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2 **Political Theory and Pop Culture (PSCI 472)—Summer 2018 (Online)**

3 **This is an online course, and requires access to an appropriate computer and reliable internet.**

4 **Professor Cyrus Masroori**

5 **Office: SBSB 4109**

6 **Office Hours: W: 11:00-12:30 via Zoom**

7 **Email: cmasroor@csusm.edu**

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9 **You are responsible to read this syllabus carefully, and**
10 **follow all its stipulations. The rules in this syllabus apply to**
11 **all students at all times. Please do not request exemption**
12 **from any of these rules.**
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21 **This course requires students to have access to a computer, reliable internet, and**
22 **sufficient knowledge of using Cougar Courses. For questions about Cougar Courses,**
23 **please contact:**

24 **Student Technology Help Desk**
25 **Kellogg 2013**
26 **760.750.6505**
27

Important Dates:

Quizzes	1	2	3	4
	June 15 th , 8:00 AM to June 16 th , 2015, 5:00 PM	June 22 nd , 8:00 AM to July 29 th , 5:00 PM	June 29 th , 8:00 AM to June 30 th , 5:00 PM	July 6 th , 8:00 AM to July 7 th , 5:00 AM

Papers	1	2	3	4
	June 15 th , 8:00 AM	June 22 nd , 8:00 AM	June 29 rd , 8:00 AM	July 6 th , 8:00 am

Discussions	1	2	3	4	5
	June 8 th @ 10 AM	June 15 th @ 10 AM	June 22 nd @ 10 AM	June 29 th @ 10 AM	July 6 th @ 10 AM

There is no grace period for Discussions

This class is currently offered as a special topics course, and does not have a catalogue description Yet.

Synopsis:

Political theory is sometimes misunderstood as a field of study alien and unrelated to the daily lives of ordinary people, and the ideas and standards which inform and influence routine decisions and behaviors. This is particularly the case when such theories are presented by figures who lived centuries ago. This course will give students the opportunity to examine the relevancy of complex theoretical arguments to

49 the ordinary daily lives of Americans. Students will study how concepts in political theory developed by
50 various thinkers over the last 2500 years have impacted the sentiments, beliefs and sensitivities of
51 Americans in the 20th and 21st centuries. The course includes readings from the writings of Plato,
52 Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Kant. Students are asked to identify the impact of the ideas developed by these
53 thinkers on popular film and music.

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55 **Student Learning Objectives:**

56 Students who successfully complete the requirements for this course will:

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58 -Learn how to **apply** political theories and ideas to historical content and contemporary realities.

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60 -**Appraise** and **analyze** questions such as: What is justice and why is it important to be just? What
61 are our moral obligations, and on what grounds do they stand? Why and how should we evaluate
62 political regimes? What are the requirements for good governance? What is/should be the
63 relationship between politics and power?

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65 -**Compare** various approaches to the same concept analytically.

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67 -Interpret various political ideas critically.

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69 -**Evaluate** the application of political ideas of different historical eras and various societies to the
70 contemporary American pop culture.

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73 **Required Texts:**

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75 You can purchase the following books at various booksellers, such as Amazon and Barnes and Noble. The first two
76 books are also available on line (please follow the copyright rules). I will provide the required pages from
77 *Leviathan* on the Cougar Courses site for the class.

78 Plato, *the Republic*, trans. G. M. A. Grube, Hackett, 1992.

79 Or online at: http://www.inp.uw.edu.pl/mdsie/Political_Thought/Plato-Republic.pdf

80 Or: http://faculty.smcm.edu/jwschroeder/Web/ETHR1002/Global_Justice_Readings_files/3.PlatoRepblic.pdf

81

82 Machiavelli, *the Prince*, trans. Peter Bondanella, Oxford University Press, 2008.

83 Or online at:

84 <https://ebooks.adelaide.edu.au/m/machiavelli/niccolo/m149p/>

85 Or: <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/machiavelli-prince.asp>

86 Hobbes, Thomas; *Leviathan*, Cambridge University Press, 1992 (only selected pages-see the Cougar Courses site
 87 for the course)

