COURSE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to essential political ideas and principles and accustom them to thinking about politics in a serious manner. This course is designed to raise the fundamental political ideas and issues, through various texts, that animated thinkers 2,500 years ago and continue to be discussed and debated to this day. This will therefore require us to think about politics philosophically, that is, to engage in inquiry and dialogue in order to seek knowledge of things political. A quest such as this requires us to begin with the question, “What is politics?” To answer this we must also consider other fundamental political questions, such as:

- Why do human beings unite in political societies?
- What kind of political order is most likely to result in happiness and justice?
- What mode of living is most likely to result in human excellence and virtue?
- Why is friendship important in political life?
- Why are laws necessary and how do they shape the character of human beings?
- What do the terms “citizenship” and “statesmanship” mean?
- What distinguishes tyranny from other forms of political leadership?

In this course our goal will be to move away from opinion of political things toward knowledge of political things. The means of doing so are serious discussion and inquiry. To this end, you are required to do the readings in advance, and be prepared to participate in class discussions and to answer questions about the assigned readings. By the end of the course, after we have discussed these and other important questions, you will have a broader and deeper understanding of what is meant by the term “politics.”

CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR:
Students are encouraged to meet with me outside of class to discuss any aspect of the materials or topics we cover in the course.

- Office: Andrews 213
- Office Phone: (419) 289-5686
- Email: ccburkett@ashland.edu
- Office Hours: Tuesday 10:50-12:00, Wednesday 11:15-12:15, and by appointment

STUDENT RESOURCES:
Students are encouraged to visit my personal website at www.ashland.edu/~cburket1/. Occasionally I will post course materials online, and there are also other valuable links and resources for students posted at this website.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Class preparation (roughly 25% of the final grade):
   This portion of the grade includes class preparation, quality participation, memory of assigned readings, and attendance. The preparation portion of the grade may also be influenced by reading quizzes, which may be given on occasion without prior notice. STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO DO THE READINGS BEFORE CLASS. Discussion is highly encouraged in this course. I will call on students from time to time to explain the main points in the assigned readings. I will also address questions to the class generally, to which students should volunteer answers. This part of the grade will be affected by excessive absences as well as by failure to speak up from time to time with correct answers, whether called on or not. The best way to prepare for class is to read the assignments and make a brief outline of the main points. Then memorize your outline.

2. Papers (roughly 25% each of the final grade):
   Students will write 2 short papers (approximately 4-5 pages each) on topics selected from a list provided by the professor. The paper must be typed and double spaced, stapled (no binders), Times New Roman 12-point font. Be sure to include a cover page with the title of your paper, your name, the date submitted, and the course number and title.

   The purpose of the papers is to demonstrate that you have grasped the importance and complexity of the question or topic. You should be as concise and specific as possible in your essays, presenting a reasoned argument in support of or against a particular aspect of political thought. Every paper should begin with a paragraph laying out your thesis, and in the body of the paper you should present evidence that supports your thesis. This is not an opportunity for you to simply give your own opinions on matters (no “I feel” this or “I think” that); rather, you should make observations and reasoned arguments and support them with evidence from the readings assigned for the course. You may also use outside sources, but the emphasis should be placed on the primary source documents assigned for class. Wikipedia is NOT a scholarly source, and you should avoid using this in your paper.

   PAPERS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN HARD-COPY FORM – NO EMAILED PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.

   See also tips for writing papers at the end of the this syllabus

3. Final exam (roughly 25% of the final grade):
   The exam will consist of a short answer section and an essay section. In writing your exam essays, you should demonstrate that you have a good grasp of the topics we have covered in class or that are contained in the assigned readings. The essay should cover general themes to demonstrate comprehensive knowledge, but you should also include many specific examples from the readings to back up your claims. You should demonstrate that you have been participating intellectually and thinking seriously in and out of class about the topics we have discussed. See also the attached sheet “The Meaning of Grades” at the end of this syllabus.
GENERAL POLICIES:

PLAGIARISM: ANY WILLFUL PLAGIARISM ON PAPERS OR CHEATING ON EXAMS WILL RESULT IN AN “F” FOR THE COURSE. You should read the Academic Integrity Policy in the student handbook or catalog. Also see the link on plagiarism at my website, www.ashland.edu/~cburket1/.

ATTENDANCE: You should make every effort to attend every class. Even if you have what you think is a good reason for missing a class, the professor retains the discretion to decide whether to count it as an excused or unexcused absence. An unacceptable number of absences will result in a deduction from the final grade for the course.

EXAMS: The final exam will be on the date assigned by the University. Because you know this date in advance, please let me know BEFORE the day of the exam (except in case of illness or other serious situation) if you cannot be there to take the exam. Failure to do so will result in an automatic deduction from the final grade.

