

U.S. Statesmanship: Liberty, Equality, and the Common Good

Villanova Integrated Academics (VIA) 3030 – 001

CRN: 33576

MW 1:30-2:45pm

Bartley 035

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“The ideas of economists and political philosophers, both when they are right and when they are wrong, are more powerful than is commonly understood. Indeed the world is ruled by little else. Practical men, who believe themselves to be quite exempt from any intellectual influence, are usually the slaves of some defunct economist.”

– John Maynard Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money*

Course Description:

This course will integrate the disciplines of economics and political philosophy in order to educate students in the history, theories, and techniques of statesmanship with a specific focus on the link between economics and politics in American presidential leadership. Framed by Aristotle’s account of statesmanship as the task of prudentially balancing the various interests in any given society in order to serve the common good, this course will study and evaluate the efforts of exceptional statesmen in American history to manage the economic and political interests of the American people. Lectures will integrate Aristotle's political philosophy, the development of macroeconomic theory from the 1930s, and studies of the political-economic policies and rhetoric of specific presidential administrations beginning with FDR. Students will present case studies of presidential administrations to illustrate the role of statesmanship in crafting and pursuing successful macroeconomic policy. Readings will include selections from Aristotle, Keynes, presidential speeches, and secondary literature on statesmanship and the history of American macroeconomic policy. No previous study of political philosophy or economics is required.

Required Texts:

These texts are available for purchase from the bookstore:

1. Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. C.D.C. Reeve (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1998)
2. Carnes Lord, *The Modern Prince* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003)
3. Herbert Stein, *Presidential Economics*, 3rd ed. (Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1994)

The following text will be provided in PDF format by the instructors:

4. J. M. Keynes, *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money* (London: London, Macmillan, 1936).

All other readings will be provided via Blackboard.

Graded Assignments:

1. Take-Home Midterm (30%). This exam will consist of a series of short answer questions and will be due on Feb. 27th.
2. Group Presentation (40% total). Students will work in groups of five or six to present on and evaluate the political-economic leadership of a specific American president. An initial proposal (5%) will be due Feb. 18th. A more elaborate outline (5%) will be due March 18th. The presentation (30%) will occupy one class period between April 8th-29th. Further instructions will be provided on a separate assignment sheet.
3. Term Paper (30%). Each student will write a 10-page paper recommending a political-economic course of action to President Trump or Speaker Nancy Pelosi. Further instructions will be provided on a separate assignment sheet. This assignment will be due on May 1st.

Grading Scale:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	59 or below

For a verbal description of what each letter grade means, please see:

<https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/provost/resources/student/policies/grades.html>

Policies and Expectations:

1. Attendance: Required. If you miss a class, you may get lost. If you must miss a class, please get notes from a classmate and notify the instructors.
2. Classroom conduct: Collegiality, if not maturity, requires that you:
 - a. Refrain from non-authorized use of your laptops.
 - b. Keep cell phones silent and do not use them during class.
 - c. Finish meals before class gets underway and clean up your mess.
3. Preparation: Please do the assigned readings before each class and bring the text(s) with you to class, so that we can refer to them and discuss them as a group.
4. Email: You are responsible for checking your Villanova e-mail regularly and for being aware of any communications the instructors send via e-mail. Please allow us at least one business day to respond to your emails.

5. Late Assignments: Late exams or term papers will lose 5% per day late. Missed deadlines for the group project receive a ZERO (0). Failure to attend the group presentation receives a grade of ZERO (0) unless written documentation of a valid reason is given to the instructors, in which case the instructors will determine an appropriate alternative assignment.
6. Class Cancellation: If a class meeting is cancelled by the University, one of the instructors will email the class to explain how the schedule will be modified.

Office of Disabilities (ODS) and Learning Support Services (LSS):

It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. Go to the Learning Support Services website (<http://learningsupportservices.villanova.edu>) for registration guidelines and instructions. For physical access or temporarily disabling conditions, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 610-519-4095 or email Stephen.mcwilliams@villanova.edu. Registration is needed in order to receive accommodations.

Academic Integrity:

All students are expected to uphold Villanova’s Academic Integrity Policy and Code. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the appropriate dean for disciplinary action. You may view the university’s Academic Integrity Policy and Code, as well as other useful information related to writing papers, at the Academic Integrity Gateway web site:

<http://library.villanova.edu/Help/AcademicIntegrity>

Absences for Religious Holidays:

Villanova University makes every reasonable effort to allow members of the community to observe their religious holidays, consistent with the University’s obligations, responsibilities, and policies. Students who expect to miss a class or assignment due to the observance of a religious holiday should discuss the matter with their professors as soon as possible, normally at least two weeks in advance. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the absence.

<https://www1.villanova.edu/villanova/provost/resources/student/policies/religiousholidays.html>

Course Schedule:

January	14	Introduction
	16	Introducing Politics and Statesmanship Reading: Aristotle, I.1-2, III.6-7, IV.1; Lord, ch. 1-3
	21	Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – No Class
	23	Democracies, Oligarchies, and Polities Reading: Aristotle, III.8-13, IV.3-9, 11-12, VI.2-3; Lord, ch. 4-5
	28	Political Change and Regime Preservation Reading: Aristotle, V.1-9; Lord, ch. 6, 8

- 30 The Challenges of Modern Statesmanship
Reading: Lord, ch. 11, 16, 20, 23-25
- February 4 A look at the data. Keynes' critique of Classical Economics
Reading: Keynes, ch. 2
- 6 Aggregate Supply-Aggregate Demand Framework
- 11 Keynes' GT on income determination
Reading: Keynes, ch. 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13
- 13 Keynes' multiplier and economic policy
Reading: Keynes, ch. 10
- 18 Shortcomings of Keynesian economics
Assignment: Submit group presentation proposal
- 20 FDR's Political Thought
Reading: Forgotten Man Speech, Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination, Speech at Madison Square Garden, The Continuing Struggle for Liberalism
- 25 FDR's Economic Policies
Reading: Stein, ch. 2, esp. pp. 28-29, 33-35, 37-39, 50, 62-63
- 27 Evaluating FDR's Statesmanship
Assignment: Submit take-home midterm
- March 4 & 6 Spring Break – No Classes
- 11 Kennedy's Political Thought
Reading: "Courage and Politics;" Acceptance of the Democratic Party Nomination; City Upon a Hill speech; First State of the Union Address; Address to the Economic Club of New York
- 13 Kennedy/Johnson Economic Policies
Reading: Stein, ch. 4, esp. pp. 89-93, 101-105, 107, 109, 113, 114, 117
- 18 Evaluation Kennedy/Johnson
Assignment: Submit group presentation outline
- 20 Reagan's Political Thought
Reading: A Time for Choosing; First Inaugural Address; Address on the Program for Economic Recovery
- 25 Reagan's Economic Policies and the Supply Side Revolution
Reading: Stein, ch. 7, 8, esp. pp. 235, 237, 239, 241, 245-249, 250-253, 261-262

	27	Evaluating Reagan's Statesmanship
April	1	Obama's Political Thought Reading: 2010 State of the Union Address; Remarks by the President on Middle Class Economics
	3	Obama's Economic Policies Reading: (https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/files/achievements/The%20Record%20-%20The%20Economy.pdf)
	8	Presentations
	10	Presentations
	15	Presentations
	17	Presentations
	22	Easter Monday – No Class
	24	Presentations
	29	Presentations
May	1	Conclusion Assignment: Submit term paper