Welcome to Marquette University’s graduate core seminar in political philosophy! Political Philosophy is not a subfield of political science but is rather the foundational discipline from which each of the narrower specialty fields of political science derives. The work of contemporary political scientists is much obliged to -- if not altogether dwarfed by -- the insights of Thucydides and Machiavelli in the study of International Affairs, of Aristotle and Montesquieu in the study of Comparative Government, and of Alexis de Tocqueville in the study of American Politics. Indeed, our semester together will not be long enough even to enumerate, much less to ponder or assimilate, the riches available in the works of political philosophers. We must be selective. It is both reasonable and congenial to begin with what is closest to ourselves: we shall confront the problem of justice as it concerns us as students of political science and as American citizens.

Requirements, Expectations and Grading

You are to attend every meeting of this class, having read the assigned texts carefully. During class sessions, you will be asked to form small group panels to introduce passages, to raise and to respond to questions, and to write three brief but detailed accounts of what you have learned. These three papers will determine 30% of your final grade, and the in-class panel presentations another 30%. Your contribution to general class discussion will determine 20%, and your citizenship (effort, respect for class mission, and general deportment) another 10%. There will be a comprehensive final exam or final paper determining the remaining 10% of your final grade. Absences may be excused, upon written request made via email by class time of the day of your absence, at your instructor’s sole discretion. In any case, you will be expected to make up any missing work.

Class Schedule

**Unit One: On the Objectivity of Natural Right**

Week 1  Fr. Guido & The Five-Minute University, Josh Waitzkin on the Art of Learning, Dorothy Sayers, “The Lost Tools of Learning”

Weeks 2-3  C.S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man; Strauss, Natural Right and History, chs.1-2

Weeks 4-6  St. Thomas Aquinas, Treatise on Law, Q.90 aa.1-3, Q.91 aa.1-4; Q.92 a.1, Q.93 aa.2, 6, Q.94 aa.2-5; Q. 95 aa.1-2, Q. 96 aa.1-2, Q. 97 a.2

Week 7  Thucydides, Peloponnesian War I pars.1-23, 66-88, 139-145, III 82-84; II 3-55; III 1-50; V 8-116

**Unit Two: Discerning Natural Right and the New Science of Politics**


**Unit Three: Challenging and Revisiting the Foundations of Natural Right**

Weeks 12-13  Machiavelli, The Prince, chs.1-8, Book of Exodus ch.32; The Prince, chs.9-26

Weeks 14-15  Plato, Republic 327a-336a; 336b-354c