POT 4025
Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Political Philosophy
Spring 2015
Monday, 6:00-8:50
Valencia West Building 11, Room 315

Instructor: Nathan Ilderton
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Office Hours: Monday 3:00-5:00pm (West Campus), Thursday 3:00-5:00pm (Orlando Campus)
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Course Description:
This course examines the history of political thought from the ancient Greeks through the writings of Niccolò Machiavelli. In this course we will pay particular attention to the philosophical foundations created by Greek thinkers such as Plato and Aristotle, the impact of the advent of Christianity on political thought, and finally the beginnings of modern political thought in the work of Machiavelli.

Course Objectives:
The primary objective of this course is to gain an understanding of the history of political philosophy from its beginnings in Ancient Greece through the rise of the modern period. This objective will be obtained through the reading, comprehension, and discussion of primary texts from the period. Through these methods students will gain an understanding of the significant concepts and ideas in the history of pre-modern western political thought.

Required Reading:
There is one book required for this class. It is available at the University Bookstore and through the usual off campus and internet outlets.

- Peter J. Steinberger. *Readings in Classical Political Thought*. (Hackett Publishing Company).

Suggested Reading:
I suggest these books as resources to help you during the course. They are not required for purchase. They are available for purchase online, but have <u>not</u> been ordered by the bookstore.

- Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren, *How To Read a Book* (Touchstone Press)
- Edward Bryan Portis, *Reconstructing the Classics* (CQ Press)

Assignments, Exams and Grading:
Students will be assessed on the basis of three types of assignments: discussions, essays and exams.

There will be six class discussion sessions. Students are expected to be present and prepared to discuss the readings assigned that day. Discussion questions will be provided on webcourses to help guide you through the readings to be discussed. In a class this size it will be difficult for everyone to participate in every discussion, but I expect every student to make an effort to participate multiple times throughout the semester. This requires attendance (which is part of your grade) and careful reading of the assignments. I encourage you to prepare answers to the discussion questions ahead of time. Beware; I reserve the right to ask random students questions should the discussion lag. On days without discussions, we will either review for exams or watch a film intended to give you a historical context for the readings for subsequent weeks.

Two essays will be assigned in the class. You will receive a set of questions in class and have one week to complete an essay of no more than 1000 words (approximately 3½ pages of double spaced 12 point font text) on the question of your choice. You are not required to use sources outside the text to complete your essays, but if you do you must properly cite your sources. You must also provide citations for any textbook passage you directly quote. The first essay will be assigned February 23rd and due March 2nd. The second essay will be assigned April 20th and due April 27th.

The first exam will be given on March 16th. Exam 2 will be given during the final exam period, May 5th, 7:00pm- 9:50pm. Even though it will be given during the final exam period, Exam 2 will <u>not</u> be cumulative. Format for the exams will be multiple choice and short answer questions.

Final grades will be calculated using the following formula:

Discussion: 15%
Attendance: 10%
Essays: 25%
Exams: 50%

The grading scale for final grades is as follows:

A: 89.5% or above
B: 79.5% to 89.4%
C: 69.5% to 79.4%
D: 59.5% to 69.4%
F: 59.4% or below

Final grades are just that, final. I will not reconsider them except in a case where I made a computational error in calculating them (I have taught for several years and have yet to

miscalculate a final grade). Please do not email or call me asking for a grade change for another reason, it will not happen.

Attendance Policy:
Because of this class' discussion component, attendance will be mandatory and will be a part of your participation grade. Be warned, I will usually take attendance after the break between the lecture and discussion portions of the class. Absences can be excused if you can document that you have been absent for a legitimate reason, i.e. illness, family emergency, mandatory university activity.

Student Engagement and Financial Aid
As of Fall 2014, all faculty are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the syllabus quiz by the end of the first week of classes or as soon as possible after adding the course, but no later than January 16th. Failure to do so may result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.

