The University of Texas at Austin
Government 382M
Unique # 38915
Plato's *Republic*
Fall 2012

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Office Hours: Friday 8:30 – 11:30

Course Description

This course examines Plato's political philosophy through a rigorous study of the *Republic*, his greatest and most influential work. We will discuss at length and hopefully in depth all of the central themes of the *Republic*. Among these themes are the question of justice, the nature and necessary limits of political life, and the relationship between philosophy and the political community. The course aims to develop the capacity of students for careful and concentrated study of Plato, who will be approached not just as important thinker in the history of political thought but as a philosopher from whom we can still learn.

Main Text

The Republic of Plato, translated by Allan Bloom (Basic Books)

If you are able to read the Greek, terrific, do so. I recommend using the OCT edition, not the Loeb.

Recommended Reading

There is an ocean of secondary literature on the *Republic*, and you are encouraged to swim in it. Below is a mere sample of some of the works you might read.

Annas, Julia. *An Introduction to Plato's Republic* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981).

Benardete, Seth. *Socrates' Second Sailing* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

Craig, Leon. *The War Lover: A Study of Plato's Republic* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994).

Howland, Jacob. *The Republic: The Odyssey of Philosophy* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1993).

Nichols, Mary. *Socrates and the Political Community: An Ancient Debate* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987).

Rabieh, Linda. *Plato and the Virtue of Courage* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006).

Reeve, C. D. C. *Philosopher-Kings: The Argument of Plato's Republic* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988).

Rosen, Stanley. *Plato's Republic: A Study* (New Haven: Yale, 2005).

Sallis, John. *Being and Logos: The Way of Platonic Dialogue* (New Jersey: Humanities Press International, 1986).

Strauss, Leo. *The City and Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964).

Vlastos, Gregory. *Platonic Studies*, 2nd ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1981)

Requirements and Grading

Seminar Paper: 60%

This 12ish–15ish page analytical essay will be due on Monday, December 10. You should come up with your own topic, but I will be happy to discuss possible topics with you. Late papers will be marked down 10 points for initial lateness, and 5 points for each day of lateness beyond the first. Incompletes will not be granted.

Three papers of 2-3 pages: 20%

For these brief papers, I will offer topics at least seven times during the semester. You are required to write three of them. They will be due at the beginning of class one week after they are assigned. Late papers will not be accepted. I will write brief comments on these papers, but I will not grade them. The quality of these papers over the course of the semester will be considered, however, in determining your final grade.

Class participation: 20%

NOTE: Plus/minus grades will be used in final grading.

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.

Course Plan

This rough schedule is subject to revision as dictated by the pace of our discussions.

As announced, I will be holding an extra study group on Book I of the *Republic*, tentatively scheduled for Mondays at 2:00 in Batts 1.104. All are welcome to attend (whatever your knowledge of Greek), but attendance is not required.

All readings are from Plato's *Republic.*

August 30	Introduction; Book II, beginning – 369a.
September 6	Book II, 369a – end.
September 13	Book III, beginning – to 403c.
September 20	Book III, 403c – end.
September 27	Book IV, beginning – 435a.
October 4	Book IV, 435a – end.
October 11	Book V, beginning – 466d.
October 18	Book V, 466d – end.
October 25	Book VI, beginning – 502d.
November 1	Book VI, 502d – end.
November 8	Book VII
November 15	Book VIII
November 29	Book IX
December 6	Book X