

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

**Course Code / Title** : HA3092 Ancient Political Thought

**Pre-requisites** : HA1002

**No. of AUs.** : 3

**Contact Hours** : 39

### **Course Aims**

This course is a comparative study of ancient political thought, which unfolds through a survey of select texts within the Chinese and Greek traditions. Although we will be sensitive to the particular historical contexts within which the works studied were produced, and which thus conditioned them in important ways, we will not treat them as mere historical curiosities. On the contrary, we will aim to appreciate both how many contemporary political concepts and values have their origins in the ancient world, and also how these texts continue to speak to our present situation through their commentary on fundamental issues of political ontology. Topics studied, for example, will include the role of virtue in governance; the relevance of aesthetics to politics; human nature; education and socialization; political knowledge and specialization; the public vs. the private sphere; the question of the best regime; the nature of democratic life; and many more.

### **Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

1. Identify the key theoretical formulations within each of the texts studied.
2. Conceptually link these formulations to various principles and assumptions of contemporary political theory.
3. Apply their critical analytic skills to the study of complex texts, synthesizing conceptual material and evaluating the strengths and weakness of the arguments engaged.
4. Interpret contemporary political reality in light of the concepts studied.
5. Present their opinions in a coherent, holistic, and logical way, both orally and in writing.

## Course Content

1	Introduction and Overview
2	Mohism: <i>Mo Tzu</i>
3	Confucianism I: <i>Mencius</i>
4	Confucianism II: <i>Xunzi</i>
5	Confucianism II, cont'd: <i>Xunzi</i>
6	Legalism: <i>Han Feizi</i>
7	Democratic Athens: <i>Old Oligarch</i> and Aristotle's <i>Constitution of Athens</i>
8	Philosophy vs. Politics: Plato's <i>Apology</i> and <i>Crito</i>
9	Philosophy vs. Sophistry: Plato's <i>Gorgias</i>
10	Political Knowledge: Plato's <i>Statesman</i>
11	Politics and Nature: Aristotle's <i>Politics</i>
12	The Political Regime: Aristotle's <i>Politics</i>
13	Summary and Review

## Course Assessment

Class Participation	: 10%
Reading Responses	: 10%
Short Essay	: 30%
Final Essay	: 50%
<b>Total</b>	----- <b>100%</b>