

Introduction to Political Theory
POLI 2060 Section 1, Fall 2016
Syllabus

Perspectives on Ethos and Political Authority

Class timings: Stubbs 220, MWF 9:30 am to 10:20 am

Instructor: Ms. Gargi Aleaz

Office hours: Stubbs 311, WF 10:30am to 12:00 pm

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Course description and objectives:

This introductory course approaches the study of political philosophy from the perspective of the interplay between *ethos*, i.e. moral character of a person or people and *legitimate political authority*. As we read texts from ancient, modern and postmodern periods, some of the questions that we will ask are: Where does power lie, who uses it and toward what end? What is the nature of ethos and political authority? How is *legitimate* power or authority achieved in the texts? Is it achieved, because of some sort of balance between ethos and *kratos*, i.e. political power generally associated with force? Is this a stable and unchanging balance? How can we understand dramatic changes in moral character and/or authority, as was visible for example in Nazi Germany?

As a general education course, POLI 2060 (1) has been designed with the following LSU learning competency objective in mind: “*LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.*”

Required texts:

The books listed below are available for purchase at the LSU bookstore, and should be brought to class on the days they are assigned for reading. **Apart from these, there will be a selection of readings available on Moodle, that students should print, study and bring to class, on the days they are assigned.**

Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics*. translated by Martin Ostwald (Prentice Hall 1962)
[ISBN-13: 9780023895302]

Aristotle. *Politics*. translated by Ernest Barker (Oxford University Press 2009)
[ISBN-13: 9780199538737]

John Rawls. *A Theory of Justice: Revised edition*. (Harvard University Press September 1999).
[ISBN-13: 9780674000780]

Thomas Hobbes. *Leviathan*. (Hackett 1994) [ISBN-13: 9780872201774]

Grading scale:

- A+ = 100-97
- A = 96-93
- A- = 92-90
- B+ = 89-87
- B = 86-83
- B- = 82-80
- C+ = 79-77
- C = 76-73
- C- = 72-70
- D+ = 69-67
- D = 66-63
- D- = 62-60
- F = 59 and Below

Course Requirements and grade distribution:

Quizzes	20%	Unannounced
Exam 1	25%	Monday, 10th October
Exam 2	25%	Wednesday, 9th November
Final Exam	30%	Monday, 5th December

Quizzes: There will be 12 in-class unannounced quizzes, requiring multiple choice as well as short answers, at the beginning of the class, on the reading of that particular day. Please have a pen ready, I will provide the writing paper with typed questions and spaces for answers. I will drop the lowest two grades and there will be no make-up quizzes.

Exam 1 and Exam 2 and the Final Exam: Blue books *and* Scantrons are required for all three Exams. There will be a short section of multiple choice questions for each of these exams, followed by essay questions.

Preparation for class and in-class decorum:

Careful reading of philosophical texts is a time-consuming, yet wonderful experience. To fully partake of this experience and appreciate each thinker's ideas, it is important to set aside time, before every class, to read the assigned texts. This will also ensure that you are prepared for unannounced quizzes and class discussion.

The use of computers, tablets and mobile phones is not allowed in class. This is a requirement for your own benefit, so that you can fully concentrate and participate in the class lectures and discussion. Please avoid eating during class, however beverages are allowed.

Communication through Moodle:

Readings for each week will be posted a week in advance on Moodle. These will be in the form of specific pages to read from the books assigned as well as pdf files that you need to print out.

Course Calendar:

The dates and readings below are tentative and subject to change. Any changes will be announced in Moodle and in class. *Reading available as a pdf file on Moodle

August 22nd	Introduction to the course
August 24th	<i>What is political Philosophy?</i> * By Leo Strauss and the <i>Allegory of the Cave</i> *
August 26th	<i>The Apology</i> * and <i>The Crito</i> *
August 29 th and 31st	<i>The Gorgias</i> *
September 2 nd and 7th	The <i>Oresteia</i> *
September 5th	No class, Labor Day
September 9 th , 12 th , 14 th , 16 th , 19 th	<i>The Nicomachean Ethics</i>
September 21 st , 23 rd , 26 th , 28 th , 30 th , and October 3 rd	<i>Politics</i>
October 5th	<i>Leviathan</i>
October 7th	No class, Fall Break
October 10th	Exam 1
October 12 th , 14 th , 17 th , 19 th , 21 st	<i>Leviathan</i> continued
October 24 th , 26 th , 28 th	John Locke, <i>Second treatise on Government</i> *
October 31 st and November 2 nd and 4 th	John Stuart Mill, <i>On Liberty</i> *
November 7th	<i>A Theory of Justice</i>
November 9th	Exam 2
November 11 th , 14 th , 16 th , 18 th , 21 st	<i>A Theory of Justice</i> continued
November 25th	No class, Thanksgiving
November 23 rd , 28 th , 30th	<i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i> * and <i>Thinking and Moral Considerations: A Lecture</i> * By Hannah Arendt

December 2nd	Final Exam Review
December 5th	Final Exam