prince,” dedication, chs. 1–3, 5–9, 12–13, 15–19,  
21–26
- December 1 Machiavelli, “The Discourses,” bk. I: preface, chs. 1–6, 9, 16–18, 27,  
34, 55, 58; bk. II: chs. 1–2; bk. III: ch. 9
- December 6 Final course review
- December 8 **Final Exam** (in class)