Political Theory and Ideologies

In the philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche’s *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, the title character exclaims “God is Dead!” This is stated not as a hope that God is dead, or that this is a good thing. Instead, he is lamenting that modernity has killed the belief in God. This death brings with it a whole host of political problems. Chief among them is that human beings, specifically Western Civilization, no longer has anything it is willing to die for. In this course, we will be exploring the thing that modernity has tried to put in place for the belief in God: political ideologies. The question the course must begin with is what is a political ideology? The word ideology first appears in France in the late 18th Century. The Ancients did not have a word for ideology. This means to explain the nature of a political ideology first requires understanding something about modern life that either demands or produces ideologies. In our current situation, is our only solution to choose an ideology? Is there a way to understand the world around us apart from political ideologies? Further, in analyzing the different ideologies, we will confront fundamental questions of human life, specifically in the modern world. What ought to be the role of reason and tradition? Quis ut Deus (or what/ who is God)? Who should rule? What is democracy (and is it a good thing)? What is equality and what should we be equal in? What rights do we have and what is their foundation? To what extent do we have private property rights? Do rights exist? Ultimately, we must address the political question: what is justice?

**Learning Outcomes**

- Identify and explain the ideas of the major thinkers in political ideologies, examining how they addressed the political issues of their times and the important political questions we still ask today

- To explain and examine their ideologies as answers to questions raised by the world in which we live

- Improved communication skills (oral and written) to be measured through exams, papers, and in-class discussions

**Major Course Requirements**

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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance/ Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-term Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Page Papers (4 Total)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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This course consists of a careful reading of a few texts in political ideologies. The number of pages to be read is kept small, so that you will be able to read – and reread – each text thoroughly. Though class will have lecture, discussion is a necessary element. Discussion will help to clarify important matters for both you and your classmates. It is crucial both that you attend classes and that you read the assigned texts carefully before each class.

Our goal will be not just to learn about these theories, but to use them to learn about ourselves. For this reason, there will be a premium on written work that should help students develop skills of interpretation, critical thinking, and communication.

Notes:

This course attempts to acquaint you with the history of political ideologies. To that end, we will examine several views of various moral and political problems: the tension between self-fulfillment and dedication to others (family, friends, community); the tension between family, friends, and the political community; is wisdom or science good for human beings?; tradition vs. innovation; morality and expediency; is philosophy good, bad, or indifferent?; and, above all, what is the meaning of justice?

As part and parcel of this project, we will learn how to read with care, and how to make, analyze, and criticize an argument.

Students are required to write 4 total papers throughout the semester (one-page in length, double-space, 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and one-sided document). Students will choose 1 reading from class and write a one-page paper describing the argument of that reading. These papers are due by 11:59pm the night before class. Lectures will incorporate these papers. Thus, it is imperative they be submitted on time. No late papers will be accepted. Students can only submit one paper per week. Papers should be submitted to turnitin in Blackboard.

Though the four paper assignments are only 1 page (and no longer than one-page, double-space, 12-point font, Times New Roman, 1-inch margins, and one-sided document), the intent is for students to gain practice composing interpretations of political theory. Interpreting political theory is a different type of writing, which most students are unfamiliar with. It is neither a research paper (here is what I found) nor an opinion piece (this is what I feel). Instead of assigning multiple large papers, we will use these small papers to practice, improve, and develop our skills of communicating our interpretations clearly and concisely. This is not an easy task. It should be one of the most difficult activities you ever engage yourself. More directions to follow.

Assignment extensions and make-up exams cannot be granted except in the most extenuating circumstances (proper documentation required). Requests for such extensions must be made in writing at least 48 hours before the due date.

There is no extra credit for this class.

Late papers/exams will NOT be accepted.
Students are required to submit written assignments for this class to Turnitin, a web-based plagiarism detection service. Before submitting your paper to Turnitin, please remove your title page and other personal information. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that the paper is properly uploaded to Turnitin.

Because of the benefits to everyone involved, your class participation can be used to improve your grade Participation grades are based on your contribution to classroom discussion.

After the first week of class, you will be assigned to a discussion group which you will contribute to both online and during class.

I expect that everyone will maintain a classroom conducive to learning. Therefore, your behavior in the classroom should not interfere with other students' opportunity to learn, or the instructor’s ability to conduct class. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave class.

Cheating:

Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a “0" for that particular assignment or exam. Additionally, the incident will be reported to the university administration which may impose further sanction.

To log into Blackboard for the course go to the following: iol.tamucc.edu After logging into your Island Online account click on our class (POLS 3361.001) on the right-hand side of the screen.

Required Readings


Some additional readings, to be determined over the course of the semester may be assigned and posted on Blackboard. You will be notified when posted.

Format

The class will be structured around instructor led lectures and class participation. The book will reinforce my lectures and students should read the corresponding chapters. Students should participate in class as they are comfortable and able.

Class Schedule:
Section I: Origins of Political Ideologies

Week 1: Introduction to Political Ideologies
1/16: “Three Waves of Modernity” (Blackboard); Ch. 1 (Johnson)

Section II: Liberalism
Week 2: Classical Liberalism

Week 3: Contemporary Liberalism I
1/30: “Liberty and Individuality,” “Homosexuality: the Nature and Harm Arguments,” “Liberalism and Positive Freedom,” “Commonwealth Club Address” (Ball, Dagger, and O’Neill); Ch. 7 (Johnson)

Week 4: Contemporary Liberalism II
2/6: “A Vindication of the Rights of Woman,” “The Seneca Falls Declaration,” “Oppression,” “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July,” “Race Matters,” “All Animals are Equal” (Ball, Dagger, and O’Neill); Ch. 12 (Johnson)

Week 5: Libertarianism

Section III: Conservatism

Week 6: Neo, Traditional, and Contemporary Conservatism

Week 7: Mid-term Exam
2/27: Online/ Take-home; submit via turnitin in Blackboard

Section IV: Socialism

Week 8: Marxism

Week 9: Spring Break
3/13: No class

Week 10: Fascism
3/20: “Civilization and Race,” “The political Theory of Fascism,” “Nation and Race,” “The Turner Diaries” (Ball, Dagger, and O’Neill); Ch. 3 and 10 (Johnson)

Section V: Other Important Ideologies

Week 11: Islam

Week 12: Environmentalism

Section VI: Strauss and Bloom

Week 13: Strauss
4/10: “What is Liberal Education?” “Progress or Return? The Contemporary Crisis in Western Civilization” (Blackboard)

Week 14: Strauss
4/17: Introduction, The Clean Slate

Week 15: Bloom
4/24: The Student and the University

Final Exam: TBD

***The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule or material due to instructional needs throughout the semester.

Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation
requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Academic Advising
The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

Dropping a Class
I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. April 5, 2019, is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” for the Spring 2019 full term.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at:
For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website,
http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

Classroom/professional behavior
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

Statement of Civility Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city,
state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

**Academic Integrity/Plagiarism**
University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in a zero for the assignment and reported to the university administration.

**Academic Honesty/Plagiarism**
**Definition:** *In an instructional setting, plagiarism occurs when a writer deliberately uses someone else’s language, ideas, or other original (not common-knowledge) material without acknowledging its source.*

Plagiarism is a violation academic expectations, but it is sometimes difficult to understand what plagiarism actually is. Often, students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example), because they are unaware of the standards that apply. Plagiarism includes:
- Using the work of another as your own,
- Downloading or purchasing ready-made essays off the web and using them as your own,
- Using resource materials without correct documentation,
- Using the organization or language of a source without using quote marks and proper citation.
- Turning in a researched project without citing sources in an appropriate documentation style.

When you are confused about citation of quotes or ideas, please visit the Writing Center or me to get help. Information on [MLA documentation rules](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) and [APA documentation rules](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) is available at Purdue University’s OWL and from our local Writing Center at CASA.

**Statement of Academic Continuity**
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi, this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.