

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY (JPB155)

COURSE SYLLABUS

Semester: Winter 2023
Lecturer: Jakub Franěk (jakub.franek@fsv.cuni.cz)
Seminar leader: Bahruz Samadov (bahruz.samadov@fsv.cuni.cz)
Lectures: Mondays 3:30-4:50PM @ Room C117
Seminars: Wednesdays 11AM-12:20PM, 2PM-3:20 @ Room B317
Office hours: See <https://konzultace.fsv.cuni.cz> appointment booking system.

Course description

This course introduces the students to the study of political theory. The first half of the course explores some of the key concepts, ideas and problems that have been defining the study of politics since its very inception. The second half is devoted primarily to the survey of the most important “-isms”, i.e. modern political ideologies. Throughout the semester, we will study the texts of both the classics of political thought and current political theorists.

Aims and purpose

The primary aims of this course are to make students familiar with the basic concepts of political theory as well as the theoretical foundations of modern political ideologies. Moreover, participation in the seminar should improve the students’ analytical and argumentative skills.

Teaching methodology

This course uses a combination of lectures and seminars. The students will be expected to have read the assigned reading before the class so that they can participate in the discussion.

NB: The lectures will be held once a week. All students enrolled in this course are expected to attend the lectures. The seminar meetings will be held every other week. The class will be divided into four seminar groups (A-D). Each seminar group will meet every other week. *The students will be assigned to seminar groups during the first week of the semester. The first seminar meeting will be held during the second week of classes.*

Course assignments / grading

Midterm exam	:	40%
Active participation:		15%
Final exam:		45%
COURSE GRADE:		100%

Grading scale

The Faculty of Social Sciences uses the following A-F grading scale:

A (excellent)	=	91-100%
B (very good)	=	81-90%
C (good)	=	71-80%
D (satisfactory)	=	61-70%
E (sufficient)	=	51-60%
F (fail)	=	0-50%

Literature

NB: All assigned texts will be available through the Moodle e-learning system. Additional texts may be assigned during the semester.

All students must register into this course in the Moodle during the first week of classes.

Hannah Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics"

Hannah Arendt, "On Violence"

Isaiah Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty"

Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*

Benjamin Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns"

Ernest Gellner, *Nationalism*

Michel Foucault, "Two Lectures"

Michel Foucault, "Truth and Power"

David Harvey, "Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction"

Andrew Heywood, *Political Theory – An Introduction* (3rd edition)

Andrew Heywood, *Political Ideologies – An Introduction* (6th edition)

John Hoffman & Paul Graham, *Introduction to Political Theory* (3rd edition)

Tony Judt, "What is Living and What is Dead in Social Democracy"

Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels: *The Communist Manifesto*

John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty*

Leo Strauss, "What is Political Philosophy"

Course schedule

Week 1: Introduction: Course overview. What is political theory?

Reading (recommended only): H. Arendt, "Philosophy and Politics" (selections).
L. Strauss: "What is Political Philosophy?" (selections).
M. Foucault: "Truth and Power" (selections).

Week 2: Power & Authority

Reading: H. Arendt, *On Violence* (selections).
H. Arendt, *What is Authority?* (recommended only).

Week 3: Freedom

Reading: I. Berlin, "Two Concepts of Liberty".
B. Constant, "The Liberty of the Ancients Compared with that of the Moderns"
(recommend only).

Week 4: Democracy I

Reading: TBA

Week 5: Democracy II

Reading: TBA

Week 6: MIDTERM EXAM

Week 7: Nationalism

Reading: E. Gellner, *Nationalism* (selections)

Week 8: Liberalism I

Reading: A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies*, Chapter 2.
Additional reading – TBA.

Week 9: Liberalism II

Reading: TBA

Week 10: Conservatism

Reading: A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies*, Chapter 3.
E. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*: Selections TBA.

Week 11: Socialism

Reading: A. Heywood, *Political Ideologies*, Chapter 4.
K. Marx & F. Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*.

Week 12: Authoritarianism & Totalitarianism

Reading: TBA