**PHIL 3050 Political Philosophy**

**Topical Outline**

Note: This course is substantially the same as PST 2050, which in its time served as a core course for the BS in Public Policy (BSPP) program, but is to be taught at a higher level; hence the promotion to the 3xxx designation. This follows on the 2008 revision of the BSPP curriculum: a free-standing course in political philosophy was removed from the core requirements for the Public Policy major, with the intention of offering instead a more advanced elective in political philosophy. This intention was recorded in the minutes of the IUCC meeting of 11/ 05/08.

**Overview**

This course is an exploration of the main currents in political philosophy from antiquity to the present, drawing mainly from original sources. Questions for consideration include the nature and origins of political institutions, the basis for claims to political legitimacy, and the meaning of terms like justice, equality, liberty, and democracy.

Throughout the term, we will give special attention to ways in which the tradition of political philosophy can shed light on contemporary debates about public policy and political process.

**Objectives**

Through taking this course, students should be better able to:

* read primary philosophical texts carefully and critically,
* describe and explain a variety of approaches to political philosophy, and offer an informed and reasoned assessment of each;
* describe and explain the impact of theoretical disagreements on contemporary policy debates;
* begin to display independent, critical thought about matters of political philosophy; and
* write clear, well-focused, well-balanced interpretive and argumentative essays that display sound understanding of the material of the course.

**Outline**

A possible text for the course would be the anthology edited by Steven M. Cahn, *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*, second edition (Oxford, 2011). In any case, readings may include substantial selections from the following works:

Plato, *Republic*

Aristotle, *Politics*

Augustine, *The City of God*

Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*

Machiavelli, *The Prince*

Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*

Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* and *Of the Social Contract*

Kant, *Perpetual Peace*

Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*

Marx and Engels, *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844* and *Manifesto of the Communist Party*

Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems*

Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*

Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*

Habermas, *Three Normative Models of Democracy*