

**GOV 335M, Unique # 38517/ CTI 335, Unique # 33131:
Morality and Politics**

Fall 2010

**Tuesdays & Thursdays 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM
Location: UTC 3.134**

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Office Hours:
Tuesdays 12:30-1:30 and
Thursdays 1:00-3:00

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? Or is morality irrelevant to 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* to gain a sense of his thought in broad outline, and we will follow that with a close reading of Machiavelli's *Prince*. We will also briefly consider how Machiavelli's break with Aristotle was continued and modified by Hobbes. 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 by authors such as Sophocles and Shakespeare that express and explore some of the greatest and most enduring questions of politics and morality. One of the main topics under examination will be gratitude. What do we owe to those who have done us a good turn? And what do we have the right to expect from those whom we have benefitted? We will also discuss the best political order, 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. 2nd Edition. University of Chicago Press.
4. *Julius Caesar*. By William Shakespeare. Bantam Classics.
5. *Leviathan*. By Thomas Hobbes. Edited by J.C. A. Gaskin. Oxford University Press.
6. *Billy Budd, Sailor (An Inside Narrative)*. By Herman Melville. University of Chicago Press.
7. *Darkness at Noon*. By Arthur Koestler. Bantam Books.

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 three 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.

Disabilities: Any student with a documented disability (physical or cognitive) who requires academic accommodations should contact the Services for Students with Disabilities area of the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (voice) or 471-4641 (TTY for users who are deaf or hard of hearing) as soon as possible to request an official letter outlining authorized accommodations.

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.

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.

August 26	Introduction
August 31	Sophocles, <i>Ajax</i> , lines 1-865
September 2	Sophocles, <i>Ajax</i> , lines 865-end.
September 7	Finish <i>Ajax</i> ; Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book I
September 9	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book III; first paper option assigned
September 14	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book X
September 16	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book I, Chapters 1-2
September 21	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book III, Chapters 6-9
September 23	Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> , Book III, Chapters 6-9, Book VII, selections; first paper due
September 28	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
September 30	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
October 5	Exam Review
October 7	First Exam

October 12	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
October 14	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
October 19	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>
October 21	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> ; second paper assigned
October 26	Shakespeare, <i>The Tragedy of Julius Caesar</i> , Acts I-II
October 28	<i>Caesar</i> , Acts III-V
November 2	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I, Selections
November 4	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I, Selections; second paper due
November 9	Melville, <i>Billy Budd</i> ; third paper option assigned
November 11	<i>Billy Budd</i>
November 16	Koestler, <i>Darkness at Noon</i>
November 18	Koestler, <i>Darkness at Noon</i> ;
November 23	<i>Darkness at Noon</i> ; third paper due
November 30	Review
December 2	Second Exam

There is no final exam in this course.