Course: Machiavelli and the Romans (Pols 345)
Credits: 3 credits
Instructor: Dr Bernard Gbikpi, PhD (gbikpi@gonzaga.edu)

Office Hours: By appointment
Schedule: Tuesday 3:35 – 6:30 pm - TBA

Prerequisites: None

Course Description
Machiavelli and the Romans (POLS 345) is a Social & Behavioral Science core course in political science which has applied for the new core qualification of Writing-Enriched Designation. The course engages students in studying Machiavelli’s political thought and action in the context of the Florentine Renaissance. It immerses students in the discipline of political thought, leading them to read not only Machiavelli’s texts, either in full (The Prince and the Discourse on Remodeling the Government of Florence) or via excerpts (Discourses on the Ten First Books of Titus Livius and Florentine Histories), but also various scholarly interpretations. The course also draws students into being aware of their own personal ideas, beliefs and interests and how they affect their apprehension of Machiavelli’s thought and subsequent scholarly interpretations. Students will thus be led into generating and producing their own interpretations of Machiavelli’s writings, as is standard in the study of political thought. Further, the course will lead students to explore Machiavelli’s republicanism so as to recognize, understand and explain how it could contribute to achieve some outcomes of social justice in our own time (such as how to keep political institutions free from manipulation by private interests, or how to guarantee political leaders’ accountability to the people).

At the completion of the course, students will be able: 1) to use at least one of the accepted methods through which knowledge is produced and disseminated in the social and behavioral sciences; 2) to express ideas and formulate arguments using modes of communication common to a social and behavioral science; 3) to explain at least one way that a discipline in the social and behavioral sciences interprets and contributes to social justice.

Students account for their in-depth reading of all assigned texts through weekly written exercises, and they expose their own interpretation through them and through one essay based on a thorough review of a specific assigned academic article. 80% of the final grade is obtained through written exercises and their oral exposition. The weekly exercises consist of thorough restatements of the readings’ arguments, in an analytical reconstruction of their structure, and a reasoned reaction to them. Feedback on those assignments focuses on their clarity, their accuracy, and their critical engagement, and they feed active participation and lively discussion in the classroom. Each of those assignments is also an opportunity for students to steadily improve by always incorporating previous feedback. The final essay is evaluated according to the clarity of its arguments, of its structure and of its exposition; according to the consistency of its follow-up of the argument; according to its engagement with the literature of the field; and the perspectives it opens for further reflection.

On the ground of the Writing-Enriched Designation requirement, at the completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate three learning outcomes: first, a competency in formal and less
formal writing specific to the history of political thought; second, an ability to integrate appropriate primary and secondary research in their writing; and third, a capacity to incrementally incorporate feedback received after each exercise and discussion in class.

The course includes an open-air introduction that is a walk in Florence on the steps of Machiavelli in order to see the places where he has lived, worked, been imprisoned, discussed his views, watched his plays, … The course also includes a visit to Machiavelli’s then property and place of exile at San Andrea in Percussina where he wrote *The Prince* -15 kms from south Florence.

The spirit of the course is to engage students in a steady long-term intellectual relationship nourished by readings – both academic and journalistic – and by lively, joyous, reasoned and inclusive discourse. In order to achieve this, it is important for the students to participate fully in reading, assignments and discussion. Such achievement requires intellectual application which, I believe, students will produce thanks to the structure of the grades. Because written accounts of the readings, and oral participation, are equally graded, the assumption is that once the student will have read the reading and written an assessment of it s/he will be willing to capitalise her/his work investment by contributing to the oral discussion.

Further, students are given a free scope in order to find their own reading and information resources so as to ensure that they will locate the kind of material they like the most. The only requirement is that the readings are relevant to the topic under discussion. I expect to receive a diversity of points of views and of analyses from students. Due to the diversity of topics, students will have an opportunity to cover a broad range of material and approaches. The academic readings assigned, as well as the lectures that introduce the topic, have a disciplinary and theoretical thread which guarantee a structured reflection throughout the semester. The point is to get the students familiarised with the concepts and methods of the discipline, and for them to become more informed by absorbing empirical information.

To me, students are an instantaneous and spontaneous mirror that I treasure, for they permit no shying away from explaining the exact state of knowledge in a given discipline. Students’ expectations of going to the true heart of a matter have thus progressively revealed to me how teaching is my social vocation, which finds a very special resonance with the Gonzaga University mission as Catholic, Jesuit and humanistic. I have the hope that by the end of the semester something special about that mission will also resonate in my students’ hearts and minds.

