

Department: POLS

Course number: 3012W

Title: Modern Political Theory

Credits: 3

Contact Person: Oksan Bayulgen

Competency Group: W only

Catalog Copy: POLS 3012W. Modern Political Theory

Second semester. Three credits. Prerequisite: ENGL 1010 or 1011 or 3800; open to juniors or higher. Major political doctrines of the contemporary period, and their influence upon political movement and institutions as they are reflected in the democratic and nondemocratic forms of government.

Course Information:

a. The course objectives are: 1) I want students to gain a basic understanding of the political theories of the modern period (17th-19th Centuries) and make connections between those theories and contemporary politics. 2) I want students to engage in understanding and analyzing political arguments. If done well, these skills will serve them beyond this particular class by helping them become better democratic citizens, and perhaps, even better human beings. 3) I want to push them to think critically about the ideas and philosophies that have shaped, and will continue to guide, contemporary political systems. 4) I want them to practice reading texts that may be difficult to understand, something which they may have to do in their future life and career.

b. The course assignments include reading quizzes; midterm and final exam consisting of matching, fill-in-the-blank, and short essays; and argument analysis papers. Reading assignments will come from primary text material.

c. The course examines the political theories of: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Edmund Burke, Mary Wollstonecraft, Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, John Stuart Mill, and Friedrich Nietzsche.

W Criteria: 1. The writing assignments will allow students to engage critically with the primary material and reflect on different Modern political theories. The W variant of the course will require, at a minimum, 15 pages of argument analysis writing that students will revise after feedback. It will also include writing in the form of argument analysis components and exam short essays.

2. I will provide students with an extensive writing guide prior to any assignments are due. I will provide formal instruction in the course, provide written feedback on writing assignments, and will meet with individual students that choose to do so during office hours.

3. Students will initially complete all 3 components of the argument analysis and receive feedback. Students will then complete a full draft argument analysis on a different topic, which I will return with feedback. They will then revise the complete argument analysis and turn in this final product.

4. The syllabus will inform students that they must pass the "W" component of the course in order to pass the course.