

PROPOSAL FOR COURSE CHANGE

To: Curriculum Committee

From: Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy

Date submitted: 19 September 2007

Request for: Course Creation

Submitted by: H. Micheal Tarver

Approved by: Department Head: H. Micheal Tarver

Dean of School: Duncan

Reviewed by: Registrar: Gammaykudis

Vice President: _____

If this is a deletion or other minor change, describe and give rationale.

If this is an addition of a new course, fill in the following and attach a syllabus (syllabus should include course objectives, and outline of the course with sufficient details to illuminate course content, and a bibliography. The Curriculum Committee/Graduate Council does not need evaluation and testing procedural information nor does it need excessively long bibliographies).

- I. Catalog description: *Classical Political Thought*. An examination of the major contributions to political thought during the Classical Age, the Medieval Era, and the Renaissance. Completion of POLS 2253 recommended.

Number: POLS 3253

Title for Catalog: Classical Political Thought

*Title for Course Inventory (24 characters): Classical Political Thought

Description: This course will use selected political theorists from classical antiquity, the medieval period, and Renaissance to examine a series of major concepts (e.g., human nature, power, authority, justice, and liberty) which are central to political theory and political science. In addition, students are introduced to the origins of our Western political thought and culture. This course is discussion oriented and designed to develop the student's critical reading and thinking abilities.

Effective date or term: Summer One 2008

*Course fees: NONE

II. Justification and feasibility of course:

- A. What is the need for this course? Who will take it? *This course will serve as an upper-level elective course for students who have an interest in political philosophy.*

app CC 10/22/07
app FS 11/12/07

- B. How does it relate to other work being offered by your department? Is there an overlap with other courses in the department? *The creation of Classical Political Thought will strengthen the offerings of the Social Sciences and Philosophy Department by further broadening the variety of courses being offered. There would be no overlap with other courses in the department.*
- C. Is this course part of any general plan of development within your department? Explain. *Yes. The Department is attempting to broaden its offerings, in an effort to add greater depth and breadth to its courses. This course strengthens the Department's efforts at achieving the goals established by the History and Political Science Program Objectives – as detailed in the Department of Social Sciences and Philosophy Assessment Plan and the National Council for the Social Studies Matrices.*
- D. How often will the course be offered? *This course will be offered every two years.*
- E. How will the course be staffed? *Dr. Michael Rogers, Assistant Professor of Political Science, will have primary responsibility to teach all new political theory courses. Dr. Jeff Mitchell, Professor of Philosophy, has agreed to be a backup for the various political theory courses.*
- F. When applicable, state with which departments you have specifically coordinated this change? (If unable to identify coordinating departments that change affects, Academic Affairs can offer assistance in identifying course use.)

List Department Head/
Program Director Consulted:
(Add to list as needed)

Indicate Support
for Proposal
(yes/no)

Date:

1. NONE

If no, please attach explanation from responding Department Head indicating why they do not support the proposal.

Assessment Note: *While this course does not directly relate to any specific departmental assessment goal, it does provide an additional course through which the department can continue to assess its students, both majors and non-majors. In specific, the course could be used to assess verbal and written communication skills and the ability to analyze, critique, and synthesize primary and secondary sources. The Departmental Assessment Committee will evaluate the course with the instructor to determine how best to incorporate the class into the Department's efforts at assessment. This course will also help build the Political Science program, as the Department moves toward the eventual creation of a B.S in Political Science.*

*Updated 8/1/04
**Updated 9/1/05

Classical Political Thought

Course Description

This course will introduce the student to some major works and thinkers in the history of classical Western political thought. The course begins by analyzing the 4th and 5th century B.C. works of Plato and Aristotle in Ancient Greece. Then, the course moves to the Hellenistic Age and the evolution of political thought during the Roman Empire. Finally, the course explores the adaptation of Greek and Roman political thought to Christianity by exploring the works of St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas.

Course Goals

- a) To provide an introduction to the history of classical Western political thought,
- b) To introduce students to the core philosophical questions and concepts used in political theory and political science, and
- c) To develop the students' skills as critical thinkers so they are better able to rationally evaluate the political system in which they live.

Required Readings

- 1) Plato. *The Great Dialogues of Plato*. Translated by W.H.D. Rouse, Signet Classics, 1999. (Referred to as **GDP** in the course outline.)
- 2) Plato. *Statesmen*. Cambridge University Press, 1995.
- 3) Aristotle. *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens*. Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- 4) Cicero. *The Republic and the Laws*. Oxford World Classics, 1998.
- 5) Saint Augustine. *City of God*. Penguin Books, 2003.
- 6) St. Thomas Aquinas. *Thomas Aquinas: Selected Writings*. Penguin Books, 1998.

Course Requirements

- 1) **Attendance (15%)**: Politics depends on involvement and participation. Therefore, every student is expected to attend class. 15% of the student's grade is based on attendance. Students are allowed 4 unexcused absences. Any additional absences without a documented excuse will result in a deduction of the student's attendance grade.
- 2) **Participation (15%)**: Every class is built on critical evaluation and debated of the readings. Therefore, daily participation in class discussions is required of every student. Failure to participate at least once a day will result in a reduction of the student's participation grade.
- 3) **Biographies (10%)**: Before a new political philosopher is begun, a student will be responsible for presenting a summary of the individual's biography to the rest of the class. The student should meet with the professor prior to the class to go over the material he/she has found and will be presenting. Handouts or powerpoints are encouraged.
- 4) **Papers (15% each)**: The course is organized by time periods. Within each time period, we examine the writings of one or two political philosophers. After completing the readings on each political thinker, students will write a 5-8 page critical reflection paper examining the philosopher's theory. Each student has the opportunity to write up to 5 papers. The final grade for each student is based on his/her best 4 of the 5 papers.

Course Outline

Aug. 22 Introduction
History of Political Thought

Part I—The Foundation of Western Political Thought: The Ancient Greeks

Aug. 24 Plato
The Apology (GDP)
The Crito (GDP)
Student Presentation

Aug. 29 Plato
The Republic (GDP). Book I & II

Aug. 31 Plato
The Republic (GDP). Book III & IV

Sept. 4 LABOR DAY—NO CLASSES!

Sept. 5 Plato
The Republic (GDP). Book V & VI

Sept. 7 Plato
The Republic (GDP). Book VII & VIII

Sept. 12 Plato
The Republic (GDP). Book IX & X

Sept. 14 Plato
Statesmen. pp. 1-42

Sept. 19 Plato
Statesmen. pp. 43-86
First paper assigned, due Sept. 21.

Sept. 21 Aristotle
The Constitution of Athens. pp. 209-242
Student Presentation

Sept. 26 Aristotle
The Constitution of Athens. pp. 243-263

Sept. 28 Aristotle
The Politics. Book I

Oct. 3 Aristotle
The Politics. Book II

Oct. 5 Aristotle
The Politics. Book III

Oct. 17 Aristotle
The Politics. Book V

Oct. 19 Aristotle
The Politics. Book VI

Oct. 24 Aristotle
The Politics. Book VII
Second paper assigned, due Oct. 31.

Part II—The Hellenistic Age: The Roman Empire

Oct. 26 The Hellenistic Age
Wiser, James. *Political Philosophy*, Chapter 3 (Handout)

Oct. 31 Cicero
The Republic. pp. 1-45.
Student Presentation