Introduction: This is an introduction to the major themes in the history of political philosophy. We will focus on one specific question:

Why, or under what conditions, should an individual follow rules of justice?


Policies: Because our readings are so challenging, your attendance, civility, and active engagement are necessary but not sufficient guarantors of your success in this course. There will be no makeup exams, so I advise you to drop the course if exam dates are inconvenient for you. Anything covered in a text, a lecture, or in discussion is fair game for an exam. If you believe your paper has been inaccurately graded, I will regrade it, but requests for regrades must be made in writing and turned into the professor, specifying the mistakes made by the grader and accompanied by a fresh copy of the unrevised paper. I will regrade your paper, but be advised: your grade could go up or down. All papers are due online on the due date by midnight. I will deduct 5 points for each day the paper is late, weekend and holiday inclusive.

COVID Policy: For now, this will be an in-person class. Everyone who comes to class will, per University guidelines, be required to wear a mask over your mouth and nose, and we will do our best to practice safe social distancing while in the classroom. If you feel ill or come into contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID, please communicate with me about your situation, make arrangements to get tested, and do not come to class. I will make every reasonable effort to accommodate you. Effective August 25, I will live-stream class, so it will be possible for students who are isolating to join us virtually, but unless you are isolating or are immune-compromised, I expect you to be present in the classroom. I, do, however reserve the right to discontinue this practice if conditions permit. If and when in-person meetings become impossible, I also reserve the right to shift the course to a 100% virtual modality and we will meet via Zoom. It is important to emphasize that this decision will be made in consultation with you, my department head, and in accordance with all University guidelines, and that we will be back in the physical classroom as soon as it is feasible.

Assignments and Evaluation: Your performance on the following assignments will determine your grade in this course:

• 1 one-page, single-spaced analytic essay: 15%
• 4 Exams (lowest grade dropped): 60%
• A Comprehensive Final Exam: 20%
• Class participation: 5%
Readings and Course Schedule:

M 8.23: Course introduction
W 8.25: The Apology (PDF)
F 8.27: The Apology (PDF)

M 8.30: Republic, Book I
W 9.1: Republic, Book I
F 9.3: Republic, Book II

M 9.6: No Class – Labor Day
W 9.8: Republic, Book II
F 9.10: Republic, Book III

M 9.13: Republic, Book IV
W 9.15: Republic, Book IV
F 9.17: Republic, Book IX

M 9.20: Review Day: Republic
W 9.22: Exam 1
F 9.24: The Prince, Epistle Dedicatory

M 9.27: Prince, ch. 1-5
W 9.29: Prince, ch. 6
F 10.1: Prince, ch. 7-10

M 10.4: Prince, ch. 11-14
W 10.6: Prince, ch. 15-20
F 10.8: Prince, ch. 21-26

M 10.11: Review Day: The Prince
W 10.13: Exam 2
F 10.15: Leviathan, Preface

M 10.17: Leviathan, ch. 1-5
W 10.19: Leviathan, ch. 6, 11
F 10.21: Leviathan, ch. 13-15

M 10.24: Leviathan, ch. 17-18
W 10.26: Review Day: Leviathan
F 10.28: Exam 3

M 11.1: The Discourse on Inequality, Epigraph and Illustration (pp. 37-8), note xvi (pp. 147-9)
W 11.3: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 51-63
F 11.5: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 64-75
M 11.8: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 75-81
W 11.10: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 81-90
F 11.12: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 91-97

M 11.15: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 97-103
W 11.17: Discourse on Inequality, pp. 103-117
F 11.19: No Class

November 22-26: No Class

M 11.29: Review Day: Discourse on Inequality
W 12.1: Exam 4
F 12.3: No class: writing day

December 6-10: No class (Paper 1 due Wednesday, December 8, at 11.59pm)

THE FINAL EXAM IS MONDAY, DECEMBER 13, AT 11.50AM.