

**The University of Texas at Austin**  
**GOV 351C; WCV 335**  
**Unique # 38925; 34182**  
**The Classical Quest for Justice**  
**Spring 2011**

Professor: Devin Stauffer  
Office: Mezes 3.144  
Email: dstauffer@austin.utexas.edu  
Office Hours: Friday 8:30 – 11:30

Teaching Assistant: Laura Rabinowitz  
Office: Batts 1.118  
Email: laura.rabinowitz@gmail.com  
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:30 – 3:30

### **Course Description**

What is justice? What are its demands as a virtue of individuals? What is its status as a guiding principle of domestic politics and as a restraint in times of war? What are the strengths and weaknesses of different kinds of political orders in their quest for justice? What is the relationship between political life and philosophic reflection? In this course we will consider these fundamental and enduring questions of political philosophy primarily through a careful study of two of the masterpieces of classical antiquity: Plato's *Republic* and Thucydides' *The Peloponnesian War*. We will preface our study of these two great texts with a look at another work, Plato's *Apology of Socrates*; but our focus will be on reading and discussing the *Republic* and *The Peloponnesian War*. These works will be approached, not just as crucial documents for our understanding of a distant age, but as works that still speak directly and profoundly to permanent questions of moral and political life.

### **Prerequisite**

Completion of at least thirty semester hours of coursework.

Note: If you have taken Government 335M (Topic: Classical Quest for Justice), you cannot take 351C.

### **Texts**

Plato and Aristophanes, *Four Texts on Socrates*, trans. by West and West (Cornell)  
Plato, *Republic*, trans. by Bloom (Basic Books)  
Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides*, ed. by Strassler (The Free Press)

- Please purchase the particular editions of the books ordered for this class, and always bring the book we are discussing to class.

### **Requirements**

Careful reading is the most important requirement. The reading assignments in this course are not long, but they are quite difficult; make sure you read them slowly and take

notes while you read. You should try to come to every class with questions, comments, and interpretations. Since the love of knowledge is not always powerful enough to inspire students to do all of the reading, I will give unannounced quizzes. These quizzes will not be particularly difficult for those who have done the reading carefully, and they can be a nice way of lifting your grade. I also encourage you to keep a reading notebook for the notes that you take as you read (separate from the notebook you use for class notes). If you turn your reading notebook at the end of the semester, you can add 1 or 2 points to your final grade, depending on the thoroughness of your notes.

You have the option of writing a paper this semester. If you choose this option, you will write an analytical essay on a theme in the readings. I will hand out options, with staggered due dates, several times during the semester. You would be wise not to wait until the last set of topics, since the end of the semester is a busy time and you might find one of the earlier topics more interesting. To encourage you to write the optional paper and to reward those who put forth the extra effort, your paper grade will be factored into your final grade only if it will be to your advantage. No late papers will be accepted.

There will be two exams, one in the middle of the term (on Plato's *Apology of Socrates* and *Republic*) and the other at the end of the term (on Plato and Thucydides, but with greater weight given to Thucydides). The first exam will be given in class; the second will be given on the scheduled day during the exam period. The exams will be essay exams, with a quotation identification component and perhaps also a short answer component in the case of the final exam.

On all of your work, you are expected to know and to adhere to UT's policies on academic honesty.

### **Attendance Policy and other Odds and Ends (please read carefully)**

- Role will be taken at the beginning of each class, and attendance will be considered in determining your final grade. *After two unexcused absences, your grade for "Attendance and Participation" will drop 25 points for each unexcused absence.* That means that a significant number of absences will exert a strong downward pull on your final grade. If you are late to class, you will be regarded as absent for that day. If you have perfect attendance for the entire semester, 5 extra points will be added to the "Attendance and Participation" part of your grade.
- No work submitted by email will be accepted.
- If you bring a cell phone to class, make sure it is turned off.
- Please do not bring a computer to class unless you have a special need for one (in which case you should explain that need to me).
- If you have a special need for a computer, please do not sit in one of the two back rows. If you use a computer for any purpose other than taking class notes (e.g., emailing, twittering, surfing the web, etc.), you will receive a double-F (0 points) for the attendance and participation portion of your grade for the semester.

## Grades

Your grade will be calculated by one of the following two methods. *Plus/minus grades will be used in the final grades.*

### With the optional paper

Paper: 25%  
First exam: 20%  
Final exam: 30%  
Attendance and Participation: 15%  
Quizzes: 10%

### Without the optional paper

First Exam: 30%  
Final Exam: 45%  
Attendance and Participation: 15%  
Quizzes: 10%

## Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/>

## Course Plan

I will give the specific assignments for each class (and some study questions) as we go along, but this is a rough schedule:

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Jan. 19           | Introduction   |
| Jan. 24 – 26      | Plato, <i>The Apology of Socrates</i> (Socrates on trial; the philosopher and the city)  |
| Jan. 31 – Feb. 2  | Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Book I (The setting and the questions; Socrates' critique of Polemarchus' view of justice; Thrasymachus' challenge) |
| Feb. 7 – 9        | <i>Republic</i> , Books I-II (Socrates' defeat of Thrasymachus?; Glaucon's and Adeimantus' demands)  |
| Feb. 14 – 16      | <i>Republic</i> , Books II-III (The origins of the city and the character of Socrates' city-in-speech)                                       |
| Feb. 21 – 23      | <i>Republic</i> , Books III-IV (The education of the guardians; the noble lie; the problem of justice)                                       |
| Feb. 28 – March 2 | <i>Republic</i> , Books V-VI (The three "waves": equality, communism, and philosophic rule)  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| March 7  | <i>Republic</i> , Books VI-VII (Philosophy and the city; the ideas; the Cave; the status of the city-in-speech)             |
| March 9  | <b>EXAM</b>   |
| SPRING BREAK   |   |
| March 21 – 23  | Thucydides, Book I (The archaeology; the cause of the war; the conference at Sparta; the question of justice and necessity) |
| March 28 – 30  | Thucydides, Books I-II (Athenian imperialism; Pausanias and Themistocles; Periclean Athens)                                 |
| April 4 – 6  | Thucydides, Book II (Pericles' Funeral Oration; the plague; the character of the war)                                       |
| April 11 – 13  | Thucydides, Selections from Book III (The Mytilenian Debate; Revolutionary politics and human nature)                       |
| April 18 – 20  | Thucydides, Selections from Book IV (Two great non-Athenians: Hermocrates and Brasidas)                                     |
| April 25 – 27  | Thucydides, Selections from Book V (Alcibiades; The Peace Treaties; The Melian Dialogue)                                    |
| May 2 – 4  | Thucydides, Selections from Book VI (The Sicilian expedition)   |
| <b>Friday, May 13 (7:00 – 10:00 p.m.) FINAL EXAM</b> |   |