

**ANCIENT ETHICAL AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY PHH3111**  
**NATHAN ROTHSCHILD**  
**SPRING 2021 SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES**

The focus of this course is the ethical and political thought of Plato and Aristotle. Both authors saw ethics and political theory as inextricable. Following their lead, the course will make a special point of examining the ways in which these authors' ethical and political views inform one another. The course begins by examining Plato's development of the view that the ideal individual and political community is one governed by knowledge. This guiding commitment has decisive consequences for, among other things, Plato's understanding of justice, the relation of rulers to ruled and the terrible shortcomings of democratic forms of government. Of special interest, will be examining the way Plato's commitment fits with and shapes his developing understanding of human beings as creatures that live together. The course will then turn to Aristotle. Aristotle presents *Nicomachean Ethics* as a precursor to an account of the ideal community, and we will read the *Ethics* in this light before moving on to Aristotle's scientific study of political community proper in *Politics*. We will examine the ways in which Aristotle seeks to extend Plato's thought that the constituting principle of both individuals and political communities ought to be knowledge, while simultaneously trying to avoid some of Plato's more radical and unsettling conclusions. Aristotle's resulting vision of the best life and political community presents its own version of the view that human life is lived with others—a view encapsulated in Aristotle's oft quoted, frequently misunderstood claim that man is a 'political animal.'

**INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION AND OFFICE HOURS**

Prof. Nathan Rothschild  
Email: njrothschild@ufl.edu  
Office: Griffin Floyd 311  
Office Hours: Wednesday 12:00-3:00pm  
Office Hours Zoom Address: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/4225788584>

**COURSE TIME AND LOCATION**

Time: T/R periods 7 (1:55-2:45)/7-8 (1:55-3:50)  
Location: MAT 0113

**REQUIRED TEXTS**

*Gorgias*, Plato, ISBN: 0872200167 (Hackett)  
*Republic*, Plato, ISBN: 0872207366 (Hackett)  
*Laws*, Plato, ISBN: 9780521676908 (Cambridge)  
*Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle, ISBN: 1624661173 (Hackett)  
*Politics*, Aristotle, ISBN: 1624665578  
All other required readings will be made available through Canvas e-learning.

**REQUIREMENTS**

Three 1500-1750 word papers	70%
Quizzes	30%
Participation	5%

## ASSIGNMENTS

**PAPERS:** You will be required to write three papers over the course of the term. You will have some choice as to when to write these papers. I will distribute five sets of paper topics, one for each of our central readings. You are required to write a paper in response to three of the five sets of topics.

- Papers are due by noon on their respective due dates. Please submit an electronic copy to Canvas.
- You must ask for an extension at least three days in advance (barring an emergency). Late assignments will be penalized one third of a letter grade for each day beyond the due date.
- Written work should be in 12pt font, double spaced, with 1 inch margins. They also must include a word count and indicate which prompt the paper is answering. Papers that do not conform to these specifications will lose one third of a grade.
- Paper topics will be distributed (roughly) one week in advance. You are also encouraged to write on a topic of your own choosing. However, you must clear the topic with me beforehand.

**PRODUCING QUALITY WRITTEN WORK:** I am available to discuss your written work and will answer questions about writing philosophy papers, talk through the paper topics with you, your ideas for the papers, or go over graded work and develop strategies for improvement. Also, take a look at the paper rubric at end of syllabus.

**GRADING:** The following grade scale will be used to assign final letter grades for the course. See UF grading policies for assigning grade points at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

Grade Scale	Grade Value
100-93=A	A=4.0
92-90=A-	A-=3.67
89-86=B+	B+=3.33
85-82=B	B=3.00
81-79=B-	B-=2.67
78-75=C+	C+=2.33
75-72=C	C=2.00
71-69=C-	C-=1.67
68-66=D+	D+=1.33
65-62=D	D=1.00
61-60=D-	D-=0.67
59-0=E	E=0.00

**WRITING CREDIT:** In order to earn the writing credit in this class, you must earn a grade of C in the class AND an average grade of C or better on the writing assignments.

**QUIZZES:** There will be several unannounced quizzes administered over the course of the semester. There will be two types of quizzes.