Contents of this syllabus are subject to change.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

• John Locke, Some Thoughts Concerning Education and Of the Conduct of the Understanding (Edited by Ruth Grant and Nathan Tarcov, Hackett, 1996, ISBN 0872203344)

RECOMMENDED TEXTS:

• Kate Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations, sixth ed. (University of Chicago, 1996, ISBN 0226816273)
• Strunk & White, The Elements of Style, fourth ed. (Longman, 2000, ISBN 020530902X)

OTHER REQUIRED READINGS:

• Other assigned readings will be distributed by the professor during class.
READING PLAN:

**WEEK 1: Introduction - Human beings and the polis**


**WEEK 2: Political Virtue**


W (9/2): Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, Book II chap. 7 (handout)

FIRST PAPER ASSIGNED

F (9/4):  NO CLASS

**WEEK 3: Educating citizens**

M (9/7): NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

W (9/9): John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, Dedication (pp. 7-9)

F (9/11): John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, §§ 1, 2, 5 (first 2 paragraphs only), and 7 (pp. 12-13 only)

**WEEK 4: Educating citizens**


W (9/16): John Locke, *Some Thoughts Concerning Education*, §§ 42, 43, 46, 56, and 57

WEEK 5: Political Education

M (9/21): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book I chap. 1

W (9/23): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book I chap. 2

F (9/25): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book I chaps. 3-4

WEEK 6: Leadership and Political Reform

M (9/28): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book I chaps. 5-6


F (10/2): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book II chap. 4

WEEK 7: Prudence and Justice

M (10/5): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book III chap. 1

W (10/7): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book III chap. 2

F (10/9): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book III chap. 3

**FIRST PAPER DUE FRIDAY 10/9**

WEEK 8: Fear, Love and Political Leadership

M (10/12): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book IV chaps. 1, 2 and 3 (pp. 125-26 only)

W (10/14): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book IV chap. 5 and Book V chap. 5

F (10/16): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book V chap. 1; Book VI chap. 1 (pages 182-85 only); Book VII chap. 3

**SECOND PAPER ASSIGNED**
WEEK 9 Kingship and tyranny:

M (10/19): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book VII chap. 5 (pp. 220-24 only) [Movie clip]

W (10/21): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book VII chap. 5 (pp. 224-32 only)

F (10/23): Xenophon, *The Education of Cyrus*, Book VIII chap. 8

WEEK 10: Honor and Political Leadership:


WEEK 11: Political Virtue Re-defined?


WEEK 12: Statesmanship and Domestic Security


WEEK 13: Statesmanship and War


SECOND PAPER DUE FRIDAY 11/20

WEEK 14: Statesmanship and War


F (11/27): NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING BREAK

WEEK 15: Statesmanship and Peace


LAST DAY OF CLASS FRIDAY, 12/4
The Meaning of Grades:

“A”: Excellent work demonstrating unusually thorough preparation, genuine comprehension and synthesis, insight and even originality. It is remarkably well-written and presented. The grade signifies not simply very good work but exceptionally fine work.

—in a word, MASTERY.

“B”: Very good, thorough work. The work demonstrates thorough preparation, a grasp of the subject matter and thorough command of the materials of the course. It may not show any special insight or originality, but it demonstrates clear understanding of the material with answers presented in a clear and logically correct style.

—in a word, COMPETENCE.

“C”: The work is acceptable for degree credit. It does not mean “poor” work because we should not award degrees for poor work. The work demonstrates an adequate, though not comprehensive, grasp of the subject matter. Significant information might be overlooked. The work may not display a full appreciation of the meaning or implication of a question. Answers might be too brief to allow sufficient development. An essay might read like a list of facts rather than a well-developed argument. It might appear to be wholly derived from the lecture material, ignoring relevant readings or references to the readings. Though imperfect, the work is, on the whole, of a quality that is acceptable in the sense that the award of the degree for this level of work is warranted.

—in other words, ACCEPTABLE or SATISFACTORY.

“D”: Work that barely qualifies for academic credit. The student has clearly learned something from the course, but the work is shoddy and shows poor or inconsistent preparation. The general impression is of an examination or essay that is inadequately prepared or understood or poorly presented. A student who performs consistently at this level should not expect to be awarded a college degree.

—in other words, POOR BUT PASSING.

“F”: Work that shows little or no preparation or comprehension. Many facts or references are missing or are misunderstood. There is little or no analysis, and the style is poor, confused or incomprehensible. IT DOES NOT MEAN THAT NO WORK HAS BEEN DONE, NO CLASSES WERE ATTENDED, NO ESSAYS WERE WRITTEN OR NO LEARNING HAS TAKEN PLACE. A student can attend classes (or at least some or most of them), do the reading (perhaps inconsistently), and hand in the required work and yet receive an “F” if the product does not reflect some minimal command of the materials of the course.

—in a word, UNACCEPTABLE.
Guidelines for writing papers

1. Papers should be double spaced, with 1” margins at the top and bottom and 1 ¼” margins on each side. Use 12 point, Times New Roman font or equivalent.

2. Always number your pages.

3. Check spelling, punctuation and capitalization. These should be perfect.

4. Correctly cite your sources, even if you paraphrase an author. You may use footnotes, endnotes, or parenthetical citations.

