

## Introduction to Political Theory: What is Justice?

Political Science 120/LinC M3: Ultimate Questions  
Spring 2007, PPHAC 338: M, W 8:50-10:00 a.m.,  
Office Hours: M, W 10:15-noon and by appointment, Comenius 112  
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“I say that the just is nothing other than the advantage of the stronger.” (337c)

Thus begins Thrasymachus’ attack on Socrates in the opening book of Plato’s *Republic*.

However offensive this formulation may strike us, Thrasymachus’ initial definition of justice stands as one of the clearest and least ambiguous in the history of political thinking. How might we define justice otherwise? While we may cherish definitions that appear more benevolent or virtuous, defining justice beyond the most general of ideas is rarely easy. This course pushes beyond the unexamined assumptions we may hold regarding justice by closely examining pivotal works of political theory. The objective of this course is twofold: 1) To introduce students to texts of central significance for the discipline; 2) To challenge students to move beyond the study of texts to their own active efforts to define justice.

Hannah Arendt, *Eichmann in Jerusalem* (Penguin Books)

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

Plato, *Apology, Crito, and Phaedo* in *Trial and Death of Socrates* (Hackett Publishing)

All books are available for purchase at Moravian College Bookstore.

Please do not purchase other translations.

### ***Reading and Discussing Texts***

Learning how to use textual evidence is one of the top priorities of this course. We cannot work without the text. It is an explicit requirement that you bring your impulsively highlighted and passionately marked up books or articles to every meeting. If you prefer not to write in books, you should take detailed notes on the text, including the page numbers of critical passages. The highest form of participation is to take the voice of the author seriously, to be able to reconstruct and reconsider the argument, and to direct others to critical passages. Unsupported answers will be less valued than those that draw the discussion back into the text.

Monday, January 15	Introduction
Wednesday, January 17	Plato, <i>Apology</i> , instructions for paper #1
Monday, January 22	Plato, <i>Apology</i>
Wednesday, January 24	Plato, <i>Crito</i>
Monday, January 29	Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Book I
Wednesday, January 31	Visiting Speaker: Professor Jack Ramsey (Theater) on reading texts out loud
Friday, February 2	Paper #1 is due to Mrs. Ortiz in Comenius 206 by 4 p.m.
Monday, February 5	Book II
Wednesday, February 7	Book III
Monday, February 12	Book IV
Wednesday, February 14	Book V, discussion of paper #1
Monday, February 19	In-class mid-term examination
Wednesday, February 21	Book VI
Sat, March 3 - Mon, March 12	Spring Recess
Monday, March 12	Workshop at Reeves Library: Dr. Dorothy Glew on researching justice

Wednesday, March 14	Book VII
Monday, March 19	Book VIII
Wednesday, March 21	Book IX, discussion of mid-term examinations
Thursday, April 22	Instructions for paper #2 via e-mail
Monday, March 26	7 p.m. film: <i>Plato's Republic</i> (1996)
Wednesday, March 28	Book X
Monday, April 2	Hannah Arendt, <i>Eichmann in Jerusalem</i> , chapters I and II
Wednesday, April 4	<i>Eichmann</i> , chapters III and IV
Thursday April 5	Paper #2 due to Mrs. Ortiz in Comenius 206 by 4 p.m.
Friday, April 6 – Monday, April 9	Easter Recess
Wednesday, April 11	7 p.m. film: <i>Witness to the Holocaust – The Trial of Adolf Eichmann</i> (1987)
Monday, April 16	<i>Eichmann</i> , chapters VII and VIII
Wednesday, April 18	<i>Eichmann</i> , chapter XV, Epilogue, and Postscript
Monday, April 23	Opening of first-day essays and closing discussion
Wednesday, April 25	Discussion of paper #2, review for final examination (date and time TBA)

Paper 1	2/2 at 4 p.m.	Five pages	15%
Midterm	2/19	In-class examination	20%
Paper 2	4/5	Six pages	20%

Final Examination	TBA	TBA	20%
Engagement: participation and presentation of the text			25%

### ***Engagement***

**A** - Critical, innovative and careful readings; substantial and consistent notes or written preparations for discussion; frequent and illuminating text-based contributions; contribution of discussion-shaping questions; careful engagement of the arguments of others; support and promotion of positive discussion dynamics.

**B** - Complete and careful readings; consistent notes or written preparations for discussion; lively, substantial, and argumentative text-based contributions; contribution of independent questions, engagement of the arguments of others.

**C** - Incomplete or superficial readings; minimal notes or written preparations for discussion; regular (at least once per meeting) discussion participation.

**D** - Incomplete or missing readings; lack of notes or written preparations for discussion; mostly passive presence.

**F** - Persistent vegetative state; low-level trance; slightly elevated body temperature.

**Nota bene: You cannot pass this course without completing all required elements.**

### ***General Housekeeping***

- 1) I invite you to visit my office hours. Please be in touch with any questions and thoughts you may have about our work together. You can also contact me by e-mail at [haddad@moravian.edu](mailto:haddad@moravian.edu).
- 2) We will discuss all assignments two weeks in advance of a given due date. I am happy to help you with outlines.
- 3) I recommend seeking help at the Writing Center. Make an appointment and request feedback on the clarity of your argument and language.
- 4) Expect to work six hours on average outside of class per week. Some weeks the reading load will be lighter, some weeks it will be considerably heavier.
- 5) Students with a documented learning disability who desire accommodations for this course must first visit the Office of Learning Services (ext. 1510) and follow college procedures on receiving accommodations.
- 6) I do not accept late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations. For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment.
- 7) Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment in this class. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm>
- 8) Do not miss class. Undocumented absences beyond the first will harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% per absence.
- 9) No food in the classroom, please. ***And, turn your cell phone off before class.***