# Honors 1100: The Good Society

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Sage 320

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Office Hours: T,TH 12:45-2:00, and by appointment.

**Communication:** This is a face-to-face class, the best way to communicate is face-to-face. I will generally be available after each class session, and we can make an appointment to meet in my office as needed.

## Course Description:

A course on The Good Society sounds nice, but would it me more important to have a classes like Ending Evil, Establishing World Peace, and Universal Harmony of Mankind? Even better, how about a course on “How to Become Happy in 16 weeks”?!?

The Good Society is a theme that has occupied human beings since the beginning of time. After so much thought (1000’s of years!), it is puzzling why The Good Society doesn’t exist already.

In this course we will approach the Good Society is some of the most influential works in human history. In their own way, each of these texts addresses elements and goals of The Good Society:

1. the book of *Genesis* is likely the most influential document in history and is shared by three major religions (4,315,000,000 people!).
2. the most famous Greek Tragedy of *Oedipus Rex* has had a fundamental influence in theater, drama in general, and even psychology.
3. Aristotle’s description of the virtues had a fundamental influence in certain parts of the world for almost 2000 years.
4. Machiavelli’s *Prince* is still influential and has his own adjective to prove it.
5. For the English speaking world, Shakespeare remains at the very foundation of the words we use to communicate and argue with one another (Almost as influential as Genesis!)

On second thought, perhaps books like those listed above are part of the reason The Good Society does not already exist. Perhaps their influence is why human society seems permanently mired in the same problems of the past. If this is true, perhaps the list of books above should serve as a handbook for “what not to do” to get a good society.

After each text, we will screen a film to explore similar issues in a contemporary setting.

Prerequisites:

No previous knowledge of the texts or films is required, but an eagerness to engage with both is essential.

## Course Objectives:

* How to detect NPC’s and to avoid or destroy them.
* Investigate religious, moral, and political themes across different epochs of history.
* Compare classical ethical dilemmas with those that exist today.
* Develop critical thinking by analyzing how narratives shape our understanding of morality and society.
* Enhance analytical skills through comparative studies of different types of literature.

## Course:

Genesis (handout)

Nicomachean Ethics, Book 4 (handout)

*Oedipus Rex*, Sophocles, The University of Chicago Press (2010). ISBN: 978-0-226-76868-7

*The Prince*, Niccolo Machiavelli. University of Chicago Press; 2nd edition (September 1, 1998) ISBN: 978-0226500447

*Henry V*, William Shakespeare, Penguin Classics; Illustrated edition (June 13, 2017). ISBN:‎ 978-0143130246

Course Structure:

We will cover an assigned text and film approximately every three weeks

* Introduction to each text, with discussions of historical, philosophical, and cultural contexts.
* Seminar Discussions: Students will engage in deep analysis, comparing narrative techniques, character development, and thematic elements between texts.
* Written Assignments: Essays that explore moral and political questions through the lens of literature.
* Presentations: Students will present on how specific scenes or chapters from texts reflect on questions about The Good Society.

**No Class**

* September 1 Labor Day
* November 5-9
* November 24-28 Thanksgiving Break

## Assessment:

Assignments, Reading Quizzes (Participation) (25%)

* Poor **Attendance** will affect your grade.

Exam and Essay 1 (15%) -

Exam and Essay 2 (15%)

Exam and Essay 3 (15%)

Exam and Essay 4 (15%)

Exam and Essay 5 (15%)

**Grading**

A 100-90

B 89-80

C 79-70

D 69-60

F 59 >

## Artificial Intelligence

Prohibited Use: In this course, I want you to engage deeply with the materials and develop your own critical thinking and writing skills. For this reason, the use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools like [insert tool(s) here, e.g., Claude, ChatGPT, and Gemini] is not permitted. While these tools can be helpful in some contexts, they do not align with our goal of fostering the development of your independent thinking. Using GenAI to complete any part of an assignment, exam, or coursework will be considered a violation of academic integrity, as it prevents the development of your own skills, and will be addressed according to the Student Academic Integrity policy (https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003).

## Course Disruptions

Students will be notified by Eagle Alert if there is a campus closing that will impact a class and describe that the calendar is subject to change, citing the [Campus Closures Policy](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-006>).

## ADA accommodation statement:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. To request accommodations, you must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) by completing an application for services and providing documentation to verify your eligibility each semester. Once your eligibility is confirmed, you may request your letter of accommodation. ODA will then email your faculty a letter of reasonable accommodation, initiating a private discussion about your specific needs in the course.

You can request accommodations at any time, but it’s important to provide ODA notice to your faculty as early as possible in the semester to avoid delays in implementation. Keep in mind that you must obtain a new letter of accommodation for each semester and meet with each faculty member before accommodations can be implemented in each class. You are strongly encouraged to meet with faculty regarding your accommodations during office hours or by appointment. Faculty have the authority to ask you to discuss your letter during their designated office hours to protect your privacy. For more information and to access resources that can support your needs, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/office-disability-access).