The syllabus quiz is a five question multiple choice quiz and can be found on the class' webcourses site under the "Quizzes" tab. The only purpose of the syllabus quiz is to satisfy the financial aid requirement for this class. It will not be included in the calculation of your final grade.

Makeup Work:
I will not allow missed assignments to be made up without a documented university excused absence. If you know ahead of time that you will miss a scheduled exam please inform me prior to the exam period. If you cannot inform me ahead of time, please inform me within one business day of the scheduled exam period that you need to make up the exam either via phone or email. Date and time of makeup exams will be determined by the instructor on a case by case basis. I reserve the right to change the format and questions of makeup exams at my discretion.

Webcourses:
A webcourses section has been created for this class and is accessible through the myUCF web portal at my.ucf.edu. This space will be used to post the syllabus, lecture notes, grades, and important class notices.

Class Topics and Reading Assignments:
Students are expected to complete the assigned reading by the beginning of each week. Please note that I reserve the right to change the lecture and readings schedule as necessary to adequately cover all topics. I also reserve the right to add or subtract readings from the course. Any changes to the schedule or assigned readings will be announced in class.

Week 1: Class Introduction, Introduction to the Study of Political Theory
January 12

No Class January 19th: Martin Luther King Day

Week 2: Socrates and Plato's Dialogues
January 26
Readings: Steinberger, pages 136-65

Week 3: *The Republic*, Books I, II, III, and IV
February 2
Readings: Steinberger, pages 166-229
Discussion

Week 4: *The Republic*, Books V, VI, VII,
February 9
Readings: Steinberger, pages 229-76
Discussion

Week 5: Conclusion of *The Republic*, Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*
February 16
Readings: Steinberger, pages 276-303, 358-77

Week 6: Aristotle's *Politics*
February 23
Readings: Steinberger, pages 377-94
Discussion

Week 7: Aristole's *Politics*
March 2
Readings: Steinberger, pages 394-421
Essay 1 Due

Spring Break: No Class March 9th

Week 8: Exam 1 March 16th

Week 9: Cicero
March 23
Readings: Steinberger, pages 443-61

Week 10: Augustine
March 30
Readings: Steinberger, pages 463-504
Discussion

Week 11: Aquinas
April 6
Readings: Steinberger, pages 508-46
Discussion

Week 12: The Protestant Reformers
April 13
Readings: Martin Luther "On Temporal Authority"
John Calvin, "On Civil Government." From *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.
(Selections to be Provided)

Week 13: Machiavelli, *The Prince*
April 20
Readings: Steinberger, pages 551-91
Discussion

Week 14: Machiavelli, *Discourses*
April 27
Readings: Steinberger, pages 591-622
Essay 2 Due

Exam 2: Monday, May 4th: 7:00pm-9:50pm

UCF Creed and Academic Honesty
Integrity, scholarship, community, creativity, and excellence are the core values that guide our conduct, performance, and decisions.

Integrity
I will practice and defend academic and personal honesty.

Scholarship
I will cherish and honor learning as a fundamental purpose of my membership in the UCF community.

Community
I will promote an open and supportive campus environment by respecting the rights and contributions of every individual.

Creativity
I will use my talents to enrich the human experience.

Excellence
I will strive toward the highest standards of performance in any endeavor I undertake.

As reflected in the UCF creed, integrity and scholarship are core values that should guide our conduct and decisions as members of the UCF community. Plagiarism and cheating contradict these values, and so are very serious academic offenses. Penalties can include a failing grade in an assignment or in the course, or suspension or expulsion from the university. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and follow the University's Rules of Conduct (see http://www.osc.sdes.ucf.edu/).

Students with Disabilities

The University of Central Florida is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. This syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students who need accommodations must be registered with Student Disability Services, Student Resource Center Room 132, phone (407) 823-2371, TTY/TDD only phone (407) 823-2116, before requesting accommodations from the professor.

Unauthorized Use of Class Notes

Third parties may be selling class notes and other materials from this class without my authorization. Please be aware that such class materials may contain errors, which could affect your performance or grade. Use these materials at your own risk.