

VC 12116 12F

CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

APPROVED MAR 27 2013

Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: ~~Lang/Phil/Culture~~ Effective Fall 2014  
 WID

or Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall 2013

1. Department: POLS College: CLASS

2. Faculty Contact Person: JW Jackson Telephone: 3-3919 Email: jjackson5@uh.edu

3. Course Information on New/Revised course:

- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
POLS / 3340 / Classical Political Thought
- Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.):  
POLS / 3340 / CLASSICAL POL THOUGHT
- SCH: 3.00 Level: JR CIP Code: 45.1001.0001 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0

RECEIVED OCT 12 2012

4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements

5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
If Yes, please complete:

- Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_
- Course ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_\_

6. Authorized Degree Program(s): BA/BS

- Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No
- Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No
- Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)

7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)

8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
POLS / 3340 / Classical Political Thought

- Course ID: 39663 Effective Date (currently active row): 20008

9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)

Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: POLS 1336 and 1337 or equivalent, or consent of instructor. Description (30 words max.): A selected examination of classical political thought of philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Thucydides, Xenophon. May also include Medieval thinkers.

10. Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 10/8/12

Print/Type Name: Dr. Sarah Fishman

## REQUEST FOR COURSES IN THE CORE CURRICULUM

Originating Department or College: Political Science

Person Making Request: Susan Collins

Telephone: 319-380

Email: [sucoll724@uiowa.edu](mailto:sucoll724@uiowa.edu)

Dean's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
*SC*

Date: 08/30/12

Course Number and Title: POLS 1410 Classical Political Thought

Please attach in separate documents:

- Completed CBM003 Add/Change Form with Catalog Description
- Syllabus

List the student learning outcomes for the course (Statements of what students will know and be able to do as a result of taking this course. See appended hints for constructing these statements):

In general, the course aims to teach students:

1. Students will carefully analyze a political text so as to understand its argument, identify its major premises and conclusions, and comprehend its conditions and qualifications. The student should be able to evaluate critically this argument and assess its substantive claims and rhetorical context and strategy.
2. Students will learn to write well—at a minimum, to write grammatically and clearly. At an advanced level, the student should be able to articulate precisely and with some sophistication a political question, problem, issue, or debate and to analyze and evaluate it in a systematic way.
3. Students will discuss and debate intelligently fundamental political questions and ideas: to understand their historical roots and evolution, as well as their contemporary significance. To comprehend and assess the ethical dimensions of civic life, our roles as citizens, and alternative political views and principles.

Component Area for which the course is being proposed (check one):

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication                              | <input type="checkbox"/> American History                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mathematics                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Government/Political Science           |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Language, Philosophy, & Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social & Behavioral Science            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Creative Arts                              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Component Area Option (WID) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life & Physical Sciences                   |   |

Competency areas addressed by the course (refer to appended chart for competencies that are required and optional in each component area):

X Critical Thinking  
X Communication Skills  
Empirical & Quantitative Skills

Teamwork  
X Social Responsibility  
X Personal Responsibility

Because we will be assessing student learning outcomes across multiple core courses, assessments assigned in your course must include assessments of the core competencies. For each competency checked above, indicated the specific course assignment(s) which, when completed by students, will provide evidence of the competency. Provide detailed information, such as copies of the paper or project assignment, copies of individual test items, etc. A single assignment may be used to provide data for multiple competencies.

#### Critical Thinking:

Students will write a paper based on seminal texts in political philosophy and the history of political thought. The paper will analyze and discuss the arguments of the texts, critically assess those arguments, and understand their rhetorical context and strategy.

#### Sample assignment:

Write a 5-6 page paper on one of the following topics:

1. Explicate Aristotle's arguments regarding musical education in Book eight, chapters 5 to 7. Then, on the basis of your analysis, discuss in some detail the following question: how would Alfarabi evaluate Aristotle's treatment of this education, particularly in connection with philosophy and religion?
2. In 1277, Etienne Tempier, bishop of Paris, drew up a list of "propositions" to be condemned by the church. Among these were two listed in your text: (1) "That there is no more excellent state than to study philosophy," and (2) "That the only wise men in the world are the philosophers" (p. 323). On the basis of the medieval authors we've read, outline the grounds upon which a religious authority would condemn these two propositions, which might be said to be the culmination of Aristotle's thought. Then, using either Averroes' *The Decisive Treatise* or Maimonides' *On Prophecy* as your guide, compose a concise and clear response to this condemnation.