   Example: “A wise prince, therefore, has avoided these arms and turned to his own” (Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 86).

   Example: Machiavelli wrote that wise princes rely on their own resources rather than relying on the arms of other men (Machiavelli, *The Prince*, 86).

General reminders on style:

5. Vague and unclear writing is the product of vague and unclear thinking. If you are having a difficult time conveying an idea, it is because you are unclear about that idea.

6. Read your essay aloud several times before you submit it. If it sounds awkward or unclear, rewrite your essay until it becomes clear. Remember, the reader does not know what you are trying to say, only what you are saying.

7. Organize your ideas in paragraphs; avoid huge leaps from one idea to another between paragraphs. Each paragraph should have some thematic relation to the preceding and following paragraphs.

8. Eliminate wordiness, flowery language, and overly complex or run-on sentences.

9. Avoid pusillanimous phrases such as “I believe,” “I think,” or “In my opinion.”

10. Always strive for clarity. Try to avoid vague words such as “thing,” “stuff,” “this,” and “that.”

    Bad: The main thing that Churchill disliked was this.

    Good: Churchill most disliked inactivity.

11. When quoting another author, make sure the reader knows who is speaking. Never simply drop a quote into your paper.

    Bad: “If men were angels, no government would be necessary.”

    Okay: As James Madison wrote, “If men were angels, no government would be necessary.”

    Better: “If men were angels,” James Madison wrote, “no government would be necessary.”

12. Never introduce a new paragraph with a conjunction; never introduce a sentence with “however” or “therefore.”

    Unacceptable: However, the evidence suggests that he is wrong.

    Acceptable: The evidence, however, suggests that he is wrong.

13. If you quote another author, and the quote is more than four lines in length, use a block quote: single space, full justify, and indent the text an additional ½ inch on each side. For example:

    In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. A dependence on the people is, no doubt, the primary control on the government; but experience has taught mankind the necessity of auxiliary precautions (Madison, 232).

14. For further advice, consult William Strunk, Jr. and E.B. White, *The Elements of Style*. It has gone through many editions, is short, inexpensive, lively and invaluable.
Common grammatical mistakes:

15. *Never* write in sentence fragments.
   
   ALL sentences must have a subject and a verb:
   
   Fragment: The extreme hostility toward those against the measure.
   
   Prepositional phrases and subordinate clauses can not stand alone without a main clause:
   
   Fragment: Although he could not go to class.

16. Make sure nouns and verbs agree in number and tense:
   
   Incorrect: He had *went* to class early.
   
   Incorrect: Cindy, along with most of her friends, *believe* that it was unfair.

17. Never use “he or she” or “they” to indicate a single person; use “he.”
   
   Incorrect: If a person (singular) decides to write, *they* (plural) should write well.

18. Avoid comma faults.
   
   Incorrect: She was able, to understand the economy.

19. In a series of three or more terms, use a comma after each (except the last).
   
   Correct: red, white, and blue
   
   Correct: He baked the cake, iced it, and ate it after supper.

20. Enclose parenthetic expressions between commas.
   
   Incorrect: The executive, as Hamilton envisioned should hold a very long term of office.
   
   Correct: The executive, as Hamilton envisioned, should hold a very long term of office.

21. Use “that” and “which” correctly. “Which” introduces a subordinate clause and must follow a comma.
   
   Incorrect: He sat on the chair which was empty.
   
   Correct: He sat on the chair that was empty.
   
   Correct: He sat on the chair, which was not being used by anyone.

22. Whenever possible, use active verbs.
   
   Passive: The problem *was understood* by him.
   
   Active: He *understood* the problem.

23. Avoid contractions, such as don’t, can’t, wouldn’t, doesn’t, she’s

24. Use “being” correctly; it is not a substitute for “as,” “since,” or “because.”
   
   Incorrect: Although he did not win, Tom accepted the praise, being that he had raced well.
   
   Correct: Although he did not win, Tom accepted the praise, as he had raced well.

25. Use apostrophes correctly.
   
   Incorrect: *Sharon’s* car is red.
   
   Incorrect: I solved three *problem’s.*

26. The possessive of “it” does not use an apostrophe; “It’s” means “it is.”
   
   Incorrect: *It’s* paw was stuck in the rocks.
   
   Correct: *Its* paw was stuck in the rocks.

27. Beware of homonyms (words that sound the same but have different meanings).
   
   Incorrect: *Their* were two problems to be *red*.
   
   Incorrect: *There* car was *read*.
   
   Incorrect: He *lead* the others in the fight.
   
   Incorrect: The society *excepted* him as a new member.

28. Do not confuse “than” and “then.” “Than” indicates comparison; “then” indicates time.
   
   Incorrect: If he does, *than* I will go with him.
   
   Incorrect: His wisdom is greater *then* mine.

29. Keep related words together.
   
   Incorrect: He noticed a large stain on the rug that was right in the center.
   
   Correct: He noticed a large stain right in the center of the rug.

30. Use “second, third,” etc., rather than “secondly, thirdly,” etc.