

Political Science					346 South Kedzie Hall					
SPRING SEM 2008					http://www.msu.edu/~allenwi/					
PLS 170					Intro to Political Philosophy					
<u>001</u>	3	Tu. Th.	3:00p	4:20p	402	Computer Center	W. ALLEN	140	175	219

432-9967

allenwi@msu.edu

Office Hours: Tu.-Th. Noon-2 p.m.

Teaching Assistant: Frank Lancaster, lancas25@msu.edu

Description: Basic questions of political philosophy as considered from ancient to modern times. Primary focus on the origins, defense, and radical critiques of modern liberal democracy.

Approach:

What is Political Power? Is virtue teachable? What is the best regime? Is human nature fixed or evolving? What is justice?

These and related questions are the heart and soul of political philosophy. They all point to an inescapable truth, namely, that human beings begin their search for truth by struggling with the first claims upon themselves that they recognize.

In this class we seek to recreate the discovery experience of asking "what is the good?" We will do so by rehearsing the records left by those persons most eminent in the pursuit of that question. Because this is a large class, we must undertake this work by means of lecture. However, we will not neglect to make time for inquiry within class. Participants may, and should, raise questions. Moreover, the instructor likely shall from time to time call upon participants to respond to particular questions of the day.

By the end of the course each participant who has seen the course through to its conclusion should be equipped to deal directly with questions of political philosophy in a more than elementary manner.

The readings and activities for the course are set forth below on a week-by-week schedule. Each participant in the course is individually responsible for fulfilling the requirements of the course as they are set out. Each must affirm to perform all assignments as required and that all work submitted in response to assignments is one's own

This course will be conducted in accord with MSU and Department of Political Science policies respecting academic honesty and academic responsibility. Anyone in doubt about the requirements of those codes and policies should contact the professor at the outset of the course.

BOOKS: One finds most of the books to be referred to in this course in the local bookstores, either the MSU Bookstore at the International Center or the independent bookstores in East Lansing. We do not expect anyone to purchase all of them. *Because they are numerous, although the readings are short, it may be convenient to find copies elsewhere.* They should also be available at the MSU Library on the reserve list for PLS170. Further, versions of classical texts will be available through on-line resources as indicated. Note, though, that this reading list is a good start on a great library!

Required Texts:

Coursepack*

Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Aristot.+Nic.+Eth.>

Aristotle, *Politics* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Aristot.+Pol.+1252a>

Plato, *Meno* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plat.+Meno+70a>

Plato, *Gorgias* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plat.+Gorg.+447a>

Plato, *Crito* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Plat.+Crito+43a>

Xenophon, *Symposium* <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?lookup=Xen.+Sym.+1.1>

Aquinas, *Treatise on Law* <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/2.htm>

Vitoria, *Commentary on Homicide* [Angel "Documents"]

Machiavelli, *The Prince* [JC143 .M3813 1997](#)

Hobbes, *Leviathan* [JC153 .H65 1996b](#)

* W. B. Allen, *The Personal and the Political: Three Fables by Montesquieu.*

Hamilton, Madison, Jay, *The Federalist Papers* [JK154 1961](#) c.2

Allen, *The Federalist Papers: A Commentary* [KF4515 .A43 2000](#)

Marx, *Critique of the Gotha Program* [HX276 .M2813 1972](#)

Marx, *German Ideology* [HX276 .M2713 1947](#)

Nietzsche, *Twilight of the Idols* [B3313 .G6713 1998](#)

Strauss, "Note on the Plan of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*" [Angel "Documents"]

Recommended Texts:

Iain Hampsher-Monk, *History of Modern Political Thought*

Leo Strauss, *History of Political Philosophy* [JA81 .S75 1972](#) c.2

Leo Strauss, *Introduction to Political Philosophy: Ten Essays...* [JA71 .S794 1989](#)

Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*

<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/home.html>

Weekly Reading Schedule:

TUE		THUR
Temple of Gnide – General Preface, Preface & Introduction	WEEK ONE	Temple of Gnide – Text & Commentary
Lysimachus & Sulla	WEEK TWO	PRE-TEST
Aristotle, <i>Ethics</i> , Bk I	WEEK THREE	Aristotle, <i>Ethics</i> , Bk II One page paper due
Plato, <i>Meno</i>	WEEK FOUR	Aristotle, <i>Ethics</i> , Bks III- IV One page paper due
Plato, <i>Gorgias</i>	WEEK FIVE	Aristotle, <i>Ethics</i> , Bk V One page paper due
Plato, <i>Crito</i> Xenophon, <i>Symposium</i>	WEEK SIX	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Bk I One page paper due
Aquinas, <i>Treatise</i> , Qu 90- 97 & Vitoria, <i>Commentary</i>	WEEK SEVEN	MID-TERM

Machiavelli, <i>Prince</i> , 1-12	WEEK EIGHT	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Bks II-III One page paper due
SPRING BREAK	WEEK NINE	SPRING BREAK
Machiavelli, <i>Prince</i> , 13-26	WEEK TEN	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Bks IV-V; One page paper due
Hobbes, pp. 1-104	WEEK ELEVEN	Hobbes, pp. 104-136 One page paper due
Federalist Papers 1, 9, 10, 15, 23, 37	WEEK TWELVE	Hobbes, pp. 139-180 One page paper due
Federalist Papers, 47, 51, 63, 67, 69, 78, 84	WEEK THIRTEEN	Marx, <i>German Ideology & Gotha Program</i> One page paper due
Allen, Pts. I-III	WEEK FOURTEEN	Nietzsche, <i>Twilight of the Idols</i> One page paper due
Allen, Pts. IV-V	WEEK FIFTEEN	Strauss, Plan of Nietzsche's <i>Beyond Good and Evil</i> One page paper due
Allen, Pts. VI-VIII	WEEK SIXTEEN	Allen, Epilogue
TERM PAPER DUE	WEEK SEVENTEEN	

REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance on each lecture in the course, as reflected by log-in records and participant affirmation.
2. Classroom participation – Regular reading of lesson assignments, as attested by participant affirmation.
3. Pre-test: By the fourth session, participants will be asked to take a pre-test, based on the readings and discussions of the first three class sessions. The test will be administered on-line, solely during the period of time set aside for the class meeting itself. The Pre-test will be graded on the evaluation scale applying to the class as a whole. The absolute grade achieved on that test will constitute the course grade for the entire semester, subject to the exceptions, terms and conditions following:

- Participants in the class must fulfill all other requirements of the class in order for the Pre-test grade to be applied as described.
 - Independent of the evaluation of the other elements of class requirements, the Pre-test grade will be the grade for the semester, provided it is the highest of the two grades computed.
 - Class participants can *improve* their grade beyond the Pre-test grade, but they cannot lower it provided they have met all other requirements, including regular attendance.
4. EXPLICATION DU TEXTE: Each class member must prepare a brief summary or “explication du texte” starting in Week Three. The summary must not exceed one page in length, and must be turned in no later than the last class in each week. Class members turning in the assignment each week may be randomly selected to read their papers to the class. The papers must be submitted through the “Drop Box” in Angel. To access the course on-line you will need your Pilot userid and password. Go to: <http://angel.msu.edu>.

Each “explication” paper will be worth four (4) points toward the semester grade. Only the nine highest up to a maximum of 35 points will be counted.

5. Mid-Term Essay: Each class participant must submit on-line a brief essay (ca. 1500 words) at the end of seventh week of the seminar. That essay shall discuss the question of “What is Political Power?”
- The Mid-Term essay shall account for twenty-five per cent (25%) of the term credit.
6. Final Paper: Each class participant must submit a final essay, responding to the question, “How does political philosophy identify the good regime?” The Final Paper must reflect research in the course materials and may include research in the secondary materials recommended. The Final Paper must be submitted on-line and shall not exceed ten pages, double-spaced in 11-pt font.
- The Term Paper shall account for thirty-five percent (35%) of the term credit.
7. 5. PARTICIPATION: 5 points. In addition to evaluation of in-class presentation, class members will have opportunity to participate on-line through the “Discussion Group” as well as in classroom discussion.

Honors Requirement: Honors students may additionally complete an assignment based on further readings. This work will be supervised by Mr. Allen, and Honor students will meet with him on an arranged basis to monitor the progress of the work.

Grade calculation

Course averages, on the 100-point scale, will be converted to MSU 4-point grades on the following table:

96-100 =	4.0
90-95 =	3.5
84-89 =	3.0
78-83 =	2.5
72-77 =	2.0
66-71 =	1.5
60-65 =	1.0
< 60 =	0.0

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APPENDIX I:

Criteria Used in Evaluating Written Work

While there will be many opportunities for oral discussion of written work, it will be helpful to adopt a grading scale and to commit ourselves to the use of certain explicit criteria.

The scale is numerical, as follows:

- 1- excellent
- 2- good
- 3- satisfactory
- 4- poor
- 5- very poor

To receive a 1 rating a paper should demonstrate the following:

- a. There should be a clearly stated thesis and a clearly developed line of argument.
- b. There should be a sense of organization in both the individual paragraphs and in the theme as a whole.
- c. The individual paragraphs should be developed and related logically to one another and to the thesis of the paper as a whole.
- d. There should be few glaring errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.
- e. Generalizations should be supported by concrete supporting evidence, and the paper should avoid stereotyped lines of argumentation.

To receive a 2 rating a paper should have all the ingredients of an excellent essay (1 rating), except that there will probably be minor problems in one or two of the above areas (a-e).

To receive a 3 rating a paper should demonstrate the following:

- a. The basic criteria for a satisfactory essay is that the student must make himself understood and must communicate ideas in spite of some technical problems.
- b. It follows that a paper receiving a 3 rating should demonstrate by college standards an adequate sense of organization, paragraphing, argumentation, spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc. Otherwise, of course, the student will not communicate ideas clearly and concisely.

