

Statesmen and Tyrants

Professor Flagg Taylor
Scribner Seminar, Fall 2019
Office Hours: Monday/Wednesday, 1:00-3:00 (& by appointment)
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Maggie Warner, Peer Mentor
Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:15-3:15 (Scribner Library, 404)

Course Description:

This course is an examination of statesmanship. Statesmanship is distinct from ordinary political leadership. It suggests a certain quality of excellence in both leadership and judgment. It also appears to be an activity at odds, or at least in tension, with democracy. In democracy, the people are said to rule. Yet democracy needs statesmanship to establish it, to sustain it, and perhaps to justify it. Is democratic statesmanship an oxymoron? What are the qualities of soul that characterize the statesman? How is the statesman different not only from the ordinary politician, but from the tyrant? This course will examine these and related questions through some classic readings on the subject, and then turn to a study of the speeches and deeds of two of the greatest statesmen of the last two centuries: Abraham Lincoln and Winston Churchill. We will explore a variety of writings (theoretical, historical, literary, biographical) about both statesmanship.

Readings:

Richard Carwardine, *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power* (Knopf: 978-1400096022)
Winston Churchill, *The Gathering Storm* (Mariner Books: 978-0395410554)
Winston Churchill, *Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat: The Great Speeches* (Penguin: 978-0141442068)
Abraham Lincoln, *Selected Speeches and Writings* (Library of America: 978-1598530537)
Machiavelli, *The Prince*, translated by Harvey Mansfield (Chicago: 978-0-226-50044-7)
Josef Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture* (Liberty Fund: 978-0865972100)
William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Folger Shakespeare Library: 978-0743477109)

Articles and shorter selections will be distributed in class and/or available on Blackboard.

Course Requirements:

Quizzes: 5%
Short response papers, Gettysburg address etc: 10%
Essay #1: 25%
Essay #2: 30%
Final Exam: 30%

Quizzes:

Quizzes are designed to let me know if and how you are doing the assigned reading. Your grade will not be affected by missing one quiz due to absence, but beyond that, being absent or tardy during a quiz will earn you an F for that quiz.

Response papers:

These are short (1-2) page essays. I'll ask you to elucidate a particular theme or argument from a text.

Essays:

These are formal essays where you are expected to have an identifiable thesis with arguments to support it. They should demonstrate a command of the text at hand, and a thoughtfulness about the claims made therein. I will hand out topics approximately two weeks before the essays are due. These are not research papers and you are not required to read any secondary literature. I want you to engage these authors directly.

Gettysburg Address:

Each student is required to memorize the Gettysburg Address and deliver it as a speech either before the class or just to me and your peer mentor.

Final Exam:

This will be a comprehensive, essay exam taken during the exam period.

General Expectations:

You are expected to read the assignments carefully and reflectively, remaining open to the possibility that what you are reading is right. Your first duty as an attentive reader is to understand what is being said. This means grasping the argument of the author—identifying central claims and seeing how these claims are supported. When you encounter something with which you strongly disagree, make sure you first understand the argument. You are expected to give reasons for your opinions.

You will be attentive in class and always display the demeanor of one who is interested in the material and respectful of others. You will take your share of responsibility for the quality of class time, coming prepared to discuss the assignments thoughtfully.

No laptops are permitted in class unless you have a medical problem that prevents you from taking notes by hand. Cell-phone use is also strictly prohibited.

Attendance:

After two absences, each absence will bring your final grade down by 5 points.

Scribner Seminar Goals

Learning Aims:

- **Intellectual Excellence:** appreciation of and passion for intellectual endeavor and the life of the mind; appreciation of and grounding in the liberal arts and sciences; excellence in a discipline, including understanding of the relationship between one's discipline and other disciplines; understanding the interconnectedness of all knowledge; habits of intellectual curiosity, honesty, humility, and persistence.
- **Critical Understanding:** the ability to evaluate a claim based on documentation, plausibility, and logical coherence; freedom from narrow, solipsistic, or parochial thinking.
- **Students demonstrate evidence-based argumentation.** In writing students make assertions, judgments and claims using evidence. Students provide proof to support written judgments and claims; writing is not merely reflective or rhetorically persuasive. Evidence takes the form of reference to a body of research findings; reference to a legal case or set of cases; or reference to the pattern or logic of a foundational text.
- **Students demonstrate the ability to apply concepts from a theoretical text or argument to a**

tangible political dilemma, proposal or event. Student achievement is the ability to apply an abstract political concept to political decisions in the past, present or future.

- Students demonstrate an in-depth, critical understanding of foundational ancient and modern Western texts on the formation of the state and the political community.

This course will challenge you to:

- > distinguish among and formulate types of questions asked by different disciplines
- > distinguish among the evidence and methods characteristic of different disciplines
- > read and think critically
- > gather and interpret textual evidence
- > formulate conclusions based upon evidence
- > make connections among ideas
- > recognize choices, examine assumptions, ask questions of yourself and your work
- > communicate ideas persuasively—orally and in writing
- > develop collegial relationships with your peers
- > relate the course material to your larger educational goals
- > accept criticism productively and critique your own work insightfully

Special attention will be given to developing your written and oral communication skills. Students will routinely engage in written work to enhance clarity and correctness. They will learn to identify and develop a central thesis and support that thesis with a number of ideas and arguments. Students will learn to link these ideas logically and to formulate appropriate transitions between arguments. Appropriate documentation will be required as will the necessity of upholding the standards of academic integrity. Students will also learn to communicate their ideas orally. They will gain the habit of asking pertinent and probing questions. Students will gain the ability to defend their assertions and interpretations with evidence gleaned from the texts. Clarity of expression will also be emphasized, as will the need for civility in the midst of disagreement. The small size of the seminar will allow for the sort of focused discussion where such goals can be met.

Fourth Credit Hour:

The fourth credit hour will be primarily devoted to readings about liberal education. Later in the semester we will use this time for exercises related to statesmanship and discussions of films.

Grading Scale:

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	below 60

Academic Honesty

You are bound by the Honor Code. Students will be expected to know and abide by the regulations concerning plagiarism and academic honesty, as stated in the Student Handbook. The standard penalty for plagiarism will be an F for the course.

Class Schedule

Part I: What is Statesmanship?

- Sept. 5 Isaiah Berlin, "Political Judgment"; Carnes Lord, "Leadership and Statecraft" (packet)
- 10 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Book IV, ch. 3; Book VI, chs. 5-8 (packet)
Robert Faulkner, *The Case for Greatness: Honorable Ambition and its Critics*, ch. 2, pp. 16-44 (packet)
- 12 Aristotle, *The Politics*, Book III, chs. 6-9; Book V, chs. 8-9 (packet)
Lord, *The Modern Prince*, ch. 5, "On Regimes" (packet)
- 17 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Dedicatory Letter, chs. 6-9; 15
Lord, *The Modern Prince*, ch. 7, "Modern Founders" (packet)
- 19 Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chs. 16-19, 25

Part II: What is Tyranny?

- 24 Xenophon, *Hiero* (entire) (packet)
- 26 Xenophon, *Hiero*
- Oct. 1 Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Act I
- 3 Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Acts II-III
- 8 Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, Acts IV-V

Part III: The Statesman Confronts Disunion—Lincoln

- 10 Richard Cawardine, *Lincoln: A Life of Purpose and Power*, ch. 1
Lincoln, "Address to the Young Men's Lyceum," pp. 13-21
- 15 Cawardine, ch. 2
Lincoln, speech at Peoria on repeal of MO Compromise (packet)
letter to Joshua F. Speed, Aug. 24, 1855, pp. 102-106
- 17 Cawardine, ch. 3
Lincoln, speech on Dred Scott, pp.117-122
House Divided speech, pp. 131-139
- 22 Cawardine, ch. 4
Lincoln, First Inaugural Address, pp.284-293
Message to Congress in Special Session, pp. 300-315

- 24 Cawardine, ch. 5
 Lincoln, letter to O.H. Browning, Sept. 22, 1861, pp. 317-319
 appeal to Border-State Representatives, pp.335-337
 reply to Horace Greeley, Aug. 22, 1862, pp. 343
 Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, Sept. 22, 1862, pp. 345-347
 Second Annual Message, Dec. 1862 pp. 356-364
 Emancipation Proclamation, Jan. 1, 1863, pp. 368-369
- 29 Letter to Erastus Corning, June 12, 1863, pp. 373-382
 Letter to James C. Conkling, August 26, 1863, pp. 389-393

MOVIE NIGHT: *Lincoln*, Wednesday, October 30, 7:30 (Library Rm. 129)

- 31 Cawardine, ch. 6
 Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, p.405
 letter to Michael Hahn, March 13, 1864, p. 418-419
- Nov. 5 letter to A.G. Hodges, April 4, 1864, pp. 419-421
 Second Inaugural, pp. 449-451

Part IV: The Statesman Confronts Modern Tyranny—Churchill

- 7 Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, ch. 11, pp. 169-185; ch. 17, pp. 268-88
 ch. 18, pp. 301-2
 ch. 19, pp. 310-12; pp. 318-21
 ch. 21, p. 358
 speech, "The Locust Years," Nov. 12, 1936, pp. 114-128
 speech, "A Total and Unmitigated Defeat," Oct. 5, 1938, pp. 129-143
- 12 Geoffrey Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, ch. 13
 Churchill, *The Gathering Storm*, ch. 22, pp. 361-368
 ch. 38, 593-601
 speech, "Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat," May 13, 1940, pp. 147-149
 speech, "Be Ye Men of Valour," May 19, 1940, pp. 150-154
- 14 Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, ch. 14
 Churchill speeches:
 "Wars are not Won by Evacuations," June 4, 1940, pp. 155-165
 "Their Finest Hour," June 18, 1940, pp. 166-178
 "The Fall of France," June 25, 1940 (packet)
 "The Tragedy of the French Fleet," July 4, 1940 (packet)
- 19 Churchill, *Their Finest Hour*, Book Two, chs. 1-2 (packet)
 Churchill speeches:
 "The Few," Aug. 20, 1940, pp. 179-192
 "Neville Chamberlain," Nov. 12, 1940, pp. 193-197

MOVIE NIGHT: *Darkest Hour*, Wednesday, November 20, 7:30 (Library Rm. 129)

- 21 Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, ch. 15, 17
Churchill speeches:
“Give Us the Tools,” Feb. 9, 1941, pp. 201-213
“President Roosevelt,” Apr. 17, 1945, pp. 251-256
- 26 Best, *Churchill: A Study in Greatness*, chs. 20, 22
Churchill speeches:
“The Iron Curtain,” Mar. 5, 1946, pp. 295-308
“Something That Will Astonish You,” Sept. 19, 1946, pp. 309-314

NO CLASS 11/27 THANKSGIVING BREAK

- Dec. 3 Eliot Cohen, *Supreme Command*, ch. 4 (packet)
Churchill, “Painting as a Pastime” (packet)
- 5 Lord, *The Modern Prince*, chs. 24-26 (packet)
Harry Clor, *On Moderation*, ch. 1 (packet)
- 10 TBA

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, Dec. 17, 6:00-9:00