**Teaching Method**

Each session consists in three parts: a) a collective detailed discussion of the chapters of the day from *The Prince* (in the first part of the semester), the *Discourses* and the *Discourse on Remodeling the Government of Florence* or excerpts from the *Florentine Histories* (in the second half of the semester); b) the presentation and discussion by the students of a commentary article bearing on those chapters/topics; c) an introduction by the instructor of the next week’s chapters and article.

**Teaching Commitment**

I aim at obtaining serious and joyous interactive discussions in class on the basis of everybody’s actual knowledge of the reading of the day. In my experience, such readings and discussions are an effective pedagogical tool for learning and practicing political thought, its methods, its concepts, and Machiavelli’s political thought in particular. Not the least, when successful, each class becomes an agreeable time and nice record for everybody. On my behalf it requires well prepared courses and thorough comments of all the students’ written pieces. On the students behalf it requires the reading of the assigned texts, their written review and their active discussion.
COURSE GRADING
Weekly reading accounts of Machiavelli’s texts count for 40% of the total grade --oral participation is factored in.
Weekly exercises of reviewing articles counts for 40% --oral participation is factored in.
The final exam contributes 20% of the total grade. It consists in a review paper (8%) and an in-class essay (12%).
Steadiness in your involvement in all assignments over the semester is the only A strategy.

THE WEEKLY ASSIGNMENTS
Outlines of Machiavelli’s texts are a thorough restatement of those texts and a thoughtful reaction to them. There is no required length for the outline as it depends on the readings that are outlined. And there is no special requirement for the reaction besides being reflective and besides their ability to launch and nourish the discussion. Alternatively, instead of an outline students may be asked to answer to study questions.
Reviews of the background readings are incremental. For weeks 2 and 3 it consists of a restatement of their argument; for weeks 4 and 5 it consists of a restatement of their argument and a reconstruction of their structure; for weeks 7, 8 and 9 it consists of a restatement of their argument a reconstruction of their structure, and an assessment of their argument; for weeks 10, 11 and 12 it consists of a restatement of their argument a reconstruction of their structure, an assessment of their argument, and a research question for further research.
Outlines are due to me at the beginning of the class.

ORAL PARTICIPATION
Oral participation consists in participating to the class discussion. At a minimum, it consists in “voicing” your responses to the questions on the reading of the day.
Participation grading
The full point (FP) on participation is granted if you have expressed your opinion on any point of the argument and if you have engaged somebody else’s argument.

FINAL EXAM
It consists in two parts. The first is a take-home review paper of an assigned journal article on Machiavelli’s political thought. The second part is an in-class essay that elaborates upon the argument provided in the reviewed assigned journal article.

THE REVIEW PAPER
The review paper is a thoughtful account of the assigned piece of secondary literature. The point of the review is to analytically restate the argument(s) and the contents of the reading, to discuss it, and to propose a research question and bibliographical sources for further research. The final review paper should have the following structure:
1) Report the complete bibliographical reference of the piece you are reviewing: author(s), year of publication, title of the article, name of the journal, volume number, issue number, page numbers, and the author(s)’s professional position.
2) The issue and main argument(s): a. What is the issue discussed in the writing? b. Formulate the argument (or what is the author trying to convince us of?) into a few sentences.
3) How does the author lead the argument? or what the demonstration consists in? That section of your review includes two parts: a) a description in one paragraph of the structure of the article; (the article includes n sections: an introduction (pp.); section 1 entitled (pp.); section 2 entitled (pp.); etc… b. an account of each section’s content. If the article is not divided into sections, its argument surely is; therefore, identify by yourself sections and entitle them. The scope of this exercise is to follow and restate the author’s reasoning step by step.
4) We aim to make a critical assessment of the argument in two parts that are strengths and weaknesses. Indicative questions toward such assessment are: Does the argument convince us? Is
only part of it convincing? Why? Is it cogent/logical? Do we think it helps us understanding something fundamental about the issue at stake? Is there any particular assumption that is important for the argument that we think should be strengthened? Are the empirical facts reported by the author relevant, accurate? Are they any alternative or counter-arguments mentioned by the author her/himself? Does the author use particular words or concepts or other authors that are particularly important for his/her argument/demonstration? How does s/he use them? Is s/he consistent in her/his use of them?

5) **Further research**: Write down a **research question** that you are genuinely curious about and that stems from your understanding of the article’s argument. A research question should reflect an underlying tension and should force to weigh evidence and compare different opinions. State your thesis that is what kind of argument you hope to make through your research question. Identify and indicate at least two bibliographical sources that are likely to address your question. Say why you think the sources in question are apposite. Such sources must, preferably, be found among those reported by the article under review for this is one main sign that your research question copes with the author’s argument. Fully report their bibliographical references.

**NB**: Specific questions for writing the assessment and/or the research question may also be assigned by the instructor.