- One type will be comprised of questions pertaining to that day's assigned reading and, potentially, the material covered in the previous one or two classes. The quizzes will take place at the beginning of the discussion period. If you arrive late to discussion section you will not receive extra time to complete the quiz.
- The second type will be a short in class writing assignment related to the material we are at that moment discussing. For example, a quiz might ask you to formulate a question about the material under consideration.
- There are no makeup quizzes. If you miss a quiz because of an excused absence, your quiz grade will be derived from the quizzes you were able to sit.

**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:** Missing class will adversely affect your ability to perform well in the course. Students are expected to show up with the text, having done the reading and prepared to participate. Attendance will not be taken. However, participation in class discussion can improve your grade. Not participating will not hurt your grade but participating will help it.

## **POLICIES**

**CLASS Demeanor AND PARTICIPATION:** Students are expected to arrive to class on time, stay the full class period, and behave in a manner that is respectful to the instructor and to fellow students. Students must also come to class prepared. This means keeping current on the reading assignments and being aware of the course schedule and activities, as presented in this syllabus, discussed in class, and announced on the course website. It also means bringing the day's reading to class.

- In order to count as present in class you must:
  - Turn on your audio
  - It is also strongly recommended that you turn on your camera, show your face and sit in a class-like setting such as the desk in your room. Things that do not count as sitting in a class-like setting are, your car, your bed, your walk back to your apartment, and so on.
- In order to receive optimum participation credit your camera must be on. Alternatively, you may leave your camera off during class and come and meet with me to discuss the material a couple of times during office hours.
- Here is the official language from UF which aligns most closely with this class's expectations regarding Zoom audio and video : *The participation portion of your grade for this class will be calculated on the basis of your attendance and your participation in class activities. Since the pedagogical approach of this course depends heavily on student engagement and interaction, you are required, at a minimum, to participate in class activities through the audio function of Zoom. Your video presence is invited as well.*
- For an absence to be excused you must provide the relevant written proof (e.g., a note from the Dean of Students).

**RECORDING LECTURES:** I will not be recording anything.

**TEXTS:** For the required texts, students *must purchase the editions listed on the syllabus*. We will examine passages from these texts in class, and they will figure on the surprise quizzes. As a result, it is imperative that students do not use different editions or translations.

**OUTSIDE SOURCES:** Do not use texts or internet sources outside of those listed on the syllabus. If you would like to use an outside source when writing your paper, please clear the text with me first.

**OFFICE HOURS:** I strongly encourage you to take advantage of office hours. Come by to talk over the paper you are considering writing, or to simply think through questions about the course material.

- I prefer to schedule my office hours by appointment, but drop-ins are great too. If you know you want to come, get in touch and we will arrange a time.
- Office hours will be held at my personal Zoom address (posted above under instructor information).

**EMAIL:** Email is an essential mode of communication in the course. Students are expected to read all email they receive concerning the course and to do so in a timely fashion.

- *Be sure set your Canvas notifications to "Notify me right away."* I will proceed on the assumption that you have done so.
- If you want to reach me by email, please do so via UF email and not via Canvas. If you have substantive philosophical questions, email is not the best place for these; please come visit me in office hours.

**ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Please make sure to turn off your phone before class period begins.

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge, which states, "We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel.

**PLAGIARISM:** You are encouraged to work and exchange ideas with your fellow classmates, and you are heartily encouraged to share drafts of written work. However, you must compose and submit your own papers. Doing otherwise is plagiarism.

Plagiarism is the presenting of another's work as one's own. Plagiarism on any assignment will result in a grade of "E" for the course. Plagiarism is defined in the University of Florida's Student Honor Code as follows: "A student shall not represent as the student's own work all or any portion of the work of another. Plagiarism includes (but is not limited to): a. Quoting oral or written materials, whether published or unpublished, without proper attribution. b. Submitting a document or assignment which in whole or in part is identical or substantially identical to a document or assignment not authored by the student." Students found guilty of academic misconduct will be prosecuted in accordance with the procedures specified in the UF honesty policy.

*If you are not sure if something counts as plagiarism consult the Honor Code. If you are still unsure, please, do not hesitate to ask.*

**MAKE UP EXAMS:** Requirements for make-up exams are consistent with university policies specified at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.** Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

**ONLINE MATERIALS:**

**ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION.** Students are expected to provide constructive and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback is available at [gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/](http://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/students/). Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [ufl.bluera.com/ufl/](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). Summaries of course evaluation results will be available to students at [gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/](http://gatorevals.ua.ufl.edu/public-results/).

**CANVAS E-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT.** This course is supplemented by online content in the e-Learning environment known as "Canvas." To login to the e-Learning site for this course, go to <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/>, click the **e-Learning Login** button under, and on the next page enter your Gatorlink username and password. Logging in will take you to the "My Workspace" page, where you can access the course e-Learning environment by clicking on the course name in the banner toward the top of the page.

- Check "Readings" for all readings, which is under the "Pages" tab.
- Check the "Announcements" and "Calendar" tools in the e-Learning environment for new course content (such as recommended readings) and due dates for assignments.

The official recommended system requirements for e-learning in Canvas are a broadband Internet connection and a fully updated and compatible browser. For Windows based PCs: Firefox 3.x or Internet Explorer 7.x or 8.x. For Macs: Firefox 3.0 or Safari 4.x. (Other browsers such as Opera, Chrome, etc. are not recommended for use with Canvas) If you encounter any difficulties logging in or accessing any of the course content, contact the UF Computing Help Desk at (352) 392-4537. Do not contact the course instructor regarding computer issues.

## SCHEDULE OF READINGS

### Week 1

- 1/12 Introduction  
1/14 Plato, *Gorgias* 447a-461b  
Thucydides, *History* 3.35-3.50

### Week 2

- 1/19 Plato, *Gorgias* 461b-481b  
1/21 Plato, *Gorgias* 481b-end

### Week 3

- 1/26 Plato, *Republic* opening-II.368c  
1/28 Plato, *Republic* II.368c-IV.427c  
1/29 **First paper option due**

### Week 4

- 2/2 Plato, *Republic* IV.427c-IV.445e  
Singpurwala, "The Tri-partite Theory of Motivation," **recommended**  
2/4 Plato, *Republic* V.449a-VI.506b  
Irwin, "The Theory of Forms," **recommended**

### Week 5

- 2/9 Plato, *Republic* VI.506b-VII.541b  
2/11 Plato, *Republic* VIII.543a-IX.592b

### Week 6

- 2/16 Plato, *Republic* X.595a-end  
2/18 *Republic* concluding thoughts  
Plato, *Laws* opening-I.650b

### Week 7

- 2/23 Plato, *Laws* II.652a-IV.707d  
2/25 **No class**  
2/26 **Second paper option due**

### Week 8

- 3/2 Plato, *Laws* II.652a-IV.707d cont.  
3/4 Plato, *Laws* IV.707d-V.747e

### Week 9

- 3/9 Plato, *Laws* IX.853a-X.910d  
3/11 Plato, *Laws* XII.960b-end

### Week 10

- 3/16 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* I.1-13  
3/18 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* II.1-7, III.6-IV.1  
3/19 **Third paper option due**

**Week 11**

3/23 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* III.1-3, VI.1, 3-5, 7-9, 12-13

