

# Morality and Politics

Fall 2012

GOV 335M, Unique # 38640 & CTI 335, Unique # 33985

Tuesdays & Thursdays 2- 3:15 PM

Location: Mezes 2.210

**Professor:** Dana Stauffer  
danastauffer@austin.utexas.edu  
Office: Mezes Hall Room 3.136  
tel. 232-1448

Office Hours:  
Mondays 12:00-3:00

The guiding question of this course concerns the relationship between morality and politics. What is the proper place of morality in political life? Should moral and ethical considerations guide our political decision-making? Does the best political order aim at a morally decent life for individuals and communities? Or are moral aims misplaced in politics? We will spend most of the course examining the contrasting answers to this question offered by two giants of political philosophy, Aristotle and Machiavelli. We will read selections from Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Politics*, and we will follow that with a close reading of Machiavelli's *Prince*. Our reading of classic texts of political philosophy will take up about two-thirds of the course; in the remaining third, we will read literary works in which political actors of various historical time periods are confronted with moral dilemmas. Specific themes under discussion will include the role of fortune in politics, and the relationships between politics and necessity, friendship and virtue, and political ambition and the common good.

## Required Texts:

1. *Sophocles II: Four Tragedies*. By Sophocles. Edited by David Grene and Richmond Lattimore. University of Chicago Press.
2. *Ethics and Politics*. By Aristotle. Translators William Ross and Benjamin Jowett. El Paso Norte Press.
3. *The Prince*. By Niccolo Machiavelli. Translated by Harvey C. Mansfield. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. University of Chicago Press.
4. *Julius Caesar*. By William Shakespeare. Bantam Classics.
5. *Darkness at Noon*. By Arthur Koestler. Bantam Books.
6. *Ibsen: Four Major Plays, Volume II*. By Henrik Ibsen. Signet Classics.

## **Grading and Requirements:**

First Exam: 30%

Second Exam: 30%

Paper: 30%

Class Participation, Including Pop Quizzes: 10%

**Exams:** Both exams will be in-class blue book exams consisting mostly, if not exclusively, of essays. There may or may not be some short answers questions as well. You will have some choice among the essay questions. And for both exams, I will announce in advance a list of themes from which the essay questions will be drawn. The second exam will include material from the entire semester.

**Papers:** You will be required to write one 5-7 page paper over the course of the term. I will hand out possible paper topics four times during the term, each with their own respective due dates. You must choose to write one of the papers. Late work will be marked down one-third of a letter grade for each day of lateness (from a B+ to a B, for example), and papers will NOT be accepted by email. You must *not* use secondary sources for this paper. Plagiarism will result in an automatic F.

**Class Participation, Quizzes, and Attendance:** The works we will read this semester were written with great care, and they are difficult. It is essential that you read every assignment carefully, preferably twice, and you should come to class with thoughtful comments and questions. Credit will be given in the area of class participation not only for serious and intelligent contributions to class, but also for listening attentively both to the lecture and to the contributions of your fellow classmates.

**Laptops, cell phones, blackberries, and gadgets of any sort must be turned off during class.** If you have a special need for a laptop, please explain that need to me.

To encourage students to keep up with the readings, I will give an unspecified number of **pop quizzes**. These quizzes will consist of basic questions that should not be especially difficult for those who have done the reading. Makeup quizzes will not be given. However, I will drop your lowest quiz grade.

**Attendance** is an important part of your overall performance in the course. Frequently I will take roll. If you are late and miss roll, you will be marked absent. If you miss a quiz, you will be marked absent. If I take roll at the end of class and you have left early, you will be marked absent. **Students with four or more unexcused absences will be docked a letter grade for the course (that is, from a B+ to a C+, for example.)** However, on a cheerier note, students with no recorded absences will receive an extra point on their final grade.

Much of the lecture will proceed by way of textual analysis. Frequently, I will quote from the readings and refer to page numbers, so you should bring the assigned reading to every class.

**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>.

Notification of a need for disability accommodations must be given to the professor at least 14 days prior to a paper due date or exam.

**Notice regarding accommodations for religious holidays:** By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

**Emergency Evacuation Policy:** In the event of a fire or other emergency, it may be necessary to evacuate a building rapidly. Upon the activation of a fire alarm or the announcement of an emergency in a university building, all occupants of the building are required to evacuate and assemble outside. Once evacuated, no one may re-enter the building without instruction to do so from the Austin Fire Department, University of Texas at Austin Police Department, or Fire Prevention Services office.

Students should familiarize themselves with all the exit doors of each room and building they occupy at the university, and should remember that the nearest exit routes may not be the same as the way they typically enter buildings.

Students requiring assistance in evacuation shall inform their instructors in writing during the first week of class. Information regarding emergency evacuation routes and emergency procedures can be found at <http://www.utexas.edu/emergency>.

**Academic Honesty:** In all of your work for this course, you are expected to know and to adhere to University of Texas policies regarding academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course.

Here is a link to the academic honor code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>.

## Course Schedule:

*Note: This course schedule is approximate. I will announce the official reading assignment for the next class at the beginning of each class. So be sure to listen carefully at the beginning of each class! I will usually post the assignment for the next class on Blackboard, but do not assume that I will do so. If you miss a class, you are responsible for finding out the precise reading assignment for the next class.*

January 17	Introduction
January 19	Sophocles, <i>Ajax</i> , lines 1-865
January 24	Sophocles, <i>Ajax</i> , lines 865-end
January 26	Finish <i>Ajax</i>
January 31	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book I; first paper assigned
February 2	Writing
February 7	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book II, selections
February 9	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book IV, selections
February 14	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book I, Chapters 1-2; first paper due
February 16	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book I, Chapters 5-8
February 21	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book III, Chapters 6-9
February 23	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book III, Chapters 10-13
February 28	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
March 1	Exam Review
March 6	<b>First Exam</b>
March 8	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
March 20	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
March 22	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> ; second paper assigned
March 27	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>

March 29	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
April 3	Finish up <i>The Prince</i> / Writing
April 5	Shakespeare, <i>The Tragedy of Julius Caesar</i> , Acts I-II; second paper due
April 10	<i>Caesar</i> , Acts III-V; third paper assigned
April 12	Henrik Ibsen, <i>An Enemy of the People</i> , Acts I-II
April 17	Ibsen, <i>An Enemy of the People</i> , Acts III-V
April 19	Koestler, <i>Darkness at Noon</i> ; fourth paper assigned
April 24	Koestler, <i>Darkness at Noon</i> ; third paper due
April 26	<i>Darkness at Noon</i>
May 1	Review
May 3	<b>Second Exam</b> ; fourth paper due

There is no final exam in this course.