#### Communication Skills:

Through the above essay, students are required to articulate in written form complex moral and political arguments and to entertain sympathetically alternative answers to fundamental questions of moral and political life.

#### Empirical & Quantitative Skills:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

#### Teamwork:

[Click here to enter text.](#)

#### Social Responsibility:

Through the above essay, students will examine the historical and theoretical roots of major ideas of the Western tradition of political thought. They are expected to comprehend the relation of these ideas to political practice and civic life and to assess the claims of different moral and political views, both ancient and modern. Honors sections of this course also fulfill a requirement in the interdisciplinary Phronesis program in politics and ethics.

Personal Responsibility:

Through the above paper, students come to understand better their own ethical and political frameworks, the role of different principles in their decision-making and choices, and the principled reasons for alternative views.

Will the syllabus vary across multiple section of the course?     Yes                     No

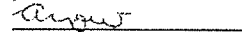
If yes, list the assignments that will be constant across sections:

Every section will require a paper of an interpretive and analytical character. As a Writing in the Disciplines course, every section will require assignments totaling at least 3000 words (including papers and exams). At least one piece of work will be done outside of class and returned to the student prior to the end of the semester (with comments on content, grammar, and style.)

Inclusion in the core is contingent upon the course being offered and taught at least once every other academic year. Courses will be reviewed for renewal every 5 years.

The department understands that instructors will be expected to provide student work and to participate in university-wide assessments of student work. This could include, but may not be limited to, designing instruments such as rubrics, and scoring work by students in this or other courses. In addition, instructors of core courses may be asked to include brief assessment activities in their course.

Dept. Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science 3340  
Classical Political Thought

T/Th 1:00-2:30  
Professor S. Collins  
PGH 401  
743-3900/succoll724@uh.edu  
Office Hours: T/Th 2:30-4:00, or by appt.

This course is an effort in recovery. We will strive to recover an understanding of ancient and medieval political philosophy. This tradition of thought may seem distant from us, but I hope the course will show that it speaks to the deepest of human concerns, and especially to the quintessentially human concern for justice in a world in which, as Machiavelli chillingly insisted, there is inevitably evil. But even in a world in which some people rise by vice and others by virtue fall, we are in the enviable position of having the leisure to investigate fundamental questions of politics and human existence: Is there justice, and if so, what is it? What is law and what is the purpose of law? What is the nature of power? What is freedom? What is the relation between ethics and politics? Is there a highest good for human beings, and if so, what is its connection to politics? What is education? What is the relation between religion and politics, faith and reason?

We will begin the course by reading Machiavelli's *Prince*, the sleek handbook on political power which inaugurated the tradition of modern realism and has profoundly influenced our own view of ethics and politics. We will aim in particular to understand the kind of politics Machiavelli founded (the specific character of his "realism") in order to gain some initial sense of the distance between us and ancient-medieval thought.

Our study of ancient-medieval thought will be anchored by two major texts of political philosophy authored by the ancient philosopher that thinkers of the Jewish, Islamic, and Christian traditions saw fit to call "The Philosopher": Aristotle. We will use Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics* to investigate both how classical thought approached the study of political matters and how medieval thought embraced and diverged from the classical tradition it confronted. Our study of medieval thought will draw from Islamic (Averroes, Avicenna, and Alfarabi), Jewish (Maimonides), and Christian (Thomas Aquinas) thinkers. Although the story of how the classical tradition was transmitted through the Islamic and Jewish worlds to Christianity is a fascinating one, we will focus on the questions that unified these theological alternatives. We will be particularly concerned to comprehend how medieval theology reconciled the centrality of faith in God with the "rational" requirements of politics-- a problem still very much alive today.

