

Political Science 4931-102: The Ethical Foundations of Politics

Darrell Dobbs, Ph.D.
Office Hours: 8:30-9:30 T Th, and by appt.
421 Wm. Wehr Physics

Marquette University, Spring Term 2012
Class time: 9:30 - 10:45 T TH
418 Wm. Wehr Physics

Course Description:

We believe that it is right and good for every adult human being to be a free agent, to exercise his or her capacity for self-government, and so, by extension, to have a share in ruling the state. But can we place such emphasis on self-government and not notice that the self in “self-government” is a person governed as well as governing? Can the person who would undertake to govern anything govern well if he is not himself well governed? What is the aim of this government of self? What role does the community play in furthering this government? In this class, we will attempt to examine these questions in all their ramifications. Aristotle’s magisterial treatment, as found in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*, will provide our guide.

Requirements, Expectations and Grading:

You are to attend every meeting of this class, having read the assigned texts carefully. You will be given daily writing exercises, which are designed to guide your reading and to enhance your participation in classroom discussions. 80% of your final grade will be determined by your performance on these daily exercises and in class discussion, while the remaining 20% will be determined by the quality of the presentation of your own topic of study near the end of the term. Absences may be excused, upon written request made via email on or before the day of absence, at your instructor’s sole discretion.

Date	Assigned Reading
Week 1	Introductions; Preliminary Thoughts on the Relationship of Ethics and Politics
Week 2	Martin Diamond, “Ethics and Politics: The American Way,” pp.75-92; pp.92-108
Week 3	Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> Book 1 chs.1-2, Book 3 chs.4-9; chs.10-17
Weeks 4-8	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book 1 chs.1-3; chs.4, 5, 7, 8; chs.9-13; Book 2 chs.1-4; chs.5-9; Book 3 chs.1-5; chs.6-9; chs.10-11, Book 4 chs.1-2; chs.3-4; Book 5 chs.1-6
Week 9	Spring Break
Weeks 10-14	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> Book 5 chs. 7-11; Book 6 chs.1-7; chs.8-13; Book 7 chs.1-10; Book 7 chs.11-14; Book 8; Book 9; Book X chs.1-5; chs.6-9; Easter Break
Weeks 15-16	Student Presentations