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Southern Polytechnic State University  
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TR 1:30PM – 2:45PM

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and TR 12:30AM to 1:30PM

### **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. 2009. **Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal**, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. New York: Longman.

Ball, Terence and Richard Dagger (editors). 2009. **Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader**, 7<sup>th</sup> 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, short answer, and essay questions drawn from the assigned readings and class lectures and discussions. 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.

The following assignment is mandatory for political science and international studies majors.

For each of the three reading assignments listed below you will be required to write a five-page essay (approximately 1500 words). Each of the readings explores the concept of justice. Your assignment is to explicate each author's conception of justice. Proper citation form is required.

The assignments are to be completed in the following order.

1. Plato, "Justice," from the *Republic* (due Oct 1)
2. David Hume, "Of Justice," from *An Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals* (due Nov. 3)
3. John Rawls, "Principles of Justice," from *A Theory of Justice* (due Nov. 24)

All three readings can be found in Westphal, Jonathan (editor). 1996. *Justice*. Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.

They are also available on electronic reserve in the library.

## 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

### **Introduction to Politics and Ideology**

Week 1 – Aug. 24-28

Chapter 1 in Ball and Dagger

### **The Democratic Idea**

Week 2 – Aug. 31— Sept. 4

Chapter 2 in Ball and Dagger

### **The Democratic Idea**

Week 3 – Sept. 7-11

Euripides – “Democracy and Despotism”

Aristotle – “Democratic Judgement and the ‘Middling’ Constitution”

Machiavelli – “What’s Wrong with Princely Rule?”

Adams – “What Is a Republic?”

de Tocqueville – “Democracy and Equality”

J.S. Mill – “Democratic Participation and Political Education”

Mao – “On the People’s Democratic Dictatorship”

### **Liberalism**

Week 4 – Sept. 14-18

Chapter 3 in Ball and Dagger

### **Liberalism**

Week 4 – Sept. 21-25

Locke – “Toleration and Government”

Paine – “Government, Rights, and the Bonds Between Generations”

“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”

### **Conservatism**

Week 5 – Sept. 28- Oct. 2

Chapter 4 in Ball and Dagger

### **Conservatism**

Week 6 – Oct.5-9

Burke – “Society, Reverence, and the ‘True Natural Aristocracy’”

de Maistre “Conservatism as Reaction”

Oakeshort – “On Being Conservative”

Bork – “Modern Liberalism and Cultural Decline”

Kristol – “The Neoconservative Persuasion”  
Reed – “A Religious Conservative Vision for America”  
Dobson – “Standing Strong in a Confused Culture”  
Antle, III – “The Conservative Crack-Up”

### **Test One October 13**

#### **Socialism and Communism: More to Marx** Week 7 – Oct. 13-16

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

#### **Socialism and Communism: After Marx** Week 8 – Oct. 19-23

Chapter 6 in Ball and Dagger

#### **Socialism and Communism: After Marx** Week 9 – Oct. 26-30

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

#### **Fascism** Week 10 – Nov. 2-6

Chapter 7 in Ball and Dagger

#### **Fascism** Week 11 – Nov. 9-13

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

### **Test Two November 17**

#### **Liberation Ideologies and the Politics of Identity** Week 12 – Nov. 16-20

Chapter 8 in Ball and Dagger

#### **Liberation Ideologies and the Politics of Identity**

Week 13 – Nov. 23-27

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”

Alfred “Indigenist Pathways of Action and Freedom”

Singer “All Animals Are Equal”

**“Green” Politics**

Week 14 – Nov.30-Dec. 4

Chapter 9 in Ball and Dagger

Leopold “The Land Ethic”

Berry “Getting Along with Nature”

Foreman “Putting the Earth First”

**Political Islam**

Week 15 – Dec.7-10

Chapter 10 in Ball and Dagger

Qutb “Milestones”

Khomeini “The Necessity for Islamic Government”

**Final Exams – December 12-16**