#### Required Texts

1. Machiavelli, *The Prince* (University of Chicago)
2. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Macmillan/Library of Liberal Arts or on Blackboard)
3. Aristotle, *Politics* (University of Chicago)
4. Lerner & Mahdi, *Medieval Political Philosophy* (Cornell)

## Expectations

Students are expected to come to class, on time, to read the assigned selections carefully, and to participate in class discussion thoughtfully and with due respect for the opinions of their classmates. Please note that class participation is assessed as a part of your final grade. There will also be surprise reading quizzes, which I will use to gauge your preparation. *BRING ALL TEXTS ASSIGNED FOR THAT DAY TO CLASS.*

## Learning Outcomes

1. Students will carefully analyze a political text so as to understand its argument, identify its major premises and conclusions, and comprehend its conditions and qualifications. The student should be able to evaluate critically this argument and assess its substantive claims and rhetorical context and strategy.
2. Students will learn to write well—at a minimum, to write grammatically and clearly. At an advanced level, the student should be able to articulate precisely and with some sophistication a political question, problem, issue, or debate and to analyze and evaluate it in a systematic way.
3. Students will discuss and debate intelligently fundamental political questions and ideas: to understand their historical roots and evolution, as well as their contemporary significance. To comprehend and assess the ethical dimensions of civic life, our roles as citizens, and alternative political views and principles.

## Requirements

### *PAPERS*

You will be required to write three papers, which are “exegetical” in nature. In brief, you will be given sections of the texts we are reading this semester and asked to provide an interpretive analysis of one of them. The papers are due at the beginning of class on the following days:

PAPER 1:	Thursday, February 12
PAPER 2:	Thursday, March 12
PAPER 3:	Thursday, April 28

### *FINAL EXAM*

There will be a final exam, which will be essay format. You will be provided a number of study questions from which the exam questions will be taken.

FINAL EXAM:	Tuesday, May 12 – 2:00-5:00 pm
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## Grades

15%	Class participation (includes reading quizzes)
15%	Paper 1
20%	Paper 2

20%	Paper 3
30%	Final exam

**Grade Penalty for Absences:**

Attendance is mandatory. You will be given two “free” absences, after which you will be docked **TWO POINTS** from your final grade points *for every class missed*.

The paper and essay exams will be given a numerical grade on the following scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	59 and below

The course grade is determined by multiplying numerical grades by the weights listed above.

**Plagiarism Policy**

**PLAGIARISM IS NOT TOLERATED.** The Department of Political Science adheres to the University Policy on Academic Honesty. Please review this policy on pp. 57-8 of the University of Houston Undergraduate Studies Handbook or at <http://www.uh.edu/academics/catalog/general/acade2.html#honesty>. I also will hand out a summary sheet on plagiarism and an Acknowledgement form that you will be required to sign and return to the Teaching Assistant *by January 29, 2009*. **You will be dropped from the class rolls if you fail to return this acknowledgement.**

*Sanctions for a violation of Academic Policy can include, failure on the assignment, failure in the course and a notation on the academic record, and suspension from the university.*

To encourage an atmosphere in which honest work is rewarded, I require students to submit all papers to **Turnitin.com**, which uses the latest in plagiarism detection software. Some of you will have used this service for your other classes, and I encourage everyone to go to the website and familiarize themselves with the process. You will need to create a “user profile,” and then use the following information to submit your papers: **Class ID #:** 2576159; **Password:** *aristotle*. (Note: the password is case sensitive). The site will then guide you through the process for submitting your paper, and if you need further help, there are electronic user manuals at the site. It also offers much information on plagiarism that you should look over.

**Other Policies**

All papers must be submitted at the first of class on the day they are due. Work that is submitted after the first of class will receive a letter grade reduction. Additional letter grade reductions are made for each subsequent day the assignment is late. This includes the day it is turned in and weekend days. For example, if a paper is due Thursday and you turn it in on Friday, your grade will be reduced by 2 letter grades or 20 points, or if a paper is due Thursday and you turn it in on Monday, your grade will be reduced by 5 letter grades or 50 points. You must turn papers in to me directly, or after having them time-date stamped and signed by one of the departmental secretaries, place them in my mailbox. *Do not slip them under my office door unless we agree to this arrangement.*

MAKE BACK-UP COPIES of your work. Do not wait until the last minute to go to the computer lab to print your paper since students often find that in waiting to the last minute to print their paper, they meet with printer problems and delays. Such last minute problems are not acceptable excuses for handing work in late.