A template of a review paper will be made available on Blackboard after a few weeks ahead in the semester.

**Review paper grading**

**Full point (FP)**: the work well addresses each point of the review.

¾ of the point (3/4 pt): some point of the review is addressed wrongly, superficially or not at all.

**Half point (HP)**: many points of the review are addressed wrongly, superficially or not at all.

¼ of the point (1/4 pt): there are more points of the review addressed wrongly, superficially or not at all than points that are well addressed.

0 **point**: The work was not done

**THE ESSAY**

The essay should be structured like the review paper but with your argument, that is: a **title** of yours; **the issue and argument** of your essay; **an outline** of its structure; the **unfolding** of your argument along **entitled sections**; a **conclusion** that reassesses your point and that provides bibliographical clues for further reflection. It should include a **bibliography**.

**Essay grading**

The essay will be evaluated along the clarity of its argument, the clarity of its structure, the consistency of its follow-up, its engagement with the literature of the field, and the perspectives it opens for further reflection.

**Final Grades Conversion**

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DECORUM
Cell-phones and e-mail boxes must be off; however, web browsers may remain switched on to the extent that they may serve the class’ learning purposes.

ATTENDANCE POLICY
Students are presumed to have sufficient maturity to recognize their responsibility for regular class attendance. Gonzaga University’s standard policy on absences stipulates that the maximum allowable absence is two class hours (100 minutes) for each class credit. My course being a three credit course and being scheduled to meet during 3 hours for each class, the maximum allowable absence is two classes in the semester. The grade given for exceeding absences is a “V”, which has the same effect as “F” (Fail) and is counted in the GPA. This outcome can be appealed to the Dean. Please, I need you to give me the precise reason for any of these two absences. For any absence that is not due to illness or extraordinary event the participation grade for the missed class will be 0.

ACADEMIC HONESTY
Academic honesty is essential to education and represents the bond of trust between the university, the instructor and the student. Academic dishonesty is any action by which a student seeks to claim credit for the intellectual effort of another person or uses unauthorized materials or fabricated information in any academic exercise. It includes unauthorized assistance in tests and examinations; intentionally impeding or damaging the academic work of others; submitting another person’s work as your own, or providing work for this purpose; submitting work of your own that has been substantially edited and revised by another person, or providing such an editing and revision service for others; submitting material from a source (books, articles, internet sites) without proper citation and bibliographic reference; paraphrasing material from a source without appropriate reference and citation; submitting substantially the same piece of work in more than one course without the explicit consent of all the instructors concerned; assisting other students in any of the above acts; plagiarism, defined as claiming intellectual property on somebody else's work, in other words as cultural theft. Written assignments will be submitted to the plagiarism detection procedures of TurnItIn.com., activated on Blackboard. Students who are academically dishonest will receive “0”, zero on the work in question or a failing grade for the course as a whole, depending on the importance of the work to the overall course grade and the judgment of the instructor. A plagiarized assignment/paper, research project, etc will be graded 0 (zero) and sent to the Main Campus accompanied by a report.

A NOTE ON HARASSMENT, DISCRIMINATION AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT
Consistent with its mission, Gonzaga seeks to assure all community members learn and work in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Title VII, Title IX and Gonzaga’s policy prohibit harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct. Gonzaga encourages anyone experiencing harassment, discrimination or sexual misconduct to talk to someone from the Campus and Local Resources list found in the Student Handbook: www.gonzaga.edu/studenthandbook about what happened so they can get the support they need and Gonzaga can respond appropriately. There are both confidential and non-confidential resources and reporting options available to you. Gonzaga is legally obligated to respond to reports of sexual misconduct, and therefore we cannot guarantee the confidentiality of a report, unless made to a confidential resource. Responses may vary from support services to formal investigations. As a faculty member, I am required to report incidents of sexual misconduct and thus cannot guarantee confidentiality. I must provide our Title IX coordinator with relevant details such as the names of those involved in the incident. For more information about policies and resources or reporting options, please visit the following websites: www.gonzaga.edu/eo and www.gonzaga.edu/titleix
SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION FOR STUDENTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES
Documented learning disabilities or other medically certified problems that need special accommodation for any of the student's expected academic performances will be treated with the due attention.

BIBLIOGRAPHY & REQUIRED READINGS

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK
- Other required readings are available on Blackboard and listed here below in the Course Outline and schedule section.

ADDITIONAL READING

MOST RECENT SECONDARY LITERATURE

NB: GIF’s library has most of those books, plus many others by and on Machiavelli.