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89 Kant, Immanuel, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays*, trans. Ted Humphrey, Hackett, 1983

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92 **The rules in this syllabus apply to all students at all times.**

93 **Please do not request exemption from any of these rules.**

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95 **Weekly schedule:**

- Plato-Lecture 1-the Beginning
- Plato-Lecture 2-Justice
- Plato-Lecture 3-Therasymachus
- Plato-Lecture 4-Response to Thrasymach

General

- News forum
- Films



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Week	Reading Assignment	Lecture Videos (online) <i>Watch all relevant lectures before writing your paper</i>	Films/Audio (all films are available on-line via Media Library)	Papers/Quizes
One 6/4 6/9	Introduction Plato: <i>The Republic</i> Books 1 through 5	Introduction to the course Plato lectures one through five Available at Cougar Courses Site for the Course	Films: <i>The Matrix</i> , Wachowski Brothers, 1999 <i>Equilibrium</i> , Kurt Wimmer, 2002 A short film about the "Allegory of the Cave:"	

			<p>https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4gZv2lIMSlw</p> <p>Music: “No Such Thing,” John Mayer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a2rcqXFrY8s</p>	
<p>Two 6/11 6/16</p>	<p>Plato: <i>The Republic</i> Books 6 through 10</p>	<p>Plato lectures 6 through 11</p> <p>Available at Cougar Courses Site for the Course</p>	<p>Music:</p>	<p><u>First Paper Due:</u> June 15 @ 8 am Choose between <i>The Matrix</i> and <i>Equilibrium</i> (you must watch both) and write a paper on an idea in the film, which has been described in Plato’s <i>Republic</i> (see instruction on paper for more information).</p> <p><u>First Quiz On-line</u> (June 15th, 8:00 AM to June 16th, 2015, 5:00 PM). You can take this quiz only once.</p>
<p>Three 6/18 6/23</p>	<p>Machiavelli: <i>The Prince</i> (entire book)</p>	<p>All Machiavelli Lectures</p> <p>Available at Cougar Courses Site for the Course</p>	<p>Movies:</p> <p><i>House of Cards</i>, 2013, Episode 1-3 ONLY</p> <p><i>Godfather</i>, Francis Ford Coppola, 1972</p> <p>Music:</p> <p>“Luck be a Lady,” Frank Sinatra: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHm-WCrKfrs</p>	<p><u>Second Paper Due:6/22@8:00 am</u> Choose between <i>House of Cards</i> and <i>Godfather</i> (you must watch both) and write a paper on an idea in the film, which has been described in Machiavelli’s <i>The Prince</i> (see instruction on paper for more information).</p>

				<p><u>Second Quiz (on line):</u> (June 22nd, 8:00 AM to July 29th, 5:00 PM). You can take this quiz only once.</p>
<p>Four 6/25 6/30</p>	<p>Hobbes: <i>Leviathan</i></p> <p>Required: pp. 69-75, 86-100, 117-129, 145-154, 221-30, 458-82</p>	<p>All Hobbes Lectures</p> <p>Available at Cougar Courses Site for the Course</p>	<p>Movies:</p> <p><i>Cromwell</i>, Ken Hughes, 1970</p> <p><i>Lord of Flies</i>, Harry Hook, 1990</p> <p>Music:</p> <p>“Hero,” Skillet: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uGcsldGOuZY</p>	<p><u>Third Paper Due: 6/29 @8:00 am</u></p> <p>Watch <i>Cromwell</i> and <i>Lord of Flies</i>. Either write a paper on an idea in <i>Lord of Flies</i> which has been described in Hobbes’s <i>Leviathan</i>; or a paper which describes how the film <i>Cromwell</i> can explain why Hobbes came up with one of his political theories (see instruction on paper for more information).</p> <p><u>Third Quiz (on line):</u> June 29th, 8:00 AM to June 30th, 5:00 PM You can take this quiz only once.</p>
<p>Five 7/2 7/7</p>	<p>Kant; <i>Perpetual Peace and Other Essays</i></p>	<p>All Kant Lectures</p> <p>Available at Cougar Courses Site for the Course</p>	<p>Movies:</p> <p><i>The Dark Knight</i>, Christopher Nolan, 2008</p> <p><i>Lone Survivor</i>, Peter Berg, 2013</p> <p>Music:</p> <p>“Waiting on the World to Change,” John Mayer:</p>	<p><u>Fourth Paper Due July 6th @8:00 am</u></p> <p>Choose between <i>The Black Knight</i> and <i>Lone Survivor</i> (you must watch both) and write a paper on an idea in the film, which has been described in one of Kant’s essays assigned to this class (see instruction on paper for more information).</p>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oBlxScJ5rIY>