If you miss handing in a paper, you must have a very good and a documented excuse: for example, a doctor's or infirmary's note, or evidence validating a family emergency. Such evidence will also be required if you miss any exam.

**Political Science 3340**  
**Tentative Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

**Week 1**

Jan 20: Introduction

Jan. 22: **WHAT IS POLITICS?**

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Bk I, chs. 1-2 and Table of Contents

Aristotle, *Politics* Bk I, chs. 1-2 and pp. 27-29 (analysis of the arg.).

Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Table of Contents, Dedicatory Letter, and ch. 15

**Week 2 MACHIAVELLI AND THE ETHICAL FOUNDATION OF MODERN POLITICS**

Jan. 27: *The Prince*, Dedicatory Letter and chs. 1-11 Acquisition and "Founding"

Jan. 29: *The Prince*, Chs. 12-14 War

**Week 3**

Feb 3: *The Prince*, Chs. 15-23 Peace & Government

Feb. 5: *The Prince*, Chs. 24-26 The Problem of "Fortuna"

**Week 4 "THE GOOD" AS HAPPINESS AND VIRTUE IN ANCIENT THOUGHT**

Feb. 10: Aristotle, *Ethics*, Bk. I, chs. 1-6 (*Professor Pangle's Visit*)

Feb. 12: *Ethics*, Bk. I, chs. 7-12

**FIRST PAPER DUE**

**Week 5**

Feb. 17: *Ethics*, Bk. I, ch. 13, Bk. II (all), Bk. III, chs. 1-5

Feb. 19: *Ethics*, Bk. III, ch. 6-12, Bk. IV (all)

Film: "A Man For All Seasons"

**Week 6 CLASSICAL JUSTICE AND THE LAW**

Feb. 24: *Ethics*, Bk. V

Completion of film

Feb. 26: *Ethics*, Bk. V



- Week 7 THE PROBLEM OF PRUDENCE**  
 Mar. 3: *Ethics*, Bk. VI, chs. 1-7
- Mar. 5: *Ethics*, Bk. VI, chs. 8-13
- Week 8 NATURE AND THE CITY**  
 Mar. 10: *Ethics*, Bk. X, chs. 6-9  
*Politics*, Bk. I, chs. 1-7
- Mar. 12: *Politics*, Bk. I, chs. 8-13  
**SECOND PAPER DUE**
- Week 9 SPRING BREAK**
- Week 10 POLITICAL JUSTICE AND THE DISPUTE OVER RULE**  
 Mar. 24: *Politics*, Bk III, chs. 1-5
- Mar. 26: *Politics*, Bk. III, chs. 6-13
- Week 11 KINGSHIP AND THE BEST REGIME**  
 Mar. 31: *Politics*, Bk. III, chs. 14-18
- Apr. 2: *Politics*, Bk. VII, chs. 1-3
- Week 12 THE BEST REGIME CONTD.**  
 Apr. 7: *Politics*, Bk. VII, chs. 4-17
- Apr. 9: *Politics*, Bk. VIII
- Week 13 MEDIEVAL TRANSFORMATIONS**  
 Apr. 14: *Medieval Political Philosophy (MPP)*, Introduction, pp. 1-20  
 Avicenna, "On the Division of the Rational Sciences," *MPP*, pp. 95-97  
 Maimonides, "Logic," *MPP*, pp. 188-190  
 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Question 90-92 (Handout)
- Apr. 16: Alfarabi, "The Attainment of Happiness," *MPP*, pp. 58-82
- Week 14 RELIGION, PHILOSOPHY, AND THE LAW or CONTEMPLATION AND WORSHIP**  
 Apr. 21: Reading contd.  
 Averroes, "The Decisive Treatise," *MPP*, pp.163-185
- Apr. 23: Reading contd.
- Week 15**  
 Apr. 28: Tempier, *MPP*, "Condemnation of 219 Propositions": Intro. (pp. 335-338); On the Nature of Philosophy (pp. 338-339); On the Human Will (pp. 350-51); On Ethics or Moral Matters (p. 351)  
 Maimonides, On Prophecy, *The Guide for the Perplexed*, *MPP*, pp. 191-226

Apr. 30: Reading contd.  
**THIRD PAPER DUE**

**FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 12 – 2:00-5:00 PM**