

Prof. K. H. Haddad, haddad@moravian.edu, Comenius 112, (610) 861-1559  
Office hours: Tuesdays 4:00 to 5:00 p.m.; Wednesdays 3:30 to 4:40 p.m.; and by appointment  
This course meets on Tuesdays and Thursday from 2:35 to 3:45 p.m. in Comenius Hall 111.

### **INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THINKING (M3)**

We will begin our study of political thinking in the depths of Plato's cave. Our concern will be to sort out the consequences of how we think about politics.

- How should I think about the world?
- What should I do? What should we do?
- How should we encounter one another?
- How should we arrange our lives together?
- Who should rule?
- What are the legitimate limits of political or state power?

These questions share a concern for norms. The emphasis falls on one recurring word: should. This means that normative political theory investigates situations in which knowing the facts will not suffice. Normative theory must address unclear, conflictual, or otherwise complex situations. This means that students of political theory must engage obligations and values as explicit sites of inquiry. To do this, we must attend to our texts with care. I invite you to find the connections between texts that have held the attention of political theorists over time and your present day experience of the personal and the political. True to the liberal arts tradition, our group will engage in close readings of the text as well as argumentative discussion. This course satisfies the Ultimate Questions (M3) requirements of the Learning in Common Curriculum (LinC) and is required for all Political Science majors.

#### **Course objectives:**

- 1) To reflect on the conditions and practices of consciousness
- 2) To gain critical distance from naïve realism
- 3) To expand and deepen an account of the political
- 4) To reflect on language usage inside and outside of the classroom
- 5) To acquire canonical and contemporary literacy in political theory
- 6) To ask critical questions regarding political matters
- 7) To improve verbal and written expression with reference to textual evidence

#### **Books for sale at the Moravian College Bookstore:**

- 1) Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (University of Chicago Press)
  - 3) Christine de Pizan, *Book of the Body Politic* (Cambridge University Press)
  - 4) Plato, *Trial and Death of Socrates* (Hackett)
  - 5) Michael J. Sandel, *Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux)
- Other required reading will be made available on reserve at Reeves Library or online.

Assignments and Evaluation

Calendar	Project	% Final Grade
Ongoing	Engagement	25%
February 14	Examination	25%
March 26	Examination	25%
May 2	Final Examination	25%

Meetings	Readings and Assignments
Tuesday, January 15	Introduction to POSC 120 (syllabus)
Thursday, January 17	Introduction to political theory (subfield)
Tuesday, January 29	Plato, <i>The Republic</i> , Book VII (Allegory of the Cave) (copies)
Thursday, January 31	Plato, <i>Apology</i> (first half)
Tuesday, February 5	<i>Apology</i> (second half)
Thursday, February 7	Plato, <i>Crito</i> (entire)
Tuesday, February 12	<i>Crito</i>
<b>Thursday, February 14</b>	<b>Examination</b>
Tuesday, February 19	Christine de Pizan, <i>Book of the Body Politic</i> , Part 1: On Princes
Thursday, February 21	<i>Book of the Body Politic</i> , Part 2: On Nobles and Knights
Tuesday, February 26	<i>Book of the Body Politic</i> , Part 3: On the Common People
Thursday, February 28	Niccolò Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (first published in Italian, 1532), Chronology, Letter to the Magnificent Lorenzo de Medici, Chapters I-VI
<b>Spring Recess</b>	
Tuesday, March 12	Chapters VII-XIII
Thursday, March 14	Chapters XIV-XX
<b>Tuesday, March 19</b>	Chapters XXI-XVI
Thursday, March 21	Comparison of the political implications of the two respective mirrors for princes
<b>Tuesday, March 26</b>	<b>Examination</b>
Thursday, March 28	Michael J. Sandel, <i>Justice: What's the Right Thing to Do?</i> (2009), Chapter 1: "Doing The Right Thing"
Tuesday, April 2	Chapter 2: "The Greatest Happiness Principle/Utilitarianism"
Thursday, April 4	Chapter 3: "Do We Own Ourselves?/Libertarianism"

Tuesday, April 9	Chapter 4: "Hired Help/Markets and Morals"
Thursday, April 11	Chapter 5: "What Matters is the Motive/Immanuel Kant"
Tuesday, April 17	Chapter 8: "Who Deserves What?/Aristotle"
Thursday, April 19	Chapter 9: "What Do We Owe One Another/Dilemmas of Loyalty"
Tuesday, April 23	Chapter 10: "Justice and the Common Good"
Thursday, April 25	Course evaluations and review for the final exam
<b>Friday, May 3</b>	<b>Final examination, 8:30 a.m.</b>

What does an engagement grade represent?

- A. Critical, innovative and careful reading of all assignments; substantial notes or written preparation for discussion; frequent text-based contributions; contribution of discussion-shaping questions; careful engagement of the arguments of others; support of positive discussion dynamics.
- B. Complete and careful readings; consistent notes or written preparation 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 preparation for discussion; regular (at least once per meeting) discussion participation.
- D. Incomplete or missing readings; lack of notes or written preparation for discussion; mostly passive presence.
- F Persistent, vegetative state; low-level trance; slightly elevated body temperature.

## General Course Information

PLEASE TURN YOUR CELLPHONE OFF OR DOWN  
AND PUT IT AWAY BEFORE YOU ENTER THE CLASSROOM.

Our purpose is concentration and dialogue. Please protect the classroom as a space of learning. If you are a parent or a caretaker and thus need to be accessible at all times, please let me know.

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. I am happy to help you with difficulties relating to your reading of our texts as well as challenges that may arise with regard to assignments. It is my pleasure to help you improve your enjoyment of and performance in this course.

2) Be diligent in your studies and attend class. Undocumented absences beyond the first will harm your engagement grade at the rate of 5% of your total course grade (per absence).

3) Drinks are fine, but food or gum impedes your ability to participate in our discussion and is therefore not appropriate.

4) Expect to work six hours on average outside of class per week. The workload varies, and the texts can be challenging. Give yourself plenty of time to read, reread, review, and take notes on texts. Our interest is in deep readings and in gaining a solid toolkit of political theory questions, concepts, and arguments. Don't skim or rush. Avoid online resources in favor of a direct experience with the text.

7) I strongly discourage late assignments, except in appropriately documented emergency situations. For the sake of equity, please do not ask for special treatment. Late work is penalized at 30 % of the assignment grade on the four-point scale.

8) Plagiarism will result in failure of the assignment or the course. Please see Moravian College Student Handbook for an account of academic honesty. See <http://www.moravian.edu/studentlife/handbook/academic2.htm>

9) Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Elaine Mara, assistant director of learning services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or by calling (610) 861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.

10) This syllabus is subject to change.