



蘇州大學  
Soochow University

# **POL 230 Introduction to Political Theory**

**Summer 2024**

**Course Credits:** 4

**Contact Hours:** 56 hours

**Instructor:** TBA

**Email:**TBA

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

This course provides students with a comprehensive overview of political theory, focusing on key concepts, thinkers, and debates in Western political thought. Through a critical examination of primary texts and secondary sources, students will explore fundamental issues about justice, law, power, democracy, and governance. By analyzing the historical development of political ideas, students will gain a deeper understanding of their relevance to contemporary political discourse.

Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:

1. Master and explain key concepts of political theory learned in the course.
2. Gain a comprehensive understanding of major themes and concepts in Western political thought.
3. Analyze primary texts from influential political theorists and evaluate their arguments and perspectives.
4. Develop critical thinking skills through engagement with complex political ideas and debates.
5. Apply theoretical frameworks to analyze contemporary political issues and phenomena.

## **PREREQUISITES**

None.

## **GRADING**



Grades will be determined by accumulating points, with 100 points being the maximum, as follows:

ITEM	POINTS
5 Reading Assignments	25 Points
Midterm	25 Points
Term Essay	15 Points
Final Exam	35 Points
Total	100 Points

Late submissions will be graded at the end of the course. Grades will be assigned according to the following rule:

$A \geq 90 > B \geq 80 > C \geq 70 > D \geq 60 > F$ .

We reserve the right to make adjustments to the overall grading policy.

## COURSE MATERIALS

### **Required Texts:**

*A History of Political Thought: Plato to Marx*, 2nd edition, Sushila Ramaswamy, Subrata Mukherjee, 2011.

### **Recommended (Optional) Texts or Other Materials:**

Plato, *The Republic*, 1968.

Aristotle, *The Politics and the Constitution of Athens*, ed. S. Everson (Cambridge, 1996).

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Richard Tuck (Cambridge, 1996).

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Advantage and Disadvantage of History for Life*, trans. Peter Preuss (Hackett, 1980).

## COURSE TOPICS

MODULE	TASKS
Module 1	<b>Topics:</b> Topic 1: What is Political Theory: Key Theoretical Concepts in Political Theory Topic 2: Criticism of Behaviouralism



	<p>Topic 3: Revival of Political Theory Topic 4: Post-behaviouralism and Neobehaviouralism</p> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Reading Assignment#1</p>
Module 2	<p><b>Topics:</b> Topic 5: Plato Topic 6: Aristotle Topic 7: Niccolo Machiavelli Topic 8: Justice and Rule of Law and Constitution</p> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Reading Assignment#2</p>
Module 3	<p><b>Topics:</b> Topic 9: Thomas Hobbes Topic 10: John Locke Topic 11: Jane Jacques Rousseau Topic 12: General Will and Individual Freedom</p> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Midterm</p>
Module 4	<p><b>Topics:</b> Topic 13: Immanuel Kant Topic 14: Edmund Burke Topic 15: Jeremy Bentham Topic 16: Citizenship and Democracy</p> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Reading Assignment#4</p>
Module 5	<p><b>Topics:</b> Topic 17: Mary Wollstonecraft Topic 18: George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel Topic 19: John Stuart Mill Topic 20: Karl Marx</p> <p><b>Assessments:</b> Reading Assignment#5 Term Essay Final Exam</p>

## ATTENDANCE

1) Class attendance is required. Missing classes without permission will lead to decrease in overall grade.

Missing less than two classes: no penalty.

Missing more than two classes: 7% will be taken off from the overall grade.



If the instructor reports a student's frequent missing of class to the Soochow University Academic Administration Office, the student might get a written warning and might be prohibited from attending final exam.

2) Participants in this course are expected to arrive in class promptly and adequately prepared. The primary objective of this course is to critically engage with the readings and the subject matter. Therefore, course participants are expected to have completed the reading prior to class and prepare thoughtful reflections/commentaries to share with fellow colleagues.

### **LEARNING REQUIREMENTS**

- 1) Late assignments are not acceptable and are subjected to grade deductions.
- 2) Assignments submitted in the wrong format will be counted as not submitted.
- 3) Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
- 4) Make-up for midterm and final exams only with valid excuses, as defined by the University.
- 5) In order to earn a Certificate of Completion, participants must thoughtfully complete all assignments by stated deadlines and earn an average quiz score of 50% or greater.

### **TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

The use of electronic devices in class is distracting, both for the user and for the rest of the class. Only non-programmable calculators can be used in the tests and exam. Any attempts to use cell phones and other electronic communication devices will be seemed as cheating. Laptops are discouraged, unless you use them for activities DIRECTLY related to the course (eg., note taking, reading course documents).

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Soochow University highly values the academic integrity and aims to promote the academic fairness, honesty and responsibility. Any academic dishonesty behaviors and any attempts to cheats and plagiarism will be reported to the university administration office. A written warning and the relevant penalties will be imposed.



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The record might be shown on the official university transcript.

## **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION**

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Soochow University is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access programs, courses, services, and activities at Soochow University. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for access to and/or participation in this course are welcome.

Note:

Please contact the University Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material.