ON LINE ACADEMIC IR RESOURCES
- Machiavelli • The Prince • The Common Sense of Politics (full documentary) at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hdFaeCPKTks&feature=related

BIBLIOGRAPHIC DATABASES
- Academic Search Complete
- JSTOR

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COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

NB: Readings may be changed

Tuesday 19 September 2017

- Introduction
- Historical and political background - Machiavelli’s Life - Machiavelli’ Humanism - Fortuna and Virtù – Film on Florence in Renaissance
- The Various Interpretations of The Prince

Tuesday 26 September 2017

- Reading and discussing Machiavelli: Letter to Francesco Vettori, 10 December 1513 (126-29) - The Dedicatory Letter: Niccolò Macchiavelli to His Magnificence Lorenzo de’ Medici - The Prince: Chapters I to V
- Background reading: Anton, Michael, 2009, Of conquest: an interpretation of Chapters 3-5 of Machiavelli’s Prince, Perspectives on Political Science, 38, 1, 33-46

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of/in Machiavelli’s Letter to Vettori and Machiavelli’s dedicatory letter and The Prince: chapters I to V – 4 pts
2. Restate the argument of the background reading – 2 pts

Tuesday 03 October 2017

- Reading and discussing The Prince: Chapters VI to XI
- Background reading: Bonadeo Alfredo, 1970, The Role of the People in the Works and Times of Machiavelli, Bibliothèque d’Humanisme et Renaissance, 32, 351-77

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of/in Machiavelli’s The Prince: chapters VI to XI – 4 pts
2. Restate the argument of the background reading – 2 pts

Tuesday 10 October 2017

- Reading and discussing The Prince: Chapters XII-XVIII
- Background reading: Catherine Zuckert, 2014, Machiavelli and the End of Nobility in Politics, Social Research: An International Quarterly, 81, 1, 85-106

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of/in Machiavelli’s The Prince: chapters XII to XVIII – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; and b) reconstruct the structure of the argument – 3 pts

Tuesday 17 October 2017

- Reading and discussing The Prince: Chapters XIX-XXVI
Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of Machiavelli’s *The Prince*: chapters XIX-XXVI – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; and b) reconstruct the structure of the argument – 3 pts

**Tuesday 24 October 2017**

- Session possibly at Machiavelli’s property at San Andrea in Percussina –15 kms from south Florence—where he wrote *The Prince*—on Machiavelli and the people
- Introduction to the *Discourses*
- Reading and discussing the *Discourses*: Dedicatory letter - Introduction

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of Machiavelli’s *Discourses*’ Dedicatory letter and Introduction – 4 pts

**Tuesday 31 October 2017**

- Reading and discussing *The Discourses*: Book I chapters 1 to 10—focus on 2 and 6

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of Machiavelli’s *Discourses*: I, 1-10 – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; and c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses) – 4 pts

**Tuesday 07 November 2017**

- Reading and discussing *The Discourses*: Book I chapters 11 to 15 and 27

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of Machiavelli’s *Discourses*: I, 11-15, 27 – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; and c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses) – 4 pts

**Tuesday 14 November 2017**

- Or Rose, Julie I., 2016, ‘Keep the citizens Poor’: Machiavelli’s Prescription for Republican Poverty, *Political Studies*, 64, 3, 734-47
Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of/in Machiavelli’s *Discourses*: I, 37-38, 55, 57-59 – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; and c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses) – 4 pts

Tuesday 28 November 2017

- Reading and discussing *The Discourses*: Book II Introduction and chapters 1-5

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of/in Machiavelli’s *Discourses*: II, 1-5 – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses); and d) write down a research question for further research – 6 pts

Tuesday 05 December 2017

- Reading and Discussing *The Discourses*: Book III Chapters 7-9

Assignments:
1. Outline/study question of/in Machiavelli’s *Discourses*: III, 7-9 – 4 pts
2. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses); and d) write down a research question for further research – 6 pts

Tuesday 12 December 2017

- Reading and Discussing Excerpts from the *Florentine Histories* (e.g. Introduction to book 3 & Introduction to book 4), or the *Discourse on Remodeling the Government of Florence* (Machiavelli, *Chief Works*, 101-15)

Assignments:
3. Outline/study question of/in Excerpts from the *Florentine Histories* (e.g. Introduction to book 3 & Introduction to book 4), or the *Discourse on Remodeling the Government of Florence* (Machiavelli, *Chief Works*, 101-15) – 4 pts
4. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses); and d) write down a research question for further research – 6 pts

Tuesday 19 December 2017

- *Final exam*: In-class essay
- TBA
Assignments:

1. a) Restate the argument of the background reading; b) reconstruct the structure of the argument; c) assess the argument (strengths and weaknesses); and d) write down a research question for further research – 8 pts
2. Write an essay that elaborates upon your review of the assigned journal article – 12 pts

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