Fourth Quiz (online):
July 6th, 8:00 AM to July 7th, 5:00 AM. You can take this quiz only once.

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The rules in this syllabus apply to all students at all times.

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Please do not request exemption from any of these rules.

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Grading:

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Credit Hour Policy Statement: Students are expected to spend thirty hours per week to watch the lecture videos and the assigned movies, read the assigned texts, listen to the assigned audios (music), complete forum participation requirements, write papers, and take quizzes.

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This course does not have a final exam. The writing requirement for this course is met by four papers (minimum 1600 words total) and five written participation responses (minimum 900 words total).

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Grades are based on:

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Four Papers: 60% (each paper will be graded on the 15 points basis). **Minimum length: 400 words per paper.**

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Participation in Forum: 20%. **Five participations. Minimum length: 180 words per participation.**

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Four quizzes: 20% (each quiz is worth 5%).

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93-100% A

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90-92% A-

118

87-89% B+

119

83-86% B

120

80-82% B-

121

77-79% C+

122

73-76% C

123

70-72% C-

124

67-69% D+

125	63-66%	D
126	60-62%	D-
127	59% and Below	F

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129 Sometimes students contact me after they receive their grades, telling me that they need a higher grade
 130 because they are on scholarship, receive financial aid, are on a school athletic team, plan to go to
 131 graduate school, ... There is nothing I can do in such cases. The standards for grading are clearly stated
 132 in this syllabus. To preserve the integrity of the course and be fair to all students, these standards apply
 133 equally to all students.

134 **The papers and quizzes for this course must be taken online. You are exclusively**
 135 **responsible for the reliability of your internet service while uploading papers and taking**
 136 **quizzes. You can take the quizzes and submit the papers at CSUSM, using the campus**
 137 **internet service.**

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139 **Papers:**

140 Papers must be submitted online via Turnitin (from the Cougar Course Site).

The screenshot shows a Turnitin interface. On the left, under the heading 'General', there is a list of items: 'News forum', 'Films', 'Announcements', 'Paper One-Plato', 'Paper Two-Machiavelli', 'Paper Three-Hobbes', 'Paper Four-Kant', and 'Paper Grade'. A large red arrow points to the 'Paper One-Plato' item. To the right of this list is a 'Your progress' section with a question mark icon and a vertical column of checkboxes, one for each item in the list. Below the list, there is a note: 'For instructions on how to find your papers' grades (after they are posted), click on the link above. The posting dates are stated on the Turnitin site for each paper.'

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142 The deadline for papers is **at 8:00 am** on the dates stated on the schedule above. **Students are**
 143 **expected to submit their papers before 8:00 am.** However, there is a grace period of two hours for
 144 when a student faces a technical problem. So, papers submitted **before** 10:00 am will not be penalized.
 145 **NO PAPER WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER 10:00 am, unless WRITTEN and VERIFIABLE PROOF of one of the**
 146 **following situations is presented:**

147 **-Medical emergency on relevant day(s);**

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149 **-Death of an immediate member of student’s family (parent, grandparent, sibling,**
150 **spouse or child);**

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152 **-Summon by a court on relevant day(s).**

