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FOUNDATIONS OF WESTERN POLITICAL THEORY

This course is designed to give the student a basic understanding of the philosophical and theoretical foundations of Western conceptions of politics and political order. We will proceed from ancient Greek assumptions about the correlation between the human psyche and human community through the Roman extension of these ideas geographically if not philosophically. Along the way, we will consider different perspectives on human nature, justice, and the consequences and responsibilities attending "freedom" and how our conversations about these issues continue to be shaped by these early considerations.

Brief Course Outline:

The course and our discussion will proceed in three units or "modules."

Module 1: Community, Identity, Polis

Module 2: Plato and the Socratic Challenge

Module 3: Politics as the Science of Human Good

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students will learn how to read their political environments critically using the insights of classical political thinkers. Through reading assignments, discussions, and written assignments the student will become familiar with various approaches to problems of political community and governance through classical political theory, discovering how these ancient attitudes shape our own. The format of the class is lecture and discussion. All discussion and written work in the class is intended to develop students' critical thinking, reading and writing skills. As you do the classwork, that is, as you read, write essays, study, and prepare for class discussions, you should keep in mind that the assigned work in this class is intended to help you develop your skills in the following ways:

- 1) Recognizing IDEAS/FACTS**, that is, develop the ability to recognize key ideas and facts.
 - key *terms* and their *meanings* (including how those meanings differ across periods and thinkers)
 - who* wrote *what*
 - what it *says*
- 2) Making CONNECTIONS**, that is, develop the ability to see connections between and among ideas and the ability to see *how* an author says what s/he says:
 - recognition of the *structure* of the author's discussion (what steps are involved in the way s/he tries to explain his or her position or persuade the reader?)
 - recognition of the *assumptions* that inform the development of ideas
 - recognition of the relative *weight* of ideas (e.g., what is the main *idea*? what are the supporting *ideas*?)
- 3) Using EXTENSIONS**, that is, develop the ability to extend the ideas beyond their context, that is, to make use of them in your own thought without distorting them or violating their meaning.
 - what are the implications of the author's position and the way s/he makes the argument?
 - what did the author leave out?
 - what value may we derive from the author's discussion?

The development of a critical voice means attending to each of these—IN ORDER. *You cannot critique an argument unless and until you can make and defend it on its own terms.* A concerted effort at understanding is the minimum requirement of a student of political theory and the mere baseline of what you will be asked to do in this course.

TEXTBOOKS: This edition of this text was carefully chosen and is required for the course. Students choosing to use a different or earlier edition are solely responsible for any reconciliation of differences.

--Bailey, et.al., editors, *The Broadview Anthology of Social and Political Thought, Volume One: From Plato to Nietzsche* (Broadview Press, 2008)

CANVAS: All written and graded assignments will appear on Canvas. Assignments can be found under the “Syllabus,” “Assignments,” and “Modules” tabs on the Course page. All written and graded work will be submitted via Canvas. Students will also find supplementary handouts and readings on Canvas. All modules, essays, and attendance/participation grades are weighted as part of your final grade. **THIS IS NOT AN ONLINE COURSE. WORK SUBMITTED BY STUDENTS NOT ATTENDING AND WHO HAVE NOT GONE THROUGH THE STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY OFFICE TO GET APPROPRIATE ACCOMMODATION(S) WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS: Grading is done on a 10-point scale: A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79, etc. The formal requirements of the course and their relative impact on your final grade are as follows:

1) Class Attendance/Participation 5%

Political theory necessarily involves discussion, and, in that vein, discussion involves taking cues from gestures, tone of voice, etc. To serve this end, you are expected to attend our class meetings regularly and to participate in our class discussions. Bring your understanding of the readings, your questions, your answers, and your insights to class meetings and be ready to articulate and discuss them.

(2) Modules: Readings and Assignment Worksheets Modules (2 x 15% each and 1 x 25%) = 55%

The course is divided into 4 units or modules. You can find the modules under the “Modules” tab on the course’s Canvas page. Each module consists of several reading assignments (listed below in the syllabus). Each module is also divided into worksheet assignments. Each worksheet assignment refers to specific readings and includes an *Assignment Worksheet* that must be completed in the week that it is assigned. *These assignments cannot be made up.*

The Assignment Worksheets consist of three (3) Analytical Questions about the readings. You will be asked to read the assigned texts and answer the accompanying questions. **USING ONLY THE TEXTS YOU READ and in your own words**, respond to each question in a coherent, comprehensive paragraph (no lists!) of neither more nor less 100 words each. Be clear, comprehensive, and don’t waste words). *Missed worksheets cannot be made up.*

(3) Midterm Essay and (15%) and Final Essay (25%) 40%

Students will be asked to write analytical essays on some aspect of the class material using specific works we have read. These **WILL NOT** be research papers. Students are expected to limit themselves to the material we have read and discussed and to demonstrate their own substantial analytical abilities. The midterm essay will be 2 pages, uploaded to Canvas as a Word doc (double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman, etc.) and the final essay will be comprehensive and 3-4 pages in length (Word doc, double-spaced, 12-point font, Times New Roman) uploaded to Canvas. See the assignments for further instructions. *Late papers WILL NOT be accepted and cannot be made up.* Below are some guidelines for writing your essays:

WARNING: IGNORE THE FOLLOWING PAPER GUIDELINES AT YOUR PERIL:

(1) DO NOT try to avoid addressing the issues by talking about the author's writing style, difficulty, etc. In this class, as in all of your classes in political science, *you are considered a professional willing to work to understand difficult material*. You can always ask the teacher for help, too, but do it BEFORE the day you turn in your paper.