Essays receiving a 4 rating are generally characterized by any combination of the following:

- a. There is oftentimes an insufficient development of ideas.
- b. The student often avoids discussing the topic.
- c. There are frequent errors in spelling, grammar, punctuation, etc.
- d. There is no clearly stated thesis and no clearly developed argument.
- e. Principles or organizing both paragraphs and the theme as a whole are ignored or applied in a very haphazard manner.
- f. There is oftentimes a lack of adequate subordination and coordination of ideas, thus resulting in too many short, choppy sentences.
- g. Generalizations oftentimes go unsupported by concrete detail, and the line of argument (if one exists) is oftentimes a rehash of cliches and stereotypes.

Essays receiving a 5 rating are generally characterized by the student's inability to make himself understood due to frequent and major problems in many of the above areas (a-g of the 4 rated essays). Due to these problems the essay is almost incoherent.

RULES GOVERNING WRITTEN COMPOSITIONS

General

1. A margin of about an inch should be observed at the left and a margin of one-half inch on the right of every theme.
2. Paragraphs must be indented another inch.
3. All compositions should be neatly written.
4. One line should be left between the title and the composition.
5. Choose words carefully to avoid repetition and to give variety.
6. All numbers up to 100 should be written out except in addresses, dates, and statistics, or where consistency demands that the Arabic numbers be used.

Punctuation

11. A comma is used after *yes* and *no* in answering questions.
12. Nouns of address are set off by commas.
13. Words in a series are separated-by-commas.
14. The second and all following items in addresses and dates should be set off by commas.
15. Words in apposition are set off by commas.
16. Commas should be used before conjunctions joining coordinate clauses.
17. Introductory adverbial clauses must be followed *by* a comma.
18. Participial groups coming first should be set off by commas.
19. Participial groups coming far after their nouns should be set off by commas.
20. Participial groups used to explain why or how or when should be set off by commas.
21. Direct quotations are indicated by comma, quotation marks, and capital letter. They are closed by period or question mark and quotation marks.
Examples of three types of quotations:
(a) John said, "May I go to the show?"
(b) "May I go to the show?" said John.
(If this had not been a question, a comma would have been used)
(c) "May I," said John, "go to the show?"
22. Non-restrictive clauses should be set off by commas.
23. A period is used at the close of a declarative sentence.
24. A period is used after all abbreviations.
25. A question mark is used after an interrogative sentence.
26. An exclamation mark should be used only after an exclamatory sentence.
27. The first word of every sentence should be capitalized.
28. The first and all other words except prepositions, articles, and conjunctions in the title should be capitalized.
29. Proper nouns and proper adjectives should be capitalized.

Grammar and Structure

31. A pronoun should always refer to a definite antecedent.
32. A participle should always modify a noun or pronoun.
33. Verbs should always agree with their subjects in number.
34. Tense consistency should be observed.
35. The correct case form of pronouns should be used.
36. Every sentence must be complete.

Spelling

41. All words whose spelling is not known should be looked up in a dictionary.
42. Final e is dropped before adding ing, ed, er, est.
43. A word ending in a single consonant preceded by a single vowel and having the accent on the last syllable doubles the final consonant before adding ing, er, est, ed.
44. *i* before *e* except after *c* or when sounded as *a* as in neighbor and weigh.

45. The plural of words ending in y preceded by a consonant is formed by changing y to i and by adding es.
46. The correct form of abbreviations should be used.
47. The singular possessive of a noun is formed by adding an apostrophe and s. The possessive form of a pronoun does not use an apostrophe.
48. The plural possessive of a word whose plural ends in s is formed by adding an apostrophe.
49. The plural possessive of a word whose plural does not end in s is formed by adding an apostrophe and s.
50. Words should be properly divided at the end of the line.
51. An apostrophe is used in contractions to designate the omission of a letter or successive letters:
e.g.
they're=they are
it's=it is
doesn't=does not
I'd=I would or I should



[Writing for Social Scientists: How to Start and Finish Your Thesis, Book, or Article](#)

Author: Becker, Howard S. **Publisher:** University of Chicago Press **ISBN or UPC:** 0-226-04108-5. **Date:** Mar 1986 **Price:** \$ 9.95 **Availability:** Readily Available

A Rulebook for Arguments **Author:**[Anthony Weston](#) **Publication Date:** January 2001 **Publisher:**[Hackett Publishing Company, Incorporated](#) **ISBN:**0-87220-552-5 **Paper Edition:**3, Revised **Pages:**xiv, 87 **Price:**\$5.95(USD) Retail (Publisher) **Available Through:**Alibris;Baker & Taylor Books;Bertrams Books;Brodart Company;Copyright Clearance Center, Inc.;Gardners Books Limited

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