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156 In the above cases extension will be given only for the period of time appropriate to the documented
157 circumstances. If there are system problems at CSUSM preventing students from submitting their
158 papers, the circumstances must be verified by the appropriate ITTS officer at CSUSM. The following is
159 the Student Help Desk information that you may need:

160 **Student Technology Help Desk**

161 **Kellogg 2013**

162 **760.750.6505**

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164 **Paper Structure:**

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166 Each paper must be divided into **three parts**. Please label each part clearly:

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168 **Part one**--the idea: In this part (roughly a third of your paper) you need to describe the idea (by the
169 relevant political theorist) that you are going to connect to the film. You must use only ONE IDEA. So,
170 for the first paper you explain ONE idea from Plato’s *Republic*, which you are going to show is relevant
171 to either *The Matrix* or *Equilibrium*.

172

173 **Part two**-the film: Describe the part of the film that you are going to link to the idea from the relevant
174 political thinker (roughly a third of your paper). Cite the film the same way as the lecture videos (time
175 stamp).

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177 **Part three**—link the idea to the film: In this part explain how the theorist’s idea (e.g. Plato) is used in
178 the part of the movie that you described in part two (roughly a third of your paper).

179

180 Make sure that you save your papers in more than one place, preferably one location being either a
181 removable disk or a cloud storage. “Losing” your file or computer, or malfunctioning of your computer
182 would not be accepted as an excuse for not submitting your paper on time.

183 You are not allowed to submit a paper which has been already submitted by you to fulfill the
184 requirements for another course at CSUSM or another institution, regardless of whether the paper has
185 been accepted/graded or not.

186 In the case of technical problems when submitting your paper, please contact the Student Help Desk at
187 (760) 750-6505. For more information please visit <http://www.csusm.edu/sth/>.

189 Grading Criteria for Papers:

190 1) Papers are primarily graded based on a student's demonstration of his/her ability to understand
191 relevant concepts, interpret them innovatively and apply them to analyzing the films.

192 **2) papers shorter than 400 and longer than 500 words will not receive any credit.**

193 **Papers without citation or with wrong citation will also receive no credit.**

194 **3) You cannot have direct quotes from any text! ANY DIRECT QUOTE = NO CREDIT.** A

195 direct quote is a part of someone's writing which you include in your writing, putting it in quotation marks and
196 providing a reference for it. The following is a direct quote: "In a majoritarian system the only winners in
197 elections are the citizens who happen to be in the majority" (Dahl, *How Democratic*, p. 107). To avoid
198 direct quotes, write the ideas of an author in your own words. In the case of the above example, you
199 can write: In a country where the party which receives the largest number of votes wins the election, the
200 only winners are the citizens who belong to that party (Dahl, *How Democratic*, p. 107).

201 4) Make sure that you cite the text and/or the lecture whenever you mention what someone says. **NO**

202 **CITATION = NO CREDIT!** Use the following example for citing:

203
204 Plato believes/says/thinks/argues that philosophers...(Plato, *the Republic*, p. 133).

205
206 ONLY IN THE CASE OF MACHIAVELLI'S *PRINCE* YOU CAN USE CHAPTER NUMBERS. IN ALL OTHER CASES
207 YOU MUST CITE PAGE NUMBERS.

208
209 At the end of your paper, give a full citation of your sources in the following way:

210
211 Author's last name, author's first name; title in italic (city where the book published, publisher: date of
212 publication). In the case of Machiavelli's *Prince* give the webpage address.

213
214 To cite the lecture videos, use the following format:

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216 Lecture number (each lecture is numbered in the Cougar Course site), lecture title, time stamp

217
218 For example:

219
220 Plato, Lecture # 6, (1:23 to 3:40).

221
222 Films need to be cited the same way as lectures (time stamp). For example: *The Matrix*, (24:03-26:18)

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224 5) There is a **minimum** 10% penalty for grammar and style problems.

