

POLI 3H: HONORS INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY/POLITICAL THEORY

Foothill College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2020
Units:	5
Hours:	5 lecture per week (60 total per quarter)
Advisory:	Not open to students with credit in POLI 3.
Degree & Credit Status:	Degree-Applicable Credit Course
Foothill GE:	Area IV: Social & Behavioral Sciences
Transferable:	CSU/UC
Grade Type:	Letter Grade (Request for Pass/No Pass)
Repeatability:	Not Repeatable

Student Learning Outcomes

- Critically Analyze the historical development of political thought focusing on the works of any of the following political philosophies: Augustine & Aquinas, Machiavelli and Hobbes, Locke & Rousseau, Bentham and Mill, Hegel and Marx, Antonio Gramsci.
- Critically analyze any of the models of political justification, forms of the state, civil and political society, and their institutional manifestation in government.
- Critically Analyze contending Theoretical Formulations of the International Political Economy This course taught in Fall Quarter 2014 had some of the most unusual group of students I have taught at Foothill College since the 1990's. They were for the most part bright, focused and industrious. Both the Honors and Non-Honors students attend the same class, receive the same instruction, participate in the same activities, do the same assignments except for the critical, analytical research paper assignment. Honors students write a 20 page critical, analytical research paper and Non-Honors students a 15 page paper. Flexibility is provided for an Honors and a non-Honors student to write a research paper together. However, if an Honors and a Non-Honors student choose to write a paper together, that paper must be 20 pages of content with Works Cited in addition. Some 85% of the Honors students were reasonably well prepared for college. They demonstrated strong analytical, research and writing skills and were well focused on their academic and professional lives particularly in transferring to some of the finest universities in the US. The majority of non-Honors students on the other hand were inadequately prepared for college: poor study skills, time management problems, difficulties understanding material and undertaking research assignments, and inadequate writing and analytical skills. Pairing Honors with Non-Honors within the class and making them work together both in leading specific seminar topics and allowing for the opportunity for groups of two to write the research paper assignment together helped to "raise up" those

students who did not have the requisite skill level preparation for college. Constantly pushing students to strive for excellence in their work and to make excellence the hallmark in all they do, seems to have helped in motivating everyone to work hard at exceeding even the expectations they held of themselves. Working closely with all students in conceptualizing their research paper topic, researching the literature and then formulating the paper coherently and logically seems to have worked well for everyone. In the end, over 80% of students earned letter grades of B and higher. Over 50% of these students enrolled in other classes in Winter and Spring, performed quite well and have now transferred to universities like NYU, UC's, Georgetown, Santa Clara and others.

Description

Analysis of the history of political thought, the development of various forms of political ideologies and their manifestation in forms of the state. Philosophical formulations of concepts of state of nature, natural law, natural rights, civil and political society explored as integral parts of political philosophies of: Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, Machiavelli and Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, Bentham and Mill, Hegel, Marx and Gramsci. The honors course is a full seminar with advanced teaching methods focusing on major writing, reading, and research assignments, student oral class presentations, group discussions and interactions.

Course Objectives

The student will be able to:

- Analyze historical development of political thought of: Plato and Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas, Machiavelli and Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau, Bentham and Mill, Hegel, Marx and Gramsci.
- Compare and contrast competing philosophical concepts of state of nature, human nature, natural law, natural rights, civil society, political society, and locate concepts in governmental structure, law, and society.
- Analyze models of political justification, forms of the state, civil society and political society, and their institutional manifestation in system of government.
- Identify and analyze the various models of political justification of forms of the state and connect them to their philosophical roots.
- Explore the philosophical basis of law and justice in society.
- Analyze the influence of political philosophies on the historical development of various forms of civil society, political society and the state.

Course Content

- Ancient/classical/medieval political philosophy: Plato and Aristotle
 - Philosophy vs. politics
 - The ideal city and concepts of justice
 - Virtue politics and the best and worst regimes
- Models of political justification: Augustine and Aquinas
 - The City of God and the City of Man
 - The virtuous man
 - Augustine's best form of government
 - Aquinas' purposes and aims of society and government
 - Forms of government
 - Eternal law and natural law
 - Justice and civil disobedience
- Modern political philosophy: models of political justification: Machiavelli and Hobbes
 - Machiavelli's republics vs. principalities
 - Use of political power and why Virtue is never virtue

3. Hobbes concept of state of nature
4. The social contract
5. Concept of the leviathan and defense of monarchy
- D. Models of political justification: Locke and Rousseau
 1. Locke's state of nature, natural law, natural rights, civil society, state
 2. The social contract
 3. Concept of the separation of powers
 4. The labor theory of value
 5. Concept of the common good
 6. Rousseau and the social contract
 7. Rousseau's state of nature, direct democracy, and freedom
 8. Concept of the general will
- E. Models of political justification: Bentham and Mill
 1. Bentham's utilitarian concept of the state
 2. Hedonism, justice and utility
 3. Critique of natural law and natural rights
 4. Critique of social contract theory and consent
 5. The role of government, civil disobedience
 6. Mills' concept of utilitarianism
 7. Justice as the basic moral and political objective
 8. The meaning of justice
 9. Mill's form of government
- F. The Historicist theory of the state: Hegelian philosophy
 1. Hegel's metaphysics
 2. Hegel's dialectic
 3. Moral and political institutions
 4. Abstract right, morality, and ethical life
 5. The family, civil society, and the state
 6. Hegel's concept of democracy and constitutional monarchy
 7. Hegel's philosophy of right
 - G. The Historicist theory of the state: Marxian philosophy
 1. Marx's philosophy of history
 2. Marx's historical and dialectical materialism
 3. The concept of the state
 4. The concept of the labor theory of value
 5. The concept of alienation and freedom
 - H. Contemporary political philosophy: Antonio Gramsci's contribution to Marxist theory
 1. The concept of historical bloc in Gramsci
 2. Gramsci's refinement of superstructural elements in Marx
 3. The role of ideology and politics in Gramsci's theory
 4. Concept of hegemony and counter-hegemonic struggle
 5. Gramsci's concept of historical bloc
 6. The war of position and the war of maneuver

Lab Content

Not applicable.

Special Facilities and/or Equipment

When taught via Foothill Global Access, on-going access to computer with email software and hardware; email address.

Method(s) of Evaluation

- A. Development of research paper topic and outline on selected philosopher's work or some aspects of that work utilizing the scientific method of analysis.
- B. Development of 20 page analytical research paper utilizing the scientific method of analysis.
- C. Intensive in-class participation in discussions, demonstrating through level of analysis a systematic understanding of philosophical works.

- D. Oral class presentation (PowerPoint) on selected philosophical works.
- E. Weekly written five page outline of the main themes of each philosophical work.
- F. Instructor meets in extra sessions with all seminar students in a series of individual and small group learning communities out-of-class to work together on students' research paper and oral presentation preparation.

Method(s) of Instruction

- A. Formal weekly lectures
- B. Intensive seminar style discussions led by student groups
- C. Oral (PowerPoint) presentations by students
- D. Small group meetings with instructor to design, develop and organize topics and themes for class discussions

Representative Text(s) and Other Materials

Bagby, Larurie M. Political Thought: A Guide to the Classics. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, CENAGE Learning, 2008.

Bronner Stephen Eric (ed). Twentieth Century Political Theory: A Reader. NY: Routledge, 2006.

Cahn, Steven M. Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts. Cambridge: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Losco, Joseph, and Leonard Williams, eds. Political Theory: Classic Writing Contemporary Views. New York, NY: St. Martins Press, 1992.

Wootton, David, ed. Modern Political Thought: Readings from Machiavelli to Nietzsche. 2nd ed. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Inc., 2008.

Original works of philosophers on library reserve.

Articles on Antonio Gramsci on library reserve.

NOTE: Although these texts are older than the suggested "5 years or newer" standard, they remain seminal pieces of scholarship (texts) in this area of study.

Types and/or Examples of Required Reading, Writing, and Outside of Class Assignments

- A. Weekly reading assignments, of 200-300 pages, and written notes on central themes and ideas in each philosophical work
- B. Library research on assigned philosopher for oral presentation
- C. Development of research paper topic, thesis and outline utilizing the scientific method of analysis

Discipline(s)

Political Science