

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY
PS 24053 (CODE: 33990)
M W 6-7:15 PM, Bowen 150
Lecturer: Joe Adams, Ph.D.
Office: Depot Building

OBJECTIVES:

- To acquaint you with the major theorists and concepts related to political theory.
- To familiarize you with a variety of historically based frameworks for analyzing politics.
- To develop critical thinking and logically reasoned argumentation skills.
- To develop analytical and writing skills for continued scholarship.

COURSE OVERVIEW:

The ultimate objective of this course is to provide students with a theoretical vocabulary to prepare them to identify the theoretical precepts and historical roots of contemporary political discourse. We will discuss how to compare political theories and what it means to 'think theoretically.' Class time will be spent defining concepts and relating those concepts to their appropriate theoretical framework(s). Students are expected to ask questions and seek clarification. Relevant class discussions are encouraged and group projects will be assigned. Lectures and films will provide the context and background to the theories we examine. Readings are essential to understanding the lecture and the films.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Cornford, F.M. *Before and After Socrates*, Cambridge University Press, 1933, ISBN 052109113

Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories, Vol. I*, Avon: Reissue Edition, 1981, ISBN 0380007851

Curtis, Michael. *The Great Political Theories, Vol. II*, Avon: Reissue Edition, 1976, ISBN 0380012359

Hamilton, Alexander, et. al., *The Federalist Papers*. The Penguin Classics, 1987, ISBN 0140444955

Films: *The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization*, PBS, Paramount Home Video, 2005
French Revolution, The History Channel, A&E Home Video, 2005.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING:

Students will be expected to use WebCT for class notes, extra credit assignments, and selected readings. Two short papers will be assigned as well as a mid-term and final. Exam questions may ask students to compare and contrast various theorists on salient points of agreement and disagreement, supply definitions, explain key concepts, or describe various modes of interpretation. Written papers should be concise and cited properly using the American Psychological Association Style Manual. Papers will count for 10 percent each (five page maximum). The midterm and the final will count for 40 percent each. Study guides will be provided. Extra credit points will be available for other assignments. Attendance and participation is required. Two absences will cost a letter grade, two more, another, etc., etc.

PLEASE NOTE: Cell phone interruptions will count against your grade.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE

August 22 & 24	Introduction & Key Concepts Readings: Cornford, pp. 1-53. Curtis, Vol. 1, pp. 1-119.
August 29 & 31	The Birth of Classical Philosophy Readings: Cornford, pp. 54-109 Film: The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization
September 7	The Romans: Republican Virtues Readings: Curtis, Vol. 1, pp. 120-156 WebCT Materials & Project Assignment
September 12 & 14	The Rise of Christianity, Islam & The Crusades Readings: Curtis, Vol. 1, pp.157-214 Readings: WebCT Materials
September 19 & 21	Class Review (Student Paper Assignments Due)
September 21	MID-TERM EXAM
September 26 & 28	The Renaissance & Reformation: Modernity Readings: Curtis, Vol.1, pp. 215-325 WebCT Materials
October 3 & 5	Contract Theory: Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau Readings: Curtis, Vol. 1, pp. 326-440 Curtis, Vol. 2, pp. 1-47 Film: The French Revolution
October 10 & 12	The Rise of Ideologies Liberalism: Rawls & Fishkin Readings: Curtis, Vol. 2, pp. 181-234 WebCT Materials
October 19	Marxism, Socialism, and Nationalism Readings: Curtis, Vol. 2, pp. 130-180, 234-253, 348-394 WebCT Materials
October 24 & 25	Contemporary Ideologies & Religion Readings: Curtis, Vol. 2, pp. 255-347, 395-421
October 31 & November 2	The American Perspective Reading: <i>The Federalist Papers</i> (Papers 10, 15, 47, 51, and 78) Also: WebCT Materials
November 7 & 9	Contemporary Political Science Problems & Issues Readings: Curtis, Vol. 2, pp. 421-467 WebCT Materials
November 14 & 16	Analytical Problems: Methods of Inquiry Readings: WebCT Materials
November 21&28	CLASS PRESENTATIONS
November 30	Study Guide: Discussion & Review
December 5	FINAL EXAM