(2) Write in reasoned, professional terms. Use your best English: there is no excuse for misspellings; make sure all of your sentences have subjects, verbs, and objects; make sure they match in number; do not use contractions; write in paragraphs (change to a new *but related* thought = new paragraph) above all, do not write the way you speak! Write like a professional.

(3) Focus on one or two ideas or issues that are common to all the readings. Do not simply rehearse the argument of the author—in the space allotted, you do not have the time! Your task is to discuss the readings in terms of the one or two most important ideas or issues that you have identified. As a start, consider the issues raised in our discussions in class and where this author/idea fits. **Add your own insights where appropriate. Raise questions and critical issues—do not rant.**

(4) These are NOT research papers. Limit yourself to the texts before you. The assignment is designed to get you to read closely, carefully, and analytically. Resist the urge to run to the internet. Force yourself to deal with the text, come to some understanding of the issues raised, and, craft your own argument.

Required Statement on Artificial Intelligence and this Course

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

The use of AI is not permitted in this course at all. I expect all the work students submit for this course to be their own. I have carefully designed all assignments and class activities to support your learning. Doing your own work, without human or artificial intelligence assistance, is best for your efforts in mastering course learning objectives. For this course, I expressly forbid using ChatGPT or any other artificial intelligence (AI) tools for any stages of the work process, including brainstorming. **Any instance of the following constitutes a violation of UT Tyler's Honor Code and academic honesty values:** a student has another person/entity do any portion of a graded assignment, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, using a previously submitted assignment and/or using AI tools (such as ChatGPT).

SYLLABUS/READING SCHEDULE

READINGS: *Students are expected to come to class having read the reading assigned for that day's class. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MATERIAL IN THE READINGS—WHETHER THERE IS EXPRESS DISCUSSION OF IT IN CLASS OR NOT—AND THE LECTURES/DISCUSSIONS.* Questions about all material are always welcome and should form the lion's share of our experience in this course.

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS: *Students are responsible for turning in assignments on-time. All assignments may be found on Canvas and may be accessed through either the "Modules" link, the "Assignments" link, or the "Syllabus" link. Work for each module will be turned in on Canvas. PAY CAREFUL ATTENTION TO DUE DATES AND TIMES. Most Worksheets are due by the end of the week (Sunday at 11:59pm) they are assigned. Assignments will be closed thereafter. Students are strongly encouraged to read ahead and to turn in their Worksheet Assignments before the Sunday deadline.*

MODULE 1: COMMUNITY, IDENTITY, POLIS

- 27 Aug T ***Introduction: Political Theory—What and Why?***
Read: Syllabus and handouts (Canvas)
- 29 Aug Th ***Antigone and the Displacement of the Greek Polis***
Read: Sophocles, *Antigone*, pp. 1-21 (available on Canvas)
- 3 Sep T ***Antigone: Creon out of place***
Read: Sophocles, *Antigone*, all (available on Canvas)
- 5 Sep Th ***Antigone: Antigone out of place***
Read: Sophocles, *Antigone*, all (available on Canvas)
- 10 Sep T ***Thucydides' Athens***
Read: Thucydides, "Pericles' Funeral Oration" and "Melian Dialogue" (Bailey, pp. 3-10)
- 12 Sep Th ***Thucydides' Athens***
Read: Thucydides, "Pericles' Funeral Oration" and "Melian Dialogue" (Bailey, pp. 3-10)

→Worksheet Due, Sunday 15 September @ 11:59pm

MODULE 2: PLATO AND THE SOCRATIC CHALLENGE

- 17 Sep T ***Plato's Socrates: Philosophy and Politics***
Read: Introduction to Plato (pp. 11-17)
Plato, *Apology* (pp. 17-29)
- 19 Sep Th ***Plato's Socrates: Philosophy and Politics***
Read: Plato, *Apology* (pp. 17-29)
Plato, *Crito* (pp. 29-35)

