

**Department: International Relations**

**Faculty: Social Sciences**

**Course Title: Political Theory (MA, Compulsory)**

**Number of Credits: Four**

**Course Objectives:**

The basic objective of this course is to facilitate and develop critical engagement with key concepts of political theory, particularly those which are fundamental to the understanding of International Relations. The course will underline an analytical approach, and provide a theoretical and conceptual prism to address challenges posed by issues in contemporary international relations. Readings have been selected on the basis of their relevance to the twenty-first century. The broad aim is to establish a dialogue between international relations theory and political theory and illuminate the significance of the 'non-western other' to the discipline of political thought and theory.

**Course Structure:**

**Unit One: Introduction to Political Theory**

The unit attempts to look at the many definitions of political theory and understand the scope and nature of the field. Further, it would establish the relevance of political theory to the discipline of International Relations.

Week 1: What is political theory?

Week 2: Political theory and International Relations

**Unit Two: Traditions in the Western World**

This unit introduces some key ideas relating to well-known thinkers in the Western canon and examines their continued relevance to understanding the contemporary world of politics.

Week 3: Socrates, Plato, Aristotle

Week 4: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau

Week 5: Adam Smith, