

PHIL G150: POLITICAL THEORY

Item	Value
Curriculum Committee Approval Date	12/05/2023
Top Code	150900 - Philosophy
Units	3 Total Units
Hours	54 Total Hours (Lecture Hours 54)
Total Outside of Class Hours	0
Course Credit Status	Credit: Degree Applicable (D)
Material Fee	No
Basic Skills	Not Basic Skills (N)
Repeatable	No
Grading Policy	Standard Letter (S), • Pass/No Pass (B)
Local General Education (GE)	• GWC Arts, Lit, Phil, Lang (GC)
Diversity Requirement (GCD)	Yes
California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)	• Cal-GETC 3B Humanities (3B) • Cal-GETC 4 Social & Behavioral Sciences (4) • Cal-GETC 4H Political Science (4H)
Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)	• IGETC 3B Humanities (3B) • IGETC 4 Social&Behavioral Sci (4) • IGETC 4H Political Science (4H)
California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE-Breadth)	• CSU C2 Humanities (C2) • CSU D8 Political Science (D8)

Course Description

Formerly: Political Philosophy. This course is identical to PSCI G150. This course introduces students to selected political theorists and concepts from classical to the present. Students will examine various theoretical approaches to politics and will analyze primary text and theoretical debates as they apply to political issues. Topics will include the nature of legitimate authority, power, political obligation, ideal government, natural rights, equality, and justice. Enrollment Limitation: PSCI G150; students who complete PHIL G150 may not enroll in or receive credit for PSCI G150. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC. C-ID: POLS 120. **C-ID: POLS 120.**

Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Course Outcomes
2. Assess the relevance of political theories to contemporary issues and policies.
3. Explain the key concepts, theories, and debates that have defined political thinking over time.
4. Evaluate the usefulness of each body of theory in relation to political life and political institutions.

Course Objectives

- 1. Identify and evaluate philosophical arguments regarding government and politics based on original texts and primary sources.
- 2. Describe and analyze the different assumptions and values about "human nature" and "reality" embedded in each political theory.
- 3. Evaluate arguments on the ideal form of government from various philosophical perspectives.
- 4. Identify the unifying themes within periods of political thought.
- 5. Compare and contrast the way that concepts and issues may be defined by various political theorists and identify their strengths and weaknesses.
- 6. Assess the contribution of each political theory towards a comprehensive understanding of political life and political institutions.
- 7. Analyze political theory and theoretical texts and explain how they are relevant to contemporary issues including policy implications.
- 8. Describe the historical dialogue and debate between political theorists and philosophers.
- 9. Engage in political inquiry using theoretical frameworks through which contemporary political institutions and events may be analyzed.
- 10. Describe the ongoing debate in political theory over interpretation of primary sources.
- 11. Examine and debate the relevance of political theory in contemporary society.

Lecture Content

Introduction to Political Theory and Thought. The nature of political inquiry and the concept of ideology. Matters regarding inquiry and analysis. Defining key terms. Identifying defining elements within a theoretical framework. Assessing theory within a historical and social context. Examining the relevancy of theory and its application to contemporary issues. Examining starting premises in relation to the questions asked and conclusions reached. Accessing and interpreting primary sources. The Future of Political Theory. The traditional normative approach. The rise of empiricism. Philosophical Foundations. Ancient/Classical/Medieval Political Philosophy -5th BCE to 15th century. Selected political thinkers to include (but not limited to): Plato. Republic: *The Dividing Line, The Divided Soul, Allegory of the Cave. Aristotle. Ethics; Politics. Cicero. The Republic; The Laws. Modern Political Philosophy -16th - 19th century. Selected political thinkers to include (but not limited to): Machiavelli. The Prince; The Discourses. Hobbes. Leviathan: *Human Nature, State of Nature, Social Contract. Locke. Two Treatises on Government: *Social Contract; Letter Concerning Toleration. Rousseau. The Social Contract: *Social Contract; Discourse on the Origins of Inequality. Hume. A Treatise of Human Nature; Of The Original Contract. Mill. On Liberty; Subjection of Women. / de Tocqueville. Democracy in America. Marx. Selected Writings: *Socialism and Communism; The Communist Manifesto. Nietzsche. Beyond Good and Evil. Contemporary Political Philosophy - 20th century. Selected political thinkers to include (but not limited to): Arendt. The Human Condition. Berlin. Two Concepts of Liberty. Habermas. Three Normative Models of Democracy. Rawls. Reviving the Social Contract; A Theory of Justice: *Veil of Ignorance/Original Position. Nozick. Anarchy, State and Utopia; A Response to Rawls. Anzaldúa. Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza. West. Race Matters. Theoretical Debates. Selected topics to include (but not

limited to): Human nature and the state of nature. Balancing natural rights, human nature, and the state. Justifying the state. The “ideal” state. Obligations to and from the state. Liberty, justice, and equality. Application of Theoretical Debates to the Modern World.

Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture (02)
- DE Live Online Lecture (02S)
- DE Online Lecture (02X)

Reading Assignments

Complete reading assignments in the assigned text(s). Complete required online reading assignments from a variety of scholarly websites and journals.

Writing Assignments

Essay exams that identify key concepts and/or examine key issues. Written essays or other projects (i.e., interactive assignments, debates) in which students will evaluate theoretical arguments. Written essays or other projects (i.e., interactive assignments, debates, term papers) in which students will apply theoretical positions to political topics. Written essays or other projects (i.e., interactive assignments) in which students will apply theory to real life contemporary examples. Written essays or other projects (i.e., interactive assignments) in which students will compare and contrast theoretical positions.

Out-of-class Assignments

Complete reading assignments of primary texts. Complete required online reading assignments from a variety of scholarly websites and journals. Conduct research pertaining to political theories and political issues.

Demonstration of Critical Thinking

Evaluate the theoretical positions as they relate to contemporary political issues. Compare and contrast the theoretical positions of two or more philosophers concerning political topics.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration

Written exams, essays and/or term papers focused on evaluating normative arguments. Assignments focused on comparing/contrasting various theoretical positions. In-class and/or online discussions presenting findings.

Eligible Disciplines

Philosophy: Masters degree in philosophy OR bachelors degree in philosophy AND masters degree in humanities or religious studies, OR the equivalent. Masters degree required. Political science: Masters degree in political science, government, or international relations OR bachelors degree in any of the above AND masters degree in economics, history, public administration, social science, sociology, any ethnic studies, J.D., or LL.B. OR the equivalent. Masters degree required.

Textbooks Resources

1. Required Cahn. An Introduction to Political Philosophy, 4th ed. Oxford University Press, 2022 2. Required Levin, Noah. et al. Political Philosophy Reader, 1st ed. Libretexts Humanities, 2021 3. Required Ball, Terence Ball, et al. Ideals and Ideology: A Reader, 11th ed. Routledge, 2020