Western Political Thought 1:  
Duty, Power, and Justice in the Ancient World

Course Overview
This course surveys leading figures and themes of Western political thought in the “ancient” world, i.e. the era of classical Greco-Roman civilization. We begin by introducing the historical setting of the Greek city-state (*polis*), and democratic Athens in particular, through works by Sophocles and Thucydides. We then explore in closer detail the political theories that the two foundational figures of the Western philosophical canon—Plato and Aristotle—developed in this setting. In the last part of the course we move forward to the age of empire that followed the decline of the *polis* and shift attention to Rome. In this new context, we focus on both political and religious transformations. First we use works by Polybius, Cicero, and Seneca to study the transmission and refashioning of classical political philosophy as the Roman Republic gave way to the Roman Empire. Finally, we study Saint Augustine’s *City of God* to explore the impact of Christianity’s rise on political philosophy. While giving a broad historical introduction to a varied set of figures and works, the course also highlights thematic questions that develop across the works we read, and continue to resonate today: questions of duty, power, and justice as these relate to the public domain of political activity and obligations, and to the tensions that arise between this domain and the claims of family, philosophy, and faith.

Required Texts for Purchase and other Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Publisher</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sophocles</td>
<td><em>Antigone</em>, trans. P. Woodruff (Hackett, 2001)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Augustine</td>
<td><em>City of God</em>, ed. V. Bourke (Image, 1958)</td>
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These texts are classics of which there are multiple translations and editions. You should purchase the specific editions listed. Copies of additional readings (from Polybius, Seneca, and Augustine) will be posted on Blackboard.

Learning Outcomes
As a result of completing this course, students will be better able to:
- Recognize and explain key concepts and claims of major ancient Western political theorists
- Understand and accurately summarize contentious viewpoints with which they may disagree
- Analytically compare and contrast arguments made by different theorists on specific topics
- Comprehend and apply synthetic historical interpretations of major changes in Western political thought from the fifth century BC through the fifth century AD

Course Requirements and Grading
*Reading:* Much of the reading for this course is demanding. You should take time to read carefully, to struggle with unexpected and paradoxical formulations, and to ponder what you have read. To get the most out of lectures, class discussion, and Q&A, you must keep up with the readings.
Midterm Exam: A midterm exam will be given in class on Feb 12.

Paper: There will be one assigned paper of 6-7 pages (double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and 12-point font) in which you will respond to one of a choice of questions about Plato and Aristotle. By noon on Monday March 30, you should both: 1) turn in your paper electronically using Blackboard, and 2) drop off a hard copy in my box in the political science department office (440 Monroe Hall). Late papers will be docked a third of a grade (e.g. from a B+ to a B) for each weekday late.

Final Exam: A final exam covering all material since the midterm will be given at the day and time assigned to our class in the final exam schedule.

Grading: The midterm will count for 25% of your course grade, the paper 35%, and the final 40%.

Academic Integrity
All members of the university community are expected to exhibit honesty in their academic work. Students have a responsibility to acquaint themselves with, and make use of, all proper procedures for doing research, writing papers, and taking exams. Members of the community will be presumed to be familiar with the proper academic procedures and will be held responsible for applying them. Failure to act in accordance with such procedures will be considered academic dishonesty. Academic dishonesty is defined as “cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one’s own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” Acts of academic dishonesty are a legal, moral, and intellectual offense against the community and will be prosecuted through the proper university channels. The University Code of Academic Integrity can be found at http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html. If you have questions about appropriate use and citation of sources, please come see me in office hours before you turn in your work.

Support for Students Outside the Classroom

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students’ personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

Security
If we experience an emergency during class time, we will try to stay at this location until we hear that we can move about safely. If we have to leave the classroom, we will meet in front of Bell Hall on G Street to account for everyone. Please refer to Campus Advisories for the latest information on the University’s operating status: http://www.campusadvisories.gwu.edu/.
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Part I. Introduction to Classical Athens: The Polis and Democracy

Jan. 13. Introduction to course
Jan. 15. Sophocles. Antigone

Part II. The Birth of Political Philosophy

a. Plato
Jan. 29. Apology, Crito, Phaedo death scene
Feb. 3. Gorgias up through 481b
Feb. 5. Gorgias 481c-end
Feb. 10. The Republic Bk. 1
Feb. 12. Midterm exam
Feb. 17 and 19. No class – professor at conference
Feb. 24. The Republic Bks. 4, 5 (up through 475e)
Feb. 26. The Republic Bks. 5 (from 476a), 6, 7
March 3. The Republic Bks. 8, 9, 10 (you may skip the first half of Book 10 and start at 606e)

b. Aristotle
March 5. The Politics Bks. 1, 2 (ch. 1-5, 7, 9-11)
March 10 and 12. Spring Break.
March 17. The Politics Bk. 3
March 24. The Politics Bks. 6, 8 (ch. 1-5)

Part III. Political Thought in the Age of Rome

a. From Republic to Empire
March 26. Polybius. Histories (selections on Blackboard)
March 30. Paper due by noon
March 31. Cicero. Republic Bks. 1, 2, 3 (§3-7, §41-48)
April 2. Cicero. Republic Bks. 3 (§8-37), 5-6; Laws Bks. 1, 2 (§1-33)
April 7. Seneca, “On Mercy” (on Blackboard)

b. Saint Augustine
April 14. City of God Bks. VI, VIII (ch. 1-14), X (ch. 1-2, 7, 31-32), XI (ch. 1-3, 9, 22), XVIII (ch. 41)
April 15. City of God Bks. XII (ch. 1-9, 22-24, 28), XIII (ch. 1-3, 13-16), XIV (ch. 1-2, 6, 11-15, 27-28), XV (ch. 1-6), XXII (ch. 1, 22, 24, 30)
April 21. City of God Bks. XIX (ch. 4-22, 24-28), XX (ch. 1-2)
April 24. Course Conclusion

Final Exam. Specific date and time will be announced in GWU schedule of final exams.

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1 If you use an edition of Aristotle’s Politics other than the assigned Simpson translation, the material after Book 3 will probably be arranged differently. You can follow the assigned readings on the basis of standardized paragraph numbers as follows: for March 19 read 1323a-1338a, for March 24 read 1288b-1301a and 1316b-1320b.