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Southern Polytechnic State University
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TR 3:00pm to 4:15 pm.

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Modern Political Theory -- POLS 3301

This course will refine the way you think about political power, ideas and issues. We explore various idea systems that shape people's thinking about concepts such as freedom, democracy, and justice. We will examine competing conceptions about the role and function of government. The course begins with a discussion of the essentially contested concept of democracy. We then examine competing idea systems (ideologies) such as liberalism, conservatism, communism, and fascism.

This course will increase your knowledge and understanding of the world in which we live. You will be able to think about and discuss political issues in a sophisticated manner. Furthermore, it should give you the basic tools necessary to be responsible members of the informed public on political issues and public policy.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

1. Discuss the role of ideology in political life.
2. Differentiate the various conceptions of democracy and freedom.
3. Compare and contrast the competing idea systems such as liberalism, conservatism, communism, and fascism.

TEXTBOOKS

Ball, Terence and Richard Dagger. 2006. **Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal**, 6th edition. New York: Longman.

Ball, Terence and Richard Dagger (editors). 2006. **Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader**, 6th edition. New York: Longman.

COURSE EVALUATION

Your final grade in this class will be derived from three examinations of equal weight (30%) and classroom participation and attendance (10%). The exams will be of a multiple-choice type drawn from the assigned readings and class lectures. Sometimes the readings and the lectures will directly overlap, but not always. It is imperative that you attend all classes and take notes, and read all the assignments.

ATTENDENCE

A major component of the course will be classroom discussion and analysis of assigned readings; therefore, attendance to all classes is mandatory. You are allowed one absence during the semester. All other absences will result in a deduction of five points from your final grade for each recorded absence.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1 – Aug 20-24 **Introduction to Politics and Ideology**

Chapter 1 in Ball and Dagger
Carver -- “Ideology: The Career of a Concept”

Week 2 – Aug 27-31 **The Democratic Idea**

Chapter 2 in Ball and Dagger

Week 3 – Sept 3-7 **The Democratic Idea**

Euripides – “Democracy and Despotism”
Aristotle – “Democratic Judgement and the ‘Middling’ Constitution”
Machiavelli – “What’s Wrong with Princely Rule?”
Adams -- “What Is a Republic?”
J.S. Mill – “Democratic Participation and Political Education”
Walzer “Town Meetings and Workers Control”
Mao “On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship”

Week 4 – Sept 10-14 **Liberalism**

Chapter 3 in Ball and Dagger

Week 5 – Sept 17-21 **Liberalism**

Locke – “Toleration and Government”
“Declaration of Independence of the United States”
“Declaration of the Rights of Man and of Citizens”
Kant – “Freedom and Enlightenment”
Mill – “Liberty and Individuality”
Sumner – “According to the Fitness of Things”
Green – “Liberalism and Positive Freedom”
Allen – “Paternalism vs Democracy: A Libertarian View”
Rothbard – “Libertarian Anarchism”
Selznick – “The Communitarian Persuasion”

Week 6 – Sept 24-28 **Conservatism**

Chapter 4 in Ball and Dagger

Week 7 – Oct 1-5 **Conservatism**

Burke – “Society, Reverence, and the ‘True Natural Aristocracy’”
de Maistre “Conservatism as Reaction”
Ortega y Gasset – “Revolt of the Masses”
Oakeshort – “On Being Conservative”
Bork – “Modern Liberalism and Cultural Decline”
Kristol – “The Neoconservative Persuasion”
Dobson – “Standing Strong in a Confused Culture”

Test One October 9

Week 8 – Oct 8-12 **Socialism and Communism: More to Marx**

Chapter 5 in Ball and Dagger
Marx and Engels “The Communist Manifesto”

Week 9 – Oct 15-19 **Socialism and Communism: After Marx**

Chapter 6 in Ball and Dagger

Week 10 – Oct 22-26 **Socialism and Communism: After Marx**

Bernstein “Evolutionary Socialism”
Lenin “Revision, Imperialism and Revolution”
Yates “Can the Working Class Change the World?”

Week 11 – Oct 29-Nov 2 **Fascism**

Chapter 7 in Ball and Dagger

Week 12 – Nov 5-9 **Fascism**

De Gobineau “Civilization and Race”
Mussolini “The Doctrine of Fascism”
Rocco “The Political Theory of Fascism”
Hitler “ Nation and Race”

Test Two November 13

Week 13 – Nov 12-16 **Liberation Ideologies and the Politics of Identity**

Chapter 8 in Ball and Dagger

Week 14 – Nov 19-23 **Liberation Ideologies and the Politics of Identity**

King “Letter From Birmingham Jail”
Biko “Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity”
Wollstonecraft “A Vindication of the Rights of Women”
Frye “Oppression”
Corvino “Homosexuality: The Nature and Harm Arguments”
Churchill “I Am Indigenist”
Singer “All Animals Are Equal”

Week 15 – Nov 26-30 **“Green” Politics**

Chapter 9 in Ball and Dagger
Leopold “The Land Ethic”
Berry “Getting Along with Nature”
Foreman “Putting the Earth First”

Week 16 – Dec 3- 7 **Political Islam and the Future of Ideology**

Chapter 10 in Ball and Dagger
Khomeini “The Necessity for Islamic Government”
Al-Salam Faraj “The Neglected Duty”
Bin Laden et al “Jihad Against Jews and Crusaders”

Final Exams – December 7-12