3/25 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* VIII-IX

**Week 12**

3/30 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* X.6-9

4/1 Aristotle, *Politics* I.1-11

**Week 13**

4/5 **Fourth paper option due**

4/6 Aristotle, *Politics* II.1-II.12

4/8 Aristotle, *Politics* III.1-IV.16

**Week 14**

4/13 Aristotle, *Politics* V.1-12

4/15 Aristotle, *Politics* VI.1-VII.3

**Week 15**

4/20 Aristotle, *Politics* VII.4-VIII.4

4/22 **No class reading days**

**Exam Week**

4/26 **Fifth paper option at noon**

## PAPER RUBRIC

<b>Thesis</b>	<p>A clear statement of the main conclusion of the paper.</p> <p>10 points</p>	<p>The thesis is obvious, but there is no single clear statement of it.</p> <p>8 points</p>	<p>The thesis is present, but must be uncovered or reconstructed from the text of the paper.</p> <p>2- 7 points</p>	<p>There is no thesis.</p> <p>0- 1 points</p>	<p>10 points</p>
<b>Exposition</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The paper contains accurate and precise summarization, description and/or paraphrasing of the issue being discussed</li> <li>● Key concepts and theories are accurately and completely explained</li> <li>● When appropriate, good, clear examples are used to illuminate concepts and issues and/or support arguments.</li> <li>● The paper uses appropriate textual support.</li> </ul> <p>26-30 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The summarization, description and/or paraphrasing of the issue is fairly accurate and precise.</li> <li>● Key concepts and theories are explained.</li> <li>● Examples are clear, but may not be well chosen.</li> <li>● The paper has textual support, but other passages may have been better choices.</li> </ul> <p>21-25 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The summarization, description and/or paraphrasing of the issue is fairly accurate, but not precise.</li> <li>● Key concepts and theories are not explained.</li> <li>● Examples are not clear, and may not be well chosen or appropriate.</li> <li>● The textual support is inappropriate.</li> </ul> <p>16-20 points</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The summarization, description and/or paraphrasing of the issue is inaccurate.</li> <li>● Key concepts and theories may be identified but are not explained.</li> <li>● Examples are not clear, are inappropriate, and/or do not illuminate concepts and issues.</li> <li>● No textual support.</li> </ul> <p>0-15 points</p>	<p>30 points</p>
<b>Evaluation</b>	<p>The paper presents an original argument regarding a position on an issue important to the course. This argument is supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● checking for support in the argument</li> <li>● checking for the argument's internal consistency</li> </ul>	<p>The paper presents an original argument regarding a position on an issue importance to the course. This argument is supported by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● checking for support in the argument</li> <li>● checking for the argument's internal consistency</li> </ul>	<p>The paper presents an original argument but describes and/or considers its plausibility in a weak or superficial way. It does not check for the support offered in the argument or the argument's internal consistency. It does not defend the central argument against plausible objections.</p>	<p>The paper does not present an original argument about the issues in question, or, it fails to offer support through rational argument.</p>	<p>35 points</p>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● considering objections to one's own argument. This involves presenting 1 or more plausible and appropriate objections, and responding to them thoroughly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● considering objections to one's own argument, though the objections may be ill chosen and/or not thoroughly responded to.</li> </ul>			
	32-35 points	29-31 points	26-28 points	0-25 points	
<b>Writing: Mechanics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All sentences are complete and grammatical.</li> <li>● Paper has been spell-checked and proofread, and has no errors, and no rhetorical questions or slang.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All sentences are complete and grammatical.</li> <li>● Paper has been spell-checked and proofread, and has very few errors, and no rhetorical questions or slang.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A few sentences are incomplete and/or ungrammatical.</li> <li>● Paper has several spelling errors, rhetorical questions and/or uses of slang.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Many sentences are incomplete and/or ungrammatical.</li> <li>● Paper has many spelling errors, rhetorical questions and/or uses of slang.</li> </ul>	10 points
	9-10 points	7-8 points	5-6 points	0-4 points	
<b>Writing: Flow and Coherence</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● All words are chosen for their precise meanings and are used consistently.</li> <li>● All of the content of the paper is relevant to the main line of argument; no extraneous material.</li> <li>● Ideas are developed in a natural order. Premises fit together naturally and it is easy to identify the main line of argument and to understand what is being said.</li> <li>● All new or unusual terms are well-defined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Most words are chosen for their precise meanings.</li> <li>● Most of the content of the paper is relevant to the main line of argument; extraneous material is at a minimum.</li> <li>● Ideas are mostly developed in a natural order. It is not hard to understand what is being said.</li> <li>● Most new or unusual terms are well-defined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Words are not chosen for their precise meanings.</li> <li>● May be substantial extraneous material.</li> <li>● Ideas are not always developed in a natural order. It is sometimes difficult to identify the line of argument or to understand what is being said.</li> <li>● New or unusual terms are not well-defined.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Words are not chosen for their precise meanings.</li> <li>● Substantial extraneous material.</li> <li>● Ideas are not developed in a natural order. Premises do not fit together naturally and it is difficult to identify the line of argument or to understand what is being said.</li> <li>● New or unusual terms are not defined.</li> </ul>	10 points

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Information (names, facts, etc.) is accurate.</li></ul> 13-15 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Information (names, facts, etc.) is accurate.</li></ul> 10-12 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Information (names, facts, etc.) is mostly accurate.</li></ul> 6-9 points	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Information (names, facts, etc.) is inaccurate.</li></ul> 0-5 points	
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