

## **Ancient and Medieval Political Theory**

Political Science 450, Fall 2021

Instructor: Jeffrey A. Bell, Ph.D.

Time: 8-9:15am TuTh, in Fayard 239

Office Hours: 9:30-11:00am, 12:30-2:00pm, MW, or by appointment

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### **Required Reading:**

Plato, *Apology* (online)

Plato, *Crito* (online)

Aristotle, *The Politics*

Cicero, *On Duties* (online)

Seneca, "On Anger," "On Favours" (online)

Aquinas, *Political Ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas* (online)

Machiavelli, *Portable Machiavelli*

### **Course Objectives**

This course will examine many of the key political theories of the western intellectual tradition from ancient through medieval times, ending with Machiavelli. We will discuss these theories in class and relate them to contemporary political issues, in particular the role of the public and its relationship to forms of governance.

### **Course Requirements**

There will be one midterm exam (20%), a final (30%), and two written assignments (25% each). The first written assignment is to be 4 pages long (1000 words, no less). This paper is to discuss any of the case studies that are linked from the course web page and relate this particular case to one of the philosophical arguments discussed in class. The second written assignment (1500 words) is to be on a topic of your choosing that is relevant to the course. You may also elect to write one 2500-word essay on a topic of your choice. This paper will be worth 50% of your grade. In the 1500-word and 2500-word paper **you must make notable reference to course readings**, meaning **you must cite from the course texts**. You must also make sure that the research paper is a research paper and utilizes an outside source—a text not required for this course—to a significant degree. Papers that do not do this will not be accepted. Note the requirements at the [paper requirements](#) link for this course at the course website. I strongly recommend that you pre-approve your topics. If you use a computer word processing program, keep a copy of your work on a backup disk and back up your files regularly. Loss of a computer file will not be accepted as an excuse for not turning in work on time. The two exams will have a section of short answer questions and essay questions. I will hand out a study sheet one or two weeks prior to each exam. Exams will be closely monitored and written

assignments will be checked for plagiarism. It is your responsibility to know what plagiarism is and to avoid it. Anyone caught cheating or turning in plagiarized work will fail the course and will be reported to appropriate university officials.

### **Attendance Requirements**

Class participation is an integral part of the course. Failure to attend class regularly will harm your final grade. **Note: the readings will be supplemented with lectures, and material from these lectures will appear on the exams.** Students who are not listed on the official class roll are not properly registered for the course, will not be allowed to attend class, and will not receive a grade for the course under any circumstances. Students bear the responsibility for ensuring that they are listed on the official class roll. Students with disabilities: If you are a qualified student with a disability seeking accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to self-identify with the Office of Student Life, Room 203, Student Union.

Student behavior/classroom decorum: Free discussion, inquiry, and expression are encouraged in this class. Classroom behavior that interferes with either the instructor's ability to conduct the class or the ability of students to benefit from the instruction is not acceptable. Examples may include routinely entering class late or departing early; use of beepers, cellular telephones, or other electronic devices; repeatedly talking in class without being recognized; talking while others are speaking; or arguing in a way that is perceived as "crossing the civility line." In the event of a situation where a student legitimately needs to carry a beeper/cellular telephone to class, prior notice and approval of the instructor is required, and students who have such approval must use the device that vibrates instead of ringing.

Students may not bring to class any children, family members, friends, or others not registered for the course except for sign-language interpreters, note-takers, or other helpers allowed by the ADA and approved by the Office of Student Affairs. No animals are allowed in the classroom except for approved seeing-eye dogs. Eating, smoking, and chewing tobacco are prohibited in the classroom. Students may consume non-alcoholic beverages in class but must properly dispose of bottles/cans/cups.

### **Grading:**

At the end of the semester, all students who have completed all the requirements listed above will have a certain number of points out of a hundred (e.g., possible

of 20 on midterm, 30 on final, etc.). Students with a grade between 90-100 will receive an A, 80-90 a B, 70-80 a C, 60-70 a D, and below 60 an F. Incomplete (I) grades: University policy states that the grade of “I” (incomplete) will be given only for work which is of passing quality at examination time but which, because of circumstances beyond the student’s control, is not complete. This means, first of all, that students may receive an “I” grade only in the case of sudden dire emergencies, such as severe and prolonged illness or injury requiring lengthy hospitalization. Students may not receive an “I” grade for prolonged absences over which they do have some control, such as incarceration or court-ordered rehabilitation for chemical dependency. Secondly, instructors may give a student an “I” grade only if the student has completed all required assignments with due dates prior to the date of the emergency, with a passing grade. In those rare and extraordinary cases in which an “I” grade is given, the instructor and student must complete an “I” Contract form in the department office and obtain the department head’s approval. No “I” grades can be given after the end of the final exam period. Students who receive “I” grades must follow the procedure for removing the “I” described in the current *Southeastern General Catalogue*, or the grade will become an “F”.

Posting Grades:

During the semester grades will not be posted for this class. All graded assignments will be returned in class as soon as they are graded. The instructor is required to keep final exams on file for a year following completion of the course. Final course grades will be posted on the Peoplesoft system. Do not call the department office or the instructor’s office to ask about grades—it is illegal to give such information over the phone.

Reading Assignments

Aug 18 Introduction

Aug 23 Plato, *Apology*

Aug 25 Plato, *Crito*

Aug 30 Aristotle, Bk VII i-xii

Sep 1 Bk I i-xiii

Sep 6 Labor Day. No class.

Sep 8 Bk II i-vii

Sep 13 Bk III i-xviii

Sep 15 Bk IV

Sep 20 Bk V i-ix

Sep 22 Bk VII xiii-xvii

Bk VIII

*Paper topics handed out.*

Sep 27 Cicero, *On Duties*, Book I

Sep 29 Cicero, *On Duties*, Book I

Oct 4 Cicero, *On Duties*, Book II  
1000 word papers due

Oct 6 Cicero, *On Duties* Book II

Oct 11 Cicero, *On Duties*, Book III

Oct 13 Cicero, *On Duties*, Book III  
Take-home midterms posted.

Oct 18 Seneca, “On Anger,” Book I

**Take-home midterms due by 11:59pm**

Oct 20 “On Anger,” Books II and III

Oct 25 ‘On Favors’

Oct 27 Aquinas, *Summa*, questions 90-94, pp. 3-54

**Oct 29 is last day to withdraw or drop**

Nov 1 *Summa*, questions 94-97, 105, pp. 55-91.

Nov 3 *Summa*, questions 42, 57, 58, 66, pp. 92-142.

Nov 8 *Summa*, questions 77, 78, 104, pp. 143-174

Nov 10 “On Kingship”

Nov 15 Machiavelli, *The Discourses*, pp. 168-88, 218-46.

Nov 17 *The Art of War*, 480-517.

“The Cycle of History,” pp.557-9

Nov 22 *The Prince*, pp. 77-120.

**Study guide for final posted.**

Nov 24 Thanksgiving. No class.

Nov 29 *The Prince*, pp. 120-166.

Dec 1 **Review**

*Research papers Due.*

Dec 6 (Monday) **Final Exam: 8:00-10:00am**