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- 226 6) Font must be 12, and margins not greater than 1 inch. Minimum penalty for violating this rule is 20%
227 of the paper grade.
228
229 7) Papers must be double-spaced.
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231 8) Make sure you have more than one copy of your paper, preferably with one of the copies saved to a
232 cloud storage. Extension will not be granted in the case of lost computers and drives, or corrupted
233 files.

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235 **Papers can be submitted once. Once you submit your paper, it cannot be retrieved.**
236

237 **The papers and quizzes for this course must be uploaded and taken online. You are**
238 **exclusively responsible for the reliability of your internet service while taking the**
239 **exams. You can always take the quizzes and submit the papers at CSUSM, using the**
240 **campus internet service.**

241 **Quizzes:** Quizzes are multiple-choice and taken online. Each quiz will be 10 questions, and you have
242 15 minutes to answer the questions. **You are responsible for making sure that you have access to the**
243 **proper equipment and internet connection to take the quiz.** You can take the quiz only once. If there
244 are system problems at CSUSM preventing students from taking their quizzes, the circumstances must
245 be verified by the appropriate IITS officer at CSUSM. In the case of technical problems please contact
246 the Student Help Desk at (760) 750-6505. For more information please visit
247 <http://www.csusm.edu/sth/>.

Week Two

Plato II

-  Plato Discussion Forum (2)
-  Plato-Lecture 6- Government 1
-  Plato-Lecture 7-Government 2
-  Plato-Lecture 8-Cave 1
-  Plato-Lecture 9-Cave 2
-  Plato-Lecture 10-Philosopher
-  Plato-Lecture 11-Decline
-  Quiz 1 Plato



Attempts allowed: 1
The quiz will not be available until

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250 **If a student misses a quiz due to**

251 **-Medical emergency,**

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253 **-Death of an immediate member of student's family, or**

254

255 -Summon by a court

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257 on the days assigned to a quiz, and he/she provides verifiable written proof for his/her
258 emergency, the average of his/her other quizzes will be used for the missed quiz.

259 Regardless of the circumstances, there will not be any make up opportunity if a student
260 misses more than one quiz.

261

262 **Participation (Discussions):** Participation is through the Moodle Forum. In general, you are
263 asked to provide a comment of 120-130 words about one aspect of what you have learned about each
264 political theorist, and respond to a comment by one of your classmates in 60-70 words.

265 **You must respond to the discussion prompt, AND comment on one of your classmate's responses to**
266 **receive credit.** You will not be able to see other students' responses until 15-20 minutes after you
267 have posted your response. There is no make up for missing participation.

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270 Please be advised that I will not tolerate comments and responses that are racist or
271 sexist, or insult someone's religion, nationality, gender or sexual orientation. As a
272 student in this class, you are at all times responsible to use a language appropriate to
273 academic dialogue, which is fully respectful of human dignity. Any violation could
274 impact your grade, and will be reported to the Dean of Students.

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276 **Students with Disability:**

277 Students with Disability: Any student who requires reasonable accommodations
278 because of disability must obtain approval for services by contacting the Office of
279 Disabled Student Services (DSS), located at Craven Hall 5205. DSS can be contacted
280 by phone at 760-750-4905, or TTY 760-750-4909. Please inform me by the first week of
281 the class if the DSS has approved you for services.

282

283 **Other Rules**

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285 I) **I do not, under any condition, communicate any aspect of your grade, or**
286 **your performance in this class via e-mail or telephone conversation.**
287 **Your final grade for this course will become available to you via the**
288 **university. Please do not contact me for your final grade.**
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290 II) **Academic dishonesty: CSUSM Policy on Academic Honesty is fully**
291 **enforced in this class. If you are not completely familiar with this policy,**
292 **carefully review it at:**

293 [http://www.csusm.edu/policies/active/documents/Academic_Honesty_Poli](http://www.csusm.edu/policies/active/documents/Academic_Honesty_Policy.html)
294 [cy.html](http://www.csusm.edu/policies/active/documents/Academic_Honesty_Policy.html)
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297 **A student who commits academic dishonesty will receive a grade of “F”**
298 **for the course, and will be reported to the Dean of Students.**