

POSC 6801: Political Philosophy

Darrell Dobbs, Ph.D.
Office Hours: 8:30-9:30 T Th; 1:45-2:30 T
421 Wm. Wehr Physics

Marquette University, Fall 2011
Class time: 4:00 - 6:40 pm TH
418 Wm. Wehr Physics

Course Description

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 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 directly affects us as members of a college, as American citizens, and as the beneficiaries, stewards, and future contributors to a long-lived and still vital civilization.

Requirements, Expectations and Grading

You are to attend *every* meeting of this class, having read the assigned texts carefully. You will be expected to complete daily writing exercises, which are designed to enhance the quality of your participation in classroom discussions. You can expect to present your exercises in class for general discussion. 50% of your final grade will be determined by the quality of your contributions to classroom discussion; 25% will be determined by the quality of your performance on one in-class examination, while the remaining 25% of your grade will be determined by the quality of one short essay you select to turn in for evaluation. Uncompleted daily exercises, as well as your physical absence from class, will naturally count against your grade, because you cannot contribute to, or benefit from, discussion if you are either poorly prepared or not in class at all. Excused absences will be granted upon written request (via email the day of your absence) at my sole discretion.

Class Schedule

Unit One: Practicing Justice in Higher Education

- Week 1 Fr. Guido & The Five-Minute University, Josh Waitzkin on the Art of Learning; Dorothy Sayers, "The Lost Tools of Learning" <http://www.gbt.org/text/sayers.html>
- Weeks 2-3 C.S. Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, ch.1; ch.2; ch.3; ch.3
- 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 Lincoln, *Lyceum Address*; **EXAMINATION #1**

Unit Two: Discerning Justice in Political Crisis

- Week 8 Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ch.13, *The Declaration of Independence*; **MIDTERM BREAK**
- Week 9 *The Constitution of the United States*, Frederick Douglass, *The Constitution: Is It Pro-Slavery or Anti-Slavery?* <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/index.asp?document=1128>, George Washington, *Farewell Address* http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/washing.asp; Lincoln, *Peoria Speech 1854*, *Speech on the Dred Scott Decision*, *House Divided Speech*, *Second Inaugural Address*
- Weeks 10-11 Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (Mansfield & Winthrop, trans.) pp.3-15, 27-44, 52-53; pp.82-93, pp. 239-251, 274-288, 294-295, 403-410, 417-426; pp.479-492, 496-506, pp.511-524; 639-645, 661-665, 673-676

Unit Three: Questioning the Foundations of Justice

- Weeks 12-13 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chs.1-8, *Book of Exodus* ch.32; *The Prince*, chs.9-14; ch.15-26; **THANKSGIVING BREAK**
- Weeks 14-15 Plato, *Republic* 327a-331d; 331d-336a; 336b-347a; 347a-354c