I. Scope and Purpose

From classical antiquity to the 18th century, flattery was a key concern for political thinkers. It continues to be a concern to democratic theorists and scholars of American politics, though they may not always use the term itself. Flattery – which we may initially define as self-interested and insincere praise – is related to a wide array of political concepts: representation, legitimacy, and rhetoric, to name but a few. Any observer of democracy – a regime that centers on persuasive speech – should be particularly concerned with the possibility that political actors may be manipulating their audiences.

Given the historical, conceptual, and normative importance of flattery, participants in this course will work to achieve the following objectives:

1. To read and analyze texts dealing with flattery and politics.
2. To explore and analyze how political theories are formulated, and to critically evaluate their strengths and weaknesses.
3. To explore and analyze how different political theories relate to each other.
4. To explore and analyze the ways in which works of political theory may inform, illuminate, and enrich contemporary political discussions.
5. To analyze and evaluate contemporary culture through the lens of philosophical and political texts.

II. Evaluation
A. Papers

All students in this course will write two papers. These two papers will be worth 35% of your grade, with the higher grade counting for 20% of your overall grade, and the lower counting for 15%. These papers are to be analyses of a work of popular culture through the lens of one of the course readings. As such, you can write a paper about a novel, song, album, television show, film, play, poem, or other similar works of literature. Your papers must develop readings of the selected works that focus on flattery and its political, ethical, or social implications. You may write these papers on a text from any two of the five course units – that is, Classical Political Thought, The Renaissance, English Political Thought, The Enlightenment, or American Political Thought. You must, however, turn in at least one paper prior to the midterm exam on Monday, March 19. While you can turn your papers in early, the deadlines for each unit are as follows:

- Unit 1: Monday, February 20
- Unit 2: Monday, March 5
- Unit 3: Wednesday, March 21
- Unit 4: Monday, April 16
- Unit 5: Monday, May 7

The papers are to be 5-8 pages in length, double spaced, Times New Roman, 12 point font, black ink, and stapled. Papers that do not meet these specifications will not be accepted. Papers will not be accepted late, and emailed papers will not be graded. Detailed guidelines on paper evaluation will be handed out well in advance of the first due date.

B. Exams

All students in this course will take a midterm and final exam. The midterm is scheduled for Monday, March 19; the final is scheduled for Wednesday, May 16, from 12:25-2:25. Be sure to arrive on time for the exams, as they will end promptly. The midterm is worth 20% of your course grade; the final is worth 30% of your course grade. You may not reschedule either exam barring documented medical or family emergency or religious observance.

C. Section and Participation

Attendance and participation in discussion section will count for 15% of your grade. Doing well on this part of your grade means active and thoughtful participation, not mere attendance. This will require you to attend lectures and to do the readings. Missing more than one discussion section without an excuse will severely harm your participation grade.

D. Pop Quizzes

Should I feel that the class is not making an adequate effort to do the readings, pop quizzes may be administered in either discussion section or class. If they are given, quizzes will be factored into the participation grade.

III. Class Expectations
You can expect me, as your instructor, to come to class prepared, to be available for assistance during office hours or by mutually convenient appointment, to answer email and phone correspondence in a reasonable amount of time (provided your email uses proper punctuation, grammar, spelling, appellation, and is signed), to provide feedback on your performance, to hand back written work in a reasonable amount of time, and to provide clear instructions and guidelines.

I expect you, as students, to come to class prepared to engage in discussion and on time, to be attentive and respectful in class, to check your university-registered email regularly, to read and understand the syllabus and other course guidelines, in addition to adhering to all university policies and policies stated in the syllabus. Students in this class may use laptops in this class under two caveats: first, if you are using a laptop, I may call on you during class to participate; second, if laptop use becomes a distraction, I may ban their use.

**Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, and will be dealt with severely.**

IV. Grading

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>$\geq 93.5$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>87.5-93.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>82.5-87.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC</td>
<td>77.5-82.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>69.5-77.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>$\leq 59.9$</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

V. Material

There are 6 required texts for this course, the bulk of which should be available in used form. I have ordered them from the University Book Store.

Danielle Allen, *Talking to Strangers* (0226014673)

Plato, *Gorgias* (Zeyl translation) (0872200167)


Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (Javitch edition) (0393976068)

Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Wootton edition) (0872203166)

Jeffrey Tulis, *The Rhetorical Presidency* (069102295X)

Readings labeled **packet** are in the course packet, available for purchase at Bob’s Copy Shop (208 North Charter Street).

**This syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations and modifications may occur at the instructor’s discretion.**
VI. Schedule of Lectures and Readings

Monday, January 23: No reading; course intro

Wednesday, January 25: *The Fox and the Raven, The Emperor’s New Clothing* (packet)

**Unit 1: Classical Political Thought**

Monday, January 30: Plato, *Gorgias*

Wednesday, February 1: Plato, *Gorgias*, cont’d

Monday, February 6: Cicero, *On Friendship* (packet)

Wednesday, February 8: Plutarch, *How to tell a Flatterer from a Friend* (packet)

Monday, February 13: Plutarch, cont’d; Tacitus, *Agricola* (packet)

**Unit 2: The Renaissance**

Wednesday, February 15: Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*

Monday, February 20: Castiglione, *Book of the Courtier*

**Unit 1 Papers Due in Class**

Wednesday, February 22: Machiavelli, *The Prince*

Monday, February 27: Machiavelli, *The Prince*

**Unit 3: English Political Thought**

Wednesday, February 29: Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Monday, March 5: Hobbes, *Leviathan*

**Unit 2 Papers Due in Class**

Wednesday, March 7: Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Monday, March 12: Hobbes, *Leviathan*

Wednesday, March 14: Review Session

Monday, March 19: Midterm

**Unit 4: The Enlightenment**

Wednesday, March 21: Mandeville, *Fable of the Bees* and other writings (packet)
Unit 3 Papers Due in Class

Monday, March 26: Mandeville, cont’d

Wednesday, March 28: Smith, Theory of Moral Sentiments (packet)

March 31 through April 8: Spring Break

Monday, April 9: Smith, cont’d

Unit 5: American Political Thought

Wednesday, April 11: Federalists 1, 9, 10, 39, 43, 47, 51, 52, 57, 62, 63, 73, 85 (packet)

Monday, April 16: Federalists, cont’d

Unit 4 Papers Due in Class

Wednesday, April 18: Tulis, Rhetorical Presidency

Monday, April 23: Tulis, cont’d

Wednesday, April 25: Allen, Talking to Strangers

Monday, April 30: Allen, cont’d

Wednesday, May 2: Thank you for Smoking

Monday, May 7: Thank you for Smoking

Unit 5 Papers Due in Class

Wednesday, May 9: Extra Day/Review

Exam: May 16, 12:25-2:25