

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3703: FALL 2006

FROM PLATO TO MACHIAVELLI: THE CLASSIC ART OF POLITICS

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“Justice is the constant and perpetual desire to render each his due.” Justinian, The Institutes, Book I, Title I.

Socrates: “I suppose that until now no greater good has arisen for you in the city [Athens] than my service to the god. For I go around and do nothing but persuade you, both younger and older, not to care for bodies and money before, nor as vehemently as, how your soul will be the best possible.” Plato, *Apology of Socrates*, 30ab

“Every *polis* is a community of some kind, and every community is established with a view to some good; for everyone always acts in order to obtain that which they think good. But, if all communities aim at some good, the political community, which is the highest of all, and which embraces all the rest, aims at the good in a higher degree than any other, and at the highest good.” Aristotle, *Politics*, I.1, 1252a1-6.

I. In this course we will explore the origins of the western political tradition, primarily through the reading of several of the foundational works of political science and theoretical reflection about political life. The origins can be traced to events and to thinkers in two extraordinary cities, Athens and Jerusalem, from each of which we still today derive much which influences our political life and thought. From the Athenians we gained the first models of political democracy and the first developments of political science, as well as a body of philosophical writing about the place in society of those like Socrates who aspire to wisdom and knowledge. From the people of ancient Israel we derive the forms of religious practice and belief that challenge secular authority and attempt to establish the idea of the “holy city.” The main objective of this course is to develop an informed, critical appreciation of the pre-modern practice and analysis of politics, and to see what we can learn from that discussion about how to think about political life, about ourselves, and about our own society.

The major works of the Greek political philosophers of classical antiquity constitute the beginnings of political science and a basis for works by later writers in many countries and languages. Some of these later authors built on the legacy of classical political philosophy. Others, especially those influenced by biblical religion, tried to modify and improve or even break with the classical models. An important theme of this course will be to understand the debate in both classical and modern times about the significance of these classical beginnings. Some authors today suggest that the classical political philosophers still have important things to teach us, while others claim they should be left behind in favor of a different outlook. Understanding at least the framework of this debate will be one of the main tasks of the course.

II. REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Plato and Aristophanes, Four Texts on Socrates, trans. Thomas West and Grace West, Cornell University Press (ISBN: 0-8014-9282-3)
2. Aristotle, Politics, trans. Ernest Barker, revised R. F. Stalley, Oxford University Press paperback (ISBN: 0-19-283393-6)
3. Machiavelli, The Prince, trans. Harvey Mansfield, University of Chicago Press (ISBN: 0-226-50044-6)
4. Reader for 3703, available at King Copy; contains the account of the lives of Lycurgus and of Pericles by Plutarch, and two excerpts from Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War*.

There will be a significant number of additional assigned readings. These will be available either on electronic reserve at Bizzell Library (noted below as BzR) or posted on learn.ou.edu under “Course Documents.”

Course Outline: The course outline below is meant to be only a very general and preliminary overview of the planned reading assignments and the order in which they will be approached. Specific assignments for each week of the class, along with dates for quizzes and exams, and discussion and study questions, will be announced in class and posted regularly on the website for this course at learn.ou.edu. It is essential for participants in this course to check the website and email regularly – several times a week, in fact – in order to be fully informed about requirements.

III. COURSE CALENDAR AND ASSIGNMENTS PRELIMINARY/TENTATIVE OVERVIEW

“The study of politics holds much of the shape given to it by Aristotle, whose epochal works on politics and ethics are models of breadth and depth.” Robert A. Dahl, Modern Political Analysis, 1963 (1st edition), p. 111.

“The model of what it means to treat politics in a manner at once philosophic and truly empirical is Aristotle’s *Politics*.” Thomas Pangle, The Ennobling of Democracy, 1992, p. 206

1. What makes political life distinctive?

Aristotle, Politics, I.1-2

Benjamin Constant, “The Liberty of the Ancients Compared to that of the Moderns” (BzR)

McWilliams, “Toward Genuine Self-Government” (BzR)

2. Political life at a high level: founders, statesmen, imperial democrats :

Plutarch, “Lycurgus” and “Pericles” (photocopied reader).

From Thucydides: Pericles and his “funeral oration” (photocopied reader).

From Thucydides: the Athenians and the Melians discuss the fate of Melos (photocopied reader).

3. Understanding political life:

Aristotle, Politics: I.1-2; III.6-13: on the purpose of “political” life

Aristotle: the idea of the political “regime” [politeia], and the typology of regimes

4. Understanding the “good life”:

Aristotle, Politics: IV.1-13, VI.1-5: on democracy, oligarchy, polity

5. Education, philosophy, and politics in Athens, I:

Plato, Apology of Socrates

Plato, Crito

6. Education, politics, and philosophy in Athens, II:

Socrates and Plato, reasoning about justice: Republic I

7. Politics and Religion: from the secular city to the holy city:

Moses: The founding of Israel: The Bible, “Exodus”

Joseph: Aaron Wildavsky, “Joseph as Administrator” (BzR)

Recommended: Samuel E. Finer, “The Jewish Kingdoms, 1025-587 B.C.” (BzR)

8. The Christian critique of classical culture and the idea of the “two cities”:

St. Augustine, The City of God, selections from Books I-IV (BzR).

St. Augustine, The City of God, selections from Book XIX, chs. 1, 4-8, 12-13, 14, 17-19, 21 (BzR).

9: The Christian prince:

St. Thomas, "On Kingship," selections

10. Ancient and Modern Government: the case for a new approach

The case for a new 'realism': Machiavelli, The Prince
Aristotle, Politics, V.10-11: on monarchy and tyranny

11. Machiavelli's princes:

- a. Theseus, Romulus, Moses, Cyrus;
- b. Borgia, Alexander, Marcus, Severus

Morality and politics: Prince chapters 15, 19, and 26

12. Classical republicanism and its legacy:

Thomas Pangle, "Reinvigorating The Legacy of Classical Republicanism," from The Ennobling of Democracy (BzR)

13. FINAL EXAM

IV. COURSE GUIDELINES AND REQUIREMENTS

This course aims to assist you in learning how to read these books and articles for yourself with some more than elementary level of understanding. Therefore, the emphasis in lectures and examinations will fall on reading the books carefully, understanding them with some thoroughness, and learning how to express your knowledge of them thoughtfully, analytically, and critically. Specific assignments will be made for each class, and it will be assumed that anyone attending class will be able to converse about the reading he or she has been doing. Students will be encouraged to remember a considerable amount of what they read.

Classes: The classes will be partly "lecture" classes (though lecture is meant here in an informal sense), and partly devoted to student comment on and analysis of the readings. Class meeting times: Tuesday and Thursday, 4:30 – 5:45 pm, Dale Hall 107. It is important that the assigned readings be brought to each class, as we will frequently refer to them and quote from them, and students may be asked to comment on or analyze particular passages.

Attendance: Attendance is neither required nor counted as a component of the grade. However, the instructor will develop a seating chart at the beginning of the second week of classes and will informally note and record attendance for two reasons: in order to learn everyone's name and in order to locate students who indicate by repeated absence that they are not likely to finish the course. While there is no requirement for attendance, students missing more than four classes will be invited to explain their absenteeism and to take counsel with the instructor about the relative merits of withdrawing from the course before it is too late vs. remaining in the class and risking a poor grade for failing to keep up with the work. Students who consistently miss class typically do not do well and are often best advised to take advantage of the liberal withdrawal policy at OU. Please inform the instructor if there are serious medical, family, or personal problems hindering participation in the class. To repeat: 1) There is no grade penalty for missing classes, nor are points awarded for attendance. 2) Excuses need not be submitted for missed classes. 3) Late arrival in class counts as a miss.

Conduct Expectations: There are certain modes of conduct expected of those in the class. Attendance is NOT required, so if you do attend, you should be prepared to adhere to the following standards. These norms will contribute to making the class sessions more pleasant and productive for all concerned: 1) Arrive on time and do not leave early unless you have notified the instructor of a pressing need to do so; leaving early should be a rare, not a regular, event. 2) Do NOT disturb the class by engaging in side conversations, leaving your cell-phone on, practicing aggressive non-attentiveness, or packing up bookbags before the class has ended. 3) As we often debate controversial material, and wish to do so in a civil way, it is important to address questions, statements, and comments to the instructor rather than to or at other students. 4) Show respect for the authors, topics, and students involved in this class by paying attention and NOT reading newspapers or doing work for other classes. 5) Deal with fatigue or sleep deprivation by one of three

methods: a) staying home, b) passing out on a sofa at the Library for a nap in advance of the class, or c) consuming a double espresso in mid-afternoon at the convenient coffee shops in the Union or in the Library.

Work Expectations: Participants in this class should expect to find the readings to present a challenge. The authors are trying to develop clear and adequate concepts for the analysis of politics and society, so their writings make demands on the reader to think with more conceptual precision and clarity than occurs in ordinary political discussions. Participants should be prepared to commit an average of about four hours per week to the assigned readings and be prepared to read them more than once. An important part of the course is learning not only to understand what the authors have to say but learning how to report and discuss their ideas accurately and perceptively.

Technology: The instructor will make regular use of OU's course information system at learn.ou.edu, in order to post announcements, to publicize specific reading assignments, to provide study and discussion questions, to adjust the syllabus, and to contact students via email. You must learn how to use the course website in order to participate fully in this class. It is essential both to check your email regularly for course-related announcements, and to check the website for specific announcements, reading assignments, quizzes, due dates, and so forth. Use of this technology is, in short, required and presupposed.

Email: the course website enables the instructor to send messages to individuals in the class or to the entire class. NOTE: email is sent by the system to your official OU email address, but you can direct the OU server to forward mail to another account (e.g., hotmail, yahoo, gmail, etc.) if you prefer to receive mail there. Students are expected to check their email accounts regularly.

Check with the computer lab assistants for help if you are having difficulty with the website or with email. In case of difficulty with any of this, try the "help" pages associated with the program as well as the "support.ou.edu" information technology help pages.

Email to the Professor: If you wish to send the instructor an email, please be sure that the message shows a recognizable "sender" name and subject. Virus emails are so common that I will not open and will immediately delete anything from a sender whose name I do not recognize.

Readings: Beyond the assigned textbooks, several of the required readings may be available only through the internet databases provided via the OU Library website or through the Library's electronic reserve system. Students who do not own a computer should make use of the several computer labs provided by the university. They are readily available, and have many computers for student use. Convenient locales are in Physical Sciences, Dale Hall Tower, Bizzell Library, the Union, and elsewhere.

Exams: There will be two exams during the semester (early October and mid-November) and a final examination. The exams may include true-false, multiple choice and short-answer questions as well as essays. The questions will focus on the assigned readings. The final examination will emphasize material covered throughout the course.

Writing: In addition to the exams, there will be short writing assignments (either papers or submissions to an internet discussion board) related to the assigned readings and to issues to be considered in class discussions. The short papers will be statements of one or two pages, asking you to develop a written interpretation of an argument in the readings, to address an assigned problem, or to take a position for or against a point of view expressed in the readings. Short papers must be typed (double-spaced) in standard English. An analytical paper of 4-5 pages will also be assigned.

Withdrawal: The University of Oklahoma has a liberal and convenient withdrawal policy, making it relatively easy for students to withdraw formally from a class if personal circumstances make it impossible to keep up with the work or to participate fully. The important dates for exercising your right to withdraw are noted below and in the University's official academic calendar. If you are having trouble keeping up with the class or if a personal situation makes it likely that you will not be able to complete the course, let the instructor know immediately and arrangements can be made for a withdrawal. Doing so will help you avoid getting a bad grade that you have not earned. Instructors are required to assign a failing grade to students who disappear from a course and who fail to submit required work or take exams. This unhappy result can be avoided if a student wanting to leave a course takes care to withdraw by the University's official deadlines.

Grades: See below.

Academic integrity and honesty is presumed and required on the part of all students in the course. I strongly advise students to become familiar with the University's policy on academic integrity. A full explanation is available at www.ou.edu/provost/integrity. In addition to explaining important concepts about academic integrity, this site also provides guidance about how academic misconduct is treated and what your rights are. In writing for this course, you must give proper credit through the use of quotation marks and by footnoting or other citation for any ideas or words of others that you rely on in your written work. Use of the work of others is positively encouraged and is central to scholarship, but it must always be properly credited. When it is not credited, and when the thoughts/words/ideas of others are passed off as your own, then that is PLAGIARISM. Plagiarism is serious academic misconduct and will be reported to the appropriate university office; penalties can be severe. If you are in doubt about how to handle quotations or citations, please consult the instructor.

Adjustments: The instructor reserves the right to make changes in the syllabus and requirements as the course proceeds if educationally useful or necessary.

Contacting the Instructor: My regular office hours will be Tuesday and Thursday, 5:50 - 6:50 pm (subject to change if scheduling problems emerge). I am on campus virtually every day and can easily arrange an appointment for another time that is mutually convenient. You can reach me by leaving a message on my answering machine (325-6437), or by e-mail at djmaletz@ou.edu. Messages may also be left during normal working hours in my departmental mailbox in Dale Hall Tower 205c. My own office is Dale Hall Tower 223.

Students with disabilities: Any student in this course who has a disability that may prevent him or her from fully demonstrating his or her abilities should contact me personally at the beginning of the course. We can arrange the necessary accommodations for full participation.

V. IMPORTANT DATES: FALL SEMESTER, 2006

Final day to add this class: August 25
 Last day to drop class with automatic grade of W: September 29
 Dropping class requires assigned grade of W or F: September 5 - December 8
 Dropping course requires petition to Dean on or after: October 30
 Last class: Thursday, December 7

Final Exam: Wednesday, December 13, 4:30 pm

VI. GRADES AND GRADING

Grading will be based on a total points system. The points assigned for each component of the course are as follows:

First Exam: 40
 Second Exam: 60
 Paper: 50
 Final Exam: 80
 Quizzes: 10 or 20, depending on the number of questions
 Formal short writing assignments: 10 or 20 points, depending on the assignment

Final course grade:

The total points earned will be summed in order to calculate a final grade. Those earning 90% or better of the total available points will receive an A; 80-89% a B; 70-79% a C; 60-69% a D; below 60 an F.

NB: "Extra-credit" assignments will NOT be given. The final course grade is determined by performance on the assignments listed above.

Posted grades: To the extent possible, grades will be posted on the course website once exams and written work are evaluated. However, please note that the official, detailed grade records are kept by the instructor, and these records are the final authority both for specific grades and for the overall course grade. The website grade data is informational only, not the official record for the course; every effort will be made to keep it up to date and accurate, but in case of questions, the instructor's records are determinative. If you have ANY questions about grades posted on the website, or you note any errors, please DO contact the instructor promptly, and he will review the matter with you.

Late work and extensions. It is important to meet deadlines for handing in work and especially important to take exams when given. If a written assignment cannot be submitted on time, it will be accepted after the deadline but will incur a grade penalty. There will be a point deduction for lateness: a) on short writing assignments, two points off for submitting within one day of the deadline, and one point off for each additional day, with Saturday and Sunday counting as one day; b) for the paper, two points off for each day late, with

Saturday and Sunday counting as one day. If you cannot turn in an assignment on time, DO turn it in late; it is much better to have a few points taken off for lateness than to have a zero for an assignment!

Missed exams: Missing an examination is serious and should not happen except in cases of a dire emergency, about which the instructor must be notified in advance of the test. Make-up exams will likely not be in the same format as the regular exams administered to the class. A missed quiz or exam without advance notice to the instructor will incur a 5% grade penalty on the score achieved on the make-up exam.

The following abbreviations are used in grading written work.

Abbreviations Used in Grading	
<p>ERP = Edit, Revise, Proofread!!! ENL? = Is English your native language? G = good point VG = very good point Checkmark = correct, OK NS = nicely stated NC = not clear VNC = very unclear ? = doubtful, questionable ??? = very doubtful, questionable Tr = trite, this is a cliché or a banal observation Org = needs better or clearer organization Expl = needs to be more fully explained Gr = incorrect grammar Awk = awkward writing, awkward sentence or phrase</p>	<p>Vawk = very awkward writing X = wrong G/V = too general or vague Circled word = mis-spelled or illegible word Sp = mis-spelling s-pl = grammar: singular-plural, lack of agreement Ex? = give an example IncS = incomplete sentence, subject or verb missing U.C. = use upper case letter l.c. = use lower case letter s.i. = split infinitive r-o = run-on-sentence ct = contraction ND = needs more development, explain more completely W = questionable or incorrect word choice</p>