24 Sep T *Plato's Socrates: Philosophy and Politics*
 Read: Plato, *Crito* (pp. 29-35)
 Plato, *Phaedo* (pp. 35-37)

26 Sep Th *Political Education in Plato's Republic*
 Plato, *The Republic*, Book 1 (pp. 37-53)

→Worksheet Due, Sunday, September 29 @ 11:59pm

1 Oct T *Republic 2: City-Soul Analogy and Censorship*
 Read: Plato, *The Republic*, Book 2 (pp. 53-68)

3 Oct Th *Republic 3 and 4: Unity and Justice*
 Read: Plato, *The Republic*, from Books 3, 4 (pp. 68-83)

8 Oct T *Republic 5 and 7: The Philosopher's Political Role*
 Read: Plato, *The Republic*, from Books 5, 7 (pp. 83-101)

10 Oct Th *Republic 8 and 9: Philosophy and Justice*
 Read: Plato, *The Republic*, Book 8, from Book 9 (pp. 101-120)

→Worksheet Due, Sunday, October 13 @ 11:59pm

15 Oct T *Republic 8 and 9: Philosophy and Justice*
 Read: Plato, *The Republic*, Book 8, from Book 9 (pp. 101-120)

18 Oct F MIDTERM ESSAY DUE, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18 @ 11:59pm.

MODULE 3. POLITICS AS THE SCIENCE OF HUMAN GOOD

17 Oct Th *"The Philosopher": Introduction to Aristotle*
 Read: Introduction to Aristotle (pp 124-130)
 --Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1 (pp. 130-140)

22 Oct T *Nicomachean Ethics 1: A Political Science*
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 1 (pp. 130-140)
 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 2 and from Book 3 (pp. 140-150)

24 Oct Th *Nicomachean Ethics 2-3: Virtue and Character*
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 2 and from Book 3 (pp. 140-150)
 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 5 (pp. 150-161)

29 Oct T *Nicomachean Ethics 2-3: Virtue and Character*
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 2 and from Book 3 (pp. 140-150)
 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 5 (pp. 150-161)

31 Oct Th **NO CLASS (LeBlanc at NCHC) *Nicomachean Ethics 5: Justice***
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 5 (pp. 150-161)

- 5 Nov T *Nicomachean Ethics 5: Justice*
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 5 (pp. 150-161)
- 7 Nov Th *Nicomachean Ethics 8 and 10: Friendship and Politics*
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 8 and from Book 10 (pp. 161-177)
- 12 Nov T *Nicomachean Ethics 8 and 10: Friendship and Politics*
 Read: Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book 8 and from Book 10 (pp. 161-177)
- 14 Nov Th *Aristotle's Politics Book 1: The Polis as Natural*
 Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, Book 1 (pp. 177-187)

→Worksheet Due, Sunday, November 17 @ 11:59pm

- 19 Nov T *Politics 1, 3, and 4: The Ethical Constitution*
 Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, from Books 1, 3, and 4 (chapters 11-14) (pp. 177-187; 204-219; 226-230)
- 21 Nov Th *Politics 3 and 4: The Ethical Constitution*
 Read: Aristotle, *Politics*, from Book 3 and 4 (chapters 11-14) (pp. 204-219; 226-230)
- 25-29 Nov THANKSGIVING BREAK**
- 3 Dec T *Conclusion and Review (class optional)*
- 4 Dec W FINAL EXAM ESSAY DUE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4 @ 11:59pm**
- 5 Dec Th No Class Meeting**

IMPORTANT: This syllabus reflects the minimum requirements of our professional relationship over the course of this semester. By staying in this class, you signify that you understand the contents of this syllabus and you agree to the terms and conditions stated herein.

Notes on Classroom Etiquette or THE RULES

- Class starts promptly. Be here on time. After the first week or so of the semester, you WILL be denied entry if you arrive more than 5 minutes late. Late arrival is disruptive to the classroom experience of your classmates and, perhaps even your professor. In any case, it works against the mission of the classroom. To this end, I suggest you not drive from class to class—gas is too expensive, and we could all use the exercise.
- The format of the class is lecture and conversation. The classroom is a safe place to ask questions. But they should be questions that derive from work with and in the material and NOT because you did not do the assignment.
- You will not read newspapers, textbooks, or study for other classes while in this class. If you do so, you will be asked to leave—and in no uncertain terms.
- Turn all cellphones and other electronic devices off (or set to vibrate) for the duration of class. You are not to accept calls or engage in text messaging during class. If you do so, I will confiscate your device. If you are awaiting a call or message of extreme importance, I suggest you skip class and accept the consequences.
- You may use a laptop, but only for the purpose of taking notes. If I catch you surfing the web, playing games, or engaged in some other activity not related to the work of the class, you will lose your laptop privileges.

--You are responsible for material missed due to absence. I suggest you exchange notes with other responsible students in any case, but particularly if you have to miss. I am happy to answer questions about this material but will not rehearse my lectures or our class discussions.

--Some semesters, life gets in the way. Should you have one of these semesters, I am more than happy to talk to you about what to do. But if the trauma is too great, I strongly suggest you drop one or all your courses. Your education is vitally important, but there are things that outrank even education sometimes—and *you must make that call when it is necessary*. I cannot grade you on how well or poorly you deal with your life at given moments. Your grades reflect your performance in class—not how well you are dealing with other things. I wish all of us a semester in which these things aren't issues.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:

- copying from another student's test paper;
- using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
- failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
- possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
- using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
- collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
- discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
- divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructor has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
- substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
- paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
- falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
- taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
- misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.

ii. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit.

iii. "Collusion" includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.

iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

VIOLATION OF THESE STANDARDS will be reported to the University Disciplinary Committee, and you will fail the assignment and/or the course.