

PSCI A188: INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY

Item	Value
Curriculum Committee Approval Date	11/01/2023
Top Code	220700 - Political Science
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)
Associate Arts Local General Education (GE)	• OC Social/Economic Institutions - AA (OD2)
Associate Science Local General Education (GE)	• OCC Social/Behavioral Sci - AS (OSD)
California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)	• Cal-GETC 4 Social & Behavioral Sciences (4)
Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)	• IGETC 4 Social&Behavioral Sci (4)
California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE-Breadth)	• CSU D8 Political Science (D8)

Course Description

An introduction to selected political theorists and concepts from Plato to the present. Focus on the Western tradition and its major texts by reading ancient, modern, and contemporary political thinkers to examine their arguments on the nature of government and politics. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC. C-ID: POLS 120. **C-ID:** POLS 120.

Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Explain the key concepts, theories, and debates that have defined political thinking over time.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the course content.
3. Effectively communicate the knowledge and skills gained in this course.

Course Objectives

- 1. Restate philosophical arguments regarding government and politics.
- 2. Analyze arguments on the nature of government and politics.
- 3. Evaluate arguments on the ideal form of government from various philosophical perspectives.
- 4. Describe the historical dialogue and debate between political theorists and philosophers.
- 5. Identify the unifying themes within periods of political thought.

- 6. Compare and contrast the perspectives of different political theorists and their arguments.
- 7. Analyze concepts and issues in the study of political thought.
- 8. Compare and contrast the way that concepts and issues may be defined by various political theorists and identify their strengths and weaknesses.
- 9. Examine and debate the relevance of political theory in contemporary society.
- 10. Provide a theoretical framework through which contemporary political institutions and events may be analyzed.
- 11. Identify the problems in interpreting primary sources.
- 12. Describe the ongoing debate in political theory over interpretation of primary sources.
- 13. Identify the policy implications of philosophical concepts and arguments.

Lecture Content

I. Introduction to Political Theory
 theory Course overview
 terms Interpreting primary sources
 Classical/Medieval Political Philosophy (5th bc to 15th century).
 Selected political thinkers may include: A. Plato
 Philosophy vs politics The Ideal City B.
 Aristotle Virtue politics The best and
 worst regimes C. Boethius Rejection of
 politics D. St. Augustine Christianity meets
 Plato E. St. Thomas Aquinas Christianity
 meets Aristotle Natural Law III. Modern Political
 Philosophy (16th - 19th century). Selected political thinkers may include:
 A. Machiavelli Virtu politics
 Republics vs. principalities B. Hobbes The
 Social Contract C. Locke The social Contract
 D. Rousseau The Social Contract
 E. The American Founding Madison
 Jefferson F. Marx Socialism and Communism
 nb G. Mill Liberty and harm H.
 Nietzsche IV. Contemporary Political Philosophy (20th century) Selected
 political thinkers may include: A. Berlin Two
 concepts of liberty B. Strauss Reading the
 Canon C. Rawls Reviving the Social Contract
 Justice D. Nozick nb A response
 to Rawls V. Conclusion A. The future of political thought

Method(s) of Instruction

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

Instructional Techniques

1. Lecture and explanations of arguments, issues, topics, terms, and concepts. Focus on argument analysis, criticism, and evaluation.
2. Lecture is outlined and detailed on the board or on PowerPoint.
3. Videos and documentaries to reinforce reading and lecture material to be shown.
4. Newspaper articles and editorials may be discussed in class to emphasize the relevance of the course materials. Other reading materials (magazine or journal articles) may be provided as necessary.
5. In-class reading of primary sources to reinforce the interpretations in the textbook and enhance reading skills.

6. Students collaborate for in-class group work assignments or small group discussions. 7. Instructor may provide additional material including handouts as needed. 8. Instructor provides written feedback on exams, homework and class work assignments, and writing assignments. 9. Instructor provides students with sample exam questions and study guides for each exam. 10. Instructor provides verbal feedback during class work assignments and class discussions.

Reading Assignments

In-class and assigned reading of primary sources to enhance reading ability and develop analytical skills. 2 hours per week.

Writing Assignments

Instructor will require students to produce writing assignments to demonstrate analysis of arguments on the nature of government and politics. Assignments will require students to demonstrate higher-order thinking: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. 2 hours per week.

Out-of-class Assignments

Homework and other assignments as necessary to reinforce course material. 2 hours per week.

Demonstration of Critical Thinking

Read and research the texts to develop and illustrate analytical skills in a writing assignment. In-class and assigned reading of primary sources to enhance reading ability and develop analytical skills.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration

Instructor will require students to produce writing assignments to demonstrate analysis of arguments on the nature of government and politics. Assignments will require students to demonstrate higher-order thinking: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.

Eligible Disciplines

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, S. M. Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2022 Rationale: .