

“...since my intent is to write something useful to whoever understands it, it has appeared to me more fitting to go to the effectual truth of the thing than to the imagination of it. And many have imagined republics and principalities that have never been seen or known to exist in truth; for it is so far from how one lives to how one should live that he who lets go of what is done for what should be done learns his ruin rather than his preservation. For a man who wants to make a profession of good in all regards must come to ruin among so many who are not good. Hence it is necessary to a prince, if he desires to maintain himself, to learn to be able not to be good, and to use this and not use it according to necessity.”

—Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch. 15

## **Political Science 7990/7991**

### **Political Theory: Interpretation & Analysis (Morality & Politics)**

**Fall 2023**

Classical political philosophy treats ethics as a branch of politics or political science; cultivating virtue among the citizens is the noblest end of the city, and the best city is ruled by those who are virtuous. Modern political philosophy takes a Machiavellian turn, redefining what counts as virtue and treating virtue either as instrumental to other political ends or as something apart from politics. In this course, examining two classical and three modern authors, we will compare and contrast their different understandings of the relation between morality and politics. Is it possible to know which view is right or best?

**Instructor:** James Stoner, Stubbs 214  
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**Office Hours:** Mondays, 2:00-3:00 pm  
Wednesdays, 4:30-5:30 pm  
Fridays, 3:00-4:00 pm, and by appointment

### **Books available for purchase:**

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, tr. Robert C. Bartlett and Susan B. Collins (University of Chicago Press) [ISBN: 9780226026756]
- *Thomas Aquinas on the Cardinal Virtues*, ed. Christopher Kaczor & Thomas Sherman, SJ (Catholic University Press) [ISBN: 9780813233611]
- Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge University Press) [ISBN: 9780521567978]
- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, tr. Allen W. Wood, updated ed. (Yale University Press) [ISBN: 9780300227437]
- Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, tr. Ted Humphrey (Hackett) [ISBN: 9780915145478]
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil*, tr. Walter Kaufmann (Penguin) [ISBN: 9780679724650]

**Course requirements:**

- Attendance at all class sessions & participation in discussions [absences penalized]
- Four 500-word papers on the assigned reading, one on Aristotle, one on Aquinas, and one each on any two of the next three authors (Hobbes, Kant, and Nietzsche), due before class (& read aloud) [40%]
- One 1000-word essay on three journal articles by different scholars about one of the authors read for the course, due for presentation in class on November 29 [20%]
- Final Exam, two 1000-word essays, due December 7 [40%]

**Grading scale:** A+ (98%-100%), A (93%-97%), A- (90%-92%)  
 B+ (88%-90%), B (83%-87%), B- (80%-82%), etc.

**Note:** The use of generative artificial intelligence in the composition of any paper or essay will be considered plagiarism. Think for yourself, and write on your own.

**SYLLABUS:**

Wed., 8/23 Introduction: Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch. 15-18

**I. Aristotle**

Wed., 8/30 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, books I-III

Wed., 9/6 *Nicomachean Ethics*, books IV-VI

Wed., 9/13 *Nicomachean Ethics*, books VII-X

**II. Aquinas**

Wed., 9/20 Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* II-II, excerpts from qq. 47-49, 52-53, 55-62, 64-66, 70-71, 73 (pp. 3-143)

Wed., 9/27 *Summa Theologica* II-II, excerpts from qq. 78-79, 81, 83, 85, 92, 101, 104-108, 110, 118, 122-126, 129-133, 136, 139 (pp. 144-294)

Wed., 10/4 *Summa Theologica* II-II, excerpts from qq. 141-142, 147-156, 158, 161, 162 (pp. 295-411)

**III. Hobbes**

Wed., 10/11 Hobbes, *Leviathan*, author's introduction, ch. 1-21

Wed., 10/18 *Leviathan*, ch. 22-32, 46-47, review & conclusion

**IV. Kant**

Wed., 10/25 Kant, *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*

Wed., 11/1 Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*

**IV. Nietzsche**

Wed., 11/8 *Beyond Good and Evil*, preface, parts I-V

Wed., 11/15 *Beyond Good and Evil*, parts VI-IX, aftersong

Wed., 11/29 Conclusion: Survey of secondary literature (essays presented)

Thurs., 12/7 **EXAMS DUE**