

Political Philosophy I

A-Basic Information

Semester Number	First
Course Code	BAPS-107
Semester Type	Fall
Academic year	2021/2022
Course Pre-requisites	No specific pre-requisite is required. Being skeptical of politicians and critical of their rhetoric is good enough.
Credit Points (ECTS)	4 CP
Course Professor	Dr. Oleksandr Svitych E-mail: osvitych@jgu.edu.in

B-Professional Information

Course Description

Political philosophy is philosophy about politics. How should individuals act toward one another? Which principles should the state use to govern its citizens? What kind of global social order should be promoted? The answers to these real-world questions necessarily involve thinking as a political philosopher. This course introduces the main themes and questions in political philosophy. By exploring some of its key concepts, thinkers, and issues, it aims to expose the moral values that lie behind politics and underlie policies, be it with regard to education, healthcare, immigration, tax rates, or climate change. It combines theoretical depth and practical examples from interpersonal, state-personal, and global relations.

The course begins by outlining the relationship between political philosophy, politics, and public policy. The first major section gives an overview of some of the main concepts in political philosophy, such as justice, liberty, equality, democracy, and community. Each concept will be illustrated with a case study. The second section of the course utilizes the political philosophy toolkit to critically assess some controversial policy issues, such as immigration, development aid, and climate change. The course ends with the discussion of the moral implications of the COVID-19 pandemic. How should resources be distributed in a pandemic? What's the relationship between the pandemic and economic justice? What are the moral prospects for a universal basic income? These are some of the questions that will be addressed through a political philosophical analysis.

Course Objectives

This course combines the Western and Asian political thought to present the most important arguments by political philosophers. Its primary objective is to teach students to check values that underlie policy issues and political rhetoric. By the end of this course, students will be able to expose and understand the moral ideals that structure political debate. They will develop analytical clarity to become conscious of different background ideals and their interpretations. They will also try to understand which policies are implied by a philosophical principle. Finally, this course aims to give students an understanding that political philosophy connects with the real world: it aims not only to speculate about the ideal world, but also to change the existing one.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

Knowledge and Understanding

1. Understand the main concepts and theories in political philosophy.
2. Discern different interpretations of the political philosophical concepts.
3. Know key thinkers in political philosophy and their main arguments.
4. Understand the difference between fact checking and value checking.
5. Understand the connections between political philosophy and the real world.

Professional and Practical Skills

1. Reveal logical inconsistencies in political debates.
2. Present arguments for public policies in a coherent and clear manner.
3. Evaluate the moral implications of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Critical Thinking and Intellectual Skills

1. Identify the principles and values behind political rhetoric and policy preferences.
2. Expose the complexities involved in each “taken-for-granted” political concept.
3. Get a clearer sense of what a position on a political issue involves and clarify their own ones.

General and Transferrable Skills

1. Read and listen carefully.
2. Express ideas clearly and effectively.
3. Articulate productive questions.
4. Make arguments and reply to them in a fair and orderly way.

Course Content/Weekly Plan

Module	Week	Topic	Lecture hrs	Officehrs
Introduction	1	<i>What is political philosophy?</i> - A brief about course description - Political philosophy, politics, and policy - Political philosophy vs. ideology	3 hrs	1 hr
	2	<i>Social justice</i> - Justice as fairness, entitlement, and desert - Global justice - Case study	3 hrs	1 hr
I. Concepts	3	<i>Liberty</i> - Conceptions of liberty - Liberty and the free market - Case study	3 hrs	1 hr
	4	<i>Equality</i> - Equality of opportunity - Egalitarianism and “egalitarianism” - Case study	3 hrs	1 hr
	5	<i>Democracy</i> - Degrees of democracy - Procedures and outcomes - Case study	3 hrs	1 hr
	6	<i>Community</i> - Communitarianism - Against liberalism? - Case study	3 hrs	1 hr
	7	Revision	3 hrs	1 hr
	8	Mid-term exam	3 hrs	1 hr
II. Issues	9	Biogenetics and transhumanism	3 hrs	1 hr
	10	Market society: freedom as “autonomy”?	3 hrs	1 hr
	11	Social media: critical reflections	3 hrs	1 hr
III. Prospects	12	Pandemic and resources distribution	3 hrs	1 hr

	13	Pandemic and economic justice	3 hrs	1 hr
	14	Pandemic and universal basic income	3 hrs	1 hr
	15	Revision	3 hrs	1 hr
	16	Final exam		
	Total contact during the semester		60 hrs	

Learning and Teaching Methods

- Overall, the course includes 45 hours of lectures (1 lecture per week), and 15 office hours (1hr per week).
- Students must ensure that they are able to attend the weekly lecture and be involved in different class activities such as group-discussions, group-activities or debates.

Assessment

Student Assessment Methods	Assessment Weights
• Final Exam	50%
• Midterm Exam	20%
• Oral debate	20%
• Class Participation	10%

1. **Class participation.** Active participation and regular attendance is required for this class. You are expected to actively engage in class discussions.
2. **Mid-term exam.** It will take place at the 8th week and consist of short essay questions and T/F questions. The exact format may be subject to change and will be confirmed as the course progresses.
3. **Oral debate.** This is a group exercise to simulate a political debate (on a TV show if you wish) on a controversial policy issue. The main protagonists are Political Philosopher and Politician. In the debate you need to demonstrate your argumentative skills and the knowledge acquired during the course. The topics will be announced after the mid-term exam and the presentations will be scheduled in the remaining weeks of the semester.
4. **Final exam.** It is in the format of a research paper of no more than 2500 words on a chosen topic. It must consist of four main sections: introduction, normative dimension, policy implications, and conclusion. Detailed instructions will be announced toward the end of the semester.
 - Rules of plagiarism to be respected
 - Referencing style: any as long as it's consistent.

Plagiarism Rules

Plagiarism is the use of someone else's words OR ideas without proper acknowledgement. Any idea, sentence or paragraph you take from a web source or from printed material must be credited with the original source. If you paraphrase or directly quote in the exam or essays, the source must be explicitly mentioned. You should not plagiarize content, be it from scholarly sources (i.e. books and journal articles) or from the Internet.

Grade Definition

Marks	Grade	Grade Point Average
>=80	O	8
79	A+	7.5
78	A+	7.5
77	A+	7.5
76	A+	7.5
75	A+	7.5
74	A	7
73	A	7
72	A	7
71	A	7
70	A	7
69	A-	6
68	A-	6
67	A-	6
66	A-	6
65	A-	6
64	B+	5
63	B+	5
62	B+	5
61	B+	5
60	B+	5
59	B	4
58	B	4
57	B	4
56	B	4
55	B	4
54	B-	3

Marks	Grade	Grade Point Average
53	B-	3
52	B-	3
51	B-	3
50	B-	3
49.5	F	2
49	P1	2
48	P1	2
47	P1	2
46	P1	2
45	P1	2
44.5	P2	1
44	P2	1
43	P2	1
42	P2	1
41	P2	1
40	P2	1
Less than 40	F	0

Learning Resources

Mandatory Textbooks

- Adam Swift, *Political Philosophy: A Beginners' Guide for Students and Politicians*, 3rd edition (Polity, 2014)
- Amartya Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (Harvard, 2009)

Recommended Textbooks

- Graeme Garrard and James Bernard Murphy, *How to Think Politically: Sages, Scholars and Statesmen Whose Ideas Have Shaped the World* (Bloomsbury, 2019)
- Catriona McKinnon, Robert Jubb, and Patrick Tomlin, *Issues in Political Theory* (Oxford, 2019)?
- Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian: Writings on Indian History, Culture and Identity* (Penguin, 2006)

Useful Websites

- Justice Everywhere – a blog about philosophy in public affairs: <http://justice-everywhere.org/>