

**Political Science 2060 Syllabus**  
**Introduction to Political Theory**  
**Fall 2011**

Instructor: Rodolfo Hernandez  
POLI 2060, Section 2  
Tuesday, Thursday 3:10pm-4:30pm  
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### **Course Description**

In this course we will read and discuss some of the great texts of Ancient, Medieval, and Modern political thought. This will be done, not by viewing these books as historical curiosities, but rather as serious attempts to answer the serious questions of politics. Central to our reading will be a search for the source of legitimate authority in political life and the ends to which that authority should act. Political bodies in their arrangements of authority, the regime, express the central ideas of a society and the purposes for which it is constituted. In turn, this arrangement shapes future generations, instituting a way of life.

Reading original texts is often difficult but gets better only with practice. To succeed in this class it is vital that you read these assignments and come to class, especially since several unannounced quizzes will be given throughout the semester. Participation in class discussion and hard work in writing the required term paper will also increase your chances of a good grade. More importantly these efforts will further your understanding of the meaning underlying political action.

### **Required Texts**

Aquinas, Thomas. *On Law, Morality and Politics*, Richard J. Regan, trans. (Hackett 2002) [ISBN 0-87220-663-7]

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Joe Sachs, trans. (Focus Publishing 2002) [ISBN 1-58510-035-8]

Hamilton, Madison, Jay. *Federalist Papers*. (Signet Publishing 2003) ISBN 1-4295-2251-8]

Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan*, (Hackett 1994) [ISBN 0-87220-177-5]

Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Government*, (Hackett 1980) [ISBN 0915144-86-7]

Plato, *The Republic of Plato*, Allan Bloom, trans. (Basic Books 1991) [ISBN-978-0465-06934-7]

Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. *On the Social Contract*. Donald A. Cress, trans. (Hackett 1987) [978-0-87220-068-5]

### **General Education Requirement**

This course can be applied towards completion of the General Education requirement for courses in the Social Sciences. This component of your education aims at learning outcomes where “LSU graduates will be able to communicate effectively through multiple media; will have a basic appreciation of historical, cultural and philosophical complexity; will be aware of the economic, political, cultural, and linguistic factors which inform global interdependence.” Specifically, in this course an understanding of historical, cultural, and philosophically complex texts will promote sophisticated discourse. Class discussion and writing assignments will lead to communication of complex knowledge. The variety of books from classical, medieval, and modern sources, which touch on a wide variety of topics, will lead to an understanding of the economic, political, and cultural factors that have shaped our world.

Students are encouraged to keep the aims of these learning outcomes in mind throughout this course. Many of these goals form the basis for the study of political science, and they are essential to a well-rounded education.

### **Grades:**

The final grade for this course will be determined by a student’s performance in the following areas:

Quizzes: 20%  
Term Paper 25%  
Mid Term Exam 25%  
Final 30%

Letter grades will be determined as follows : A=100 to 90 percent, B= 89 to 80 percent, C= 79 to 70 percent, D =69 to 60 percent, and F= below 60 percent

**Quizzes:** Six unannounced quizzes (closed book) will be given based on the readings; students will be allowed to drop their two lowest scores, allowing for a total of four. Quizzes missed without an extraordinary excuse (documented sickness, family emergency, etc.) will be graded a zero. Again, it is vital that students attend class.

**Term paper:** A 5-7 page **original** essay (12 font, 1” margins) in MLA format on any issue/topic presented in the course material is due in class on **November 17, 2011**. Suggested topics and further details on the project will be offered early in the semester. The aim of this paper is not for it to be research oriented but rather to give students a chance to do some thinking about major themes in political theory.

Be careful to cite text and ideas that are not your own. Please familiarize yourself with LSU's policy on academic honesty, especially plagiarism, any suspected violations will be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation.

**Mid Term Exam:** Multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions dealing with material covered in the first half of the course.

**Final Exam:** Multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions dealing primarily with material covered in the second half of the course, but might also include some material from the first half.

**Class Participation for Extra Credit.** While not a major portion of calculating a student's final grade in this course, taking part in class discussions, including commenting on a topic and/or addressing a question, is an important way to learn. To that end students may earn up to 5 points of extra credit on their final grade through participation. Following class, students who contributed in that day's class should write a sentence or two about what they said on a piece of paper and turn it in to me. This ensures that I keep an accurate record of participation. Other extra credit opportunities may be offered, but the majority of extra credit will come through class participation.

### **Course Schedule**

August 23, 2011 Introduction to Course

August 25, 2011 Plutarch, *Life of Lycurgus*, Thucydides, *Pericles' Funeral Oration* on Moodle

August 30, 2011 Plato, *Republic*, Book I

September 01, 2011 Plato, *Republic*, Books II, III

September 06, 2011 Plato, *Republic*, Books, IV, V

September 08, 2011 Plato *Republic*, Books VI, VII

September 13, 2011 Plato *Republic*, Books, VIII, IX

September 15, 2011 Plato *Republic*, Book X

September 20, 2011, Aristotle, *NE*, Books I, II

September 22, 2011 Aristotle, *NE*, Books VIII, IX, also BK X Chpts. 7-10

September 27, 2011 Aquinas, *On Law, Morality, and Politics*, p. 10-51

September 29, 2011 Aquinas, *On Law, Morality, and Politics*, p. 51-96

October 04, 2011 MID TERM EXAMINATION

October 06, 2011 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Author's Dedication, Introduction, Chpts. 5, 6, 11

October 11, 2011 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chpts.13-18

October 13, 2011 FALL HOLIDAY –NO CLASS

October 18, 2011 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Chpts. 21, 24, 29-30, A Review and Conclusion (p. 489-497)

October 20, 2011 Locke, *2<sup>nd</sup> Treatise*, Chapters 1-5

October 25, 2011 Locke, *2<sup>nd</sup> Treatise*, Chapter 6-13

October 27, 2011 Locke *2<sup>nd</sup> Treatise* Chapter 14-19

November 01, 2011 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Books 1 and 2

November 03, 2011 Rousseau, *Social Contract*, Books 3 and 4

November 08, 2011 Declaration of Independence and US Constitution

“It's Time to Repair the Constitution's Flaws” by Sanford Levinson on Moodle

November 10, 2011 *Federalist Papers* 1, 2, 6, 9, 10

November 15, 2011 *Federalist Papers* 14, 15, 23, 27, 31, 33, 35, 37-39, 45

November 17, 2011 *Federalist Papers* 47-51, 55, 56, 62, 70, 78 (**Term Paper Due**)

November 22, 2011 Brutus #15 “Federal v. Consolidated Republic” Centinel #1 “Argument against an extended Republic” Herbert Storing selection, “What the Anti-Federalist Were For,” on Moodle.

November 24, 2011 HAPPY THANKSGIVING – NO CLASS

November 29, 2011 “What is Political Philosophy?” Leo Strauss, *Journal of Politics*, Vol. 19 No. 3 (August, 1957) p. 343-368 on Moodle.

December 01, 2011 Review

To Be Announced FINAL EXAMINATION

Please note that this schedule is tentative and subject to change as the semester progresses. All reading assignments will be confirmed in class.