PHIL 228401: Political Philosophy (3 Credits)
Boston College Summer Session 2016
Summer 2, June 27 – August 3

Course: MW 6 - 9:15pm
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Office: Stokes, N220b
Office Hours: Tuesday 5-6
& by appointment

Boston College Mission Statement
Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description
The goal of this course is to reflect philosophically on the question: What does it mean to belong to a political community? Exploring this question will involve asking other questions, including, What are my obligations towards others and their obligations towards me? What is nature of a law? Should it be obeyed? Always? We will pursue these questions in conversation with the authors and primary texts of political philosophy. We will begin by examining the classic texts by Plato and Aristotle and the ideas of community and virtue that animate the Greek polis. Next we will turn to the Realpolitik of Machiavelli and Hobbes, as well as the responses of Locke and Rousseau. Finally we will conclude with a selection of contemporary authors including Martin Luther King. Throughout the course we will put our readings in conversation with contemporary issues regarding political belonging and participation, e.g., debates about immigration and the refugee crisis as well as the ethics of voting.

Textbooks & Readings (Required)
Plato, Republic (ISBN: 978-0465069347)
Rousseau, Basic Political Writings (ISBN: 9780872200470)

Textbooks & Readings (Recommended)
Canvas
Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more—all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click here.

Course Objectives
1. Through oral and written work the student will demonstrate a basic knowledge of the thinkers, texts, and philosophical questions that constitute political philosophy.
2. The student will demonstrate the ability to discuss philosophical issues and raise philosophical questions through frequent and informed contributions to class discussion.
3. In discussion with the professor and the course participants, the student will cultivate the ability to reflect critically on his or her own beliefs, convictions, and values in light of those proposed by the authors and texts.
4. The student will demonstrate the ability to question across cultural settings and will learn to consider the impact of culture, gender, and age in philosophical deliberation.
5. The student will demonstrate the ability to engage in ethical questioning and reflection with respect to questions of human happiness, the common good, and personal authenticity.

Grading

1) Reading and Participation: 30%
You are expected to come to class having completed the assigned reading. In addition, you will be given a series of reading questions that highlight key themes or lines of argumentation in a text. You must provide short answers to these and turn them in the following class day. These will constitute a third of your participation grade. Another third will be based on the results of your reading quizzes. The last third will be based on (relatively) frequent, respectful, and informed contributions to class discussion.

2) Response Paper: 20%
There will be a shorter (2-3pp) response paper to help you synthesize the key points of our readings. This assignment will be largely summary in nature.

3) Exam: 20%

4) Final Paper: 30%
There will one longer (5-7pp) paper. Unlike the response paper, in this case you will choose a topic that interests you from our readings. This paper will be argumentative and thesis-driven in nature. You will be asked to articulate and compare a common theme in two authors.

The undergraduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:

A (4.00), A- (3.67)  
B+ (3.33), B (3.00),  
B- (2.67), C+ (2.33),  
C (2.00), C- (1.67)  
D+ (1.33), D (1.00),  
D- (.67), F (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the Office of Student Services.

Deadlines and Late Work: Turning in late assignments will result in a lower grade.
Course Assignments
It is expected that you will spend 8 hours per week on out-of-class assignments and exercises. Some weeks will require more time and some less time but the average is approximately 8 hours per week over the semester.

Course requirements and policies
1. No Cell Phones. No Laptops. No Food. (Drinks permitted. Coffee encouraged.)
2. Students must attend all classes. Unexcused absences will lower your final grade.
3. Your written assignments will be graded on both content and style. Any form of plagiarism is absolutely forbidden and will result in a grade of F for the assignment and possibly for the course.
4. You must have (or acquire quickly) a sense of humor.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/29</td>
<td>Plato, Republic (Selections)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/4</td>
<td>Fourth of July Holiday—No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/6</td>
<td>Plato, Republic (Selections)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/11</td>
<td>Aristotle, Politics (Selections)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/13</td>
<td>Aristotle, Politics (Selections)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/18</td>
<td>Aristotle, Politics (Selections) Bowen “Who Should Be Allowed to Vote?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/20</td>
<td>Aquinas on Law, Machiavelli</td>
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<td>7/25</td>
<td>Hobbes</td>
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<td>7/27</td>
<td>Locke Thomas Jefferson, “Declaration of Independence” (Handout)</td>
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<td>8/1</td>
<td>Rousseau</td>
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<td>8/3</td>
<td>Contemporary Accounts Martin Luther King, “Letter from a Birmingham County Jail” (Handout) MacIntyre, “The Only Vote Worth Casting in November” (Handout) Brennan, The Ethics of Voting, (Selections, Handout) NYTimes, “It is O.K. if Your Vote is a Lie?” (Handout)</td>
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Written Work
Summer Session students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation
and spelling. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center.

**Attendance**

Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines. Many instructors grade for participation; if you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Makeup work may be assigned at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. [Instructor note: Please outline your specific policy for attendance credit and the implications of missed classes.]

Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

**Accommodation and Accessibility**

Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Summer Session courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC) coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- The Disabilities Services Office (DSO) coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility

**Scholarship and Academic Integrity**

Students in Summer Session courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work. Please see the Boston College policy on academic integrity for more information.

*Please note that this syllabus should be regarded only as a general guide to the course and is subject to change at the instructor’s discretion.

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