

# POLI 108: POLITICAL THEORY

## Citrus College Course Outline of Record

Heading	Value
Effective Term:	Fall 2024
Credits:	3
Total Contact Hours:	54
Lecture Hours :	54
Lab Hours:	0
Hours Arranged:	0
Outside of Class Hours:	108
Total Student Learning Hours:	162
Strongly Recommended:	ENGL 101 or ENGL 101E or ENGL 101H.
District General Education:	D1. History and Political Science
Transferable to CSU:	Yes
Transferable to UC:	Yes - Approved
Grading Method:	Standard Letter, Pass/No Pass

## Catalog Course Description

This course traces the development of key concepts in political theory such as justice, democracy, liberty, equality, order, citizenship, sovereignty, power and revolution over the course of Western history to include the ancient, modern, and contemporary periods. The course traces the evolution of key political concepts through an examination of thinkers from these periods, including Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Madison, Mill, Marx, and Arendt. 54 lecture hours.

## Course Objectives

- Analyze and evaluate political concepts, theories, and institutions.
- Compare and contrast different political theories, including, but not limited to, the different theoretical bases of liberalism, conservatism, and socialism.
- Identify key concepts linking political theory to other social sciences.
- Employ research tools including scholarly readings, current media, and the Internet.
- Demonstrate critical thinking ability, including the analysis and evaluation of differing philosophies.
- Evaluate the relationship between political theory and practice.
- Analyze the role political theory plays in current political events.
- Evaluate the role of ideology in contemporary politics.

## Major Course Content

This course may cover, but is not limited to, the following topics:

- Ancient Greek Political Thought
  - The origins of democratic thought
  - Plato's view of justice and order
  - Aristotle's ideas of mixed government; typologies of government systems
  - Overview of Aristotle's "The Politics"
- "Power" Politics: Machiavelli

- Historical Context of Renaissance Italy
  - Overview of Machiavelli's political thought
  - Overview of Machiavelli's "The Prince"
  - Interpretations of Machiavelli as a Republican thinker
- Liberalism and the Social Contract
    - Historical context of 17th and 18th Century Europe
    - The Natural Rights Revolution
    - Overview of Thomas Hobbes, "Leviathan"
    - Overview of John Locke, "Two Treatises of Government"
    - Overview of Jean Jacques Rousseau, "The Social Contract"
    - The gradual expansion of the natural rights doctrine in the West
  - The American Revolution
    - The influence of the social thinkers on the framers
    - Overview of the Declaration of Independence
    - Overview of the U.S. Constitution
    - Overview of James Madison's thought, "Federalist Paper"
    - The evolution of natural rights and democracy in the West since the founding
  - Marxism and Socialism
    - Europe and the 19th Century
    - Overview of Political Economy
    - Overview of Marxist Theory
    - Theories of revolution
    - Contemporary European Socialism
  - Contemporary Political Thought
    - The evolution of the concept of equality in the 20th Century
    - Justifications for the welfare state
    - John Rawls's argument, "A Theory of Justice"
    - Robert Nozick's reply to Rawls
    - Hannah Arendt: Totalitarianism and the banality of evil.

## Suggested Reading Other Than Required Textbook

Journals, supplemental texts, and primary source documents.

## Examples of Required Writing Assignments

1) Compare and contrast the political ideologies of liberalism, socialism, and conservatism. What are the basic principles of each? Which ideology, in your view, is most relevant today? Why? 2) Compare and contrast the philosophical principles used to justify the state and define its proper functions in the social contract theories of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau. Evaluate these principles and the resulting conceptions of the social contract in light of your own view of the nature and purpose of the state.

## Examples of Outside Assignments

1. Study lecture notes and material presented in class. 2. Answer questions based on textbook readings to assess comprehension of the material. 3. Read required materials, such as supplemental texts, journal articles, and primary documents. 4. Write essays based on assigned readings and presented materials.

## **Instruction Type(s)**

Lecture, Online Education Lecture

## **IGETC Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences**

4H. Political Science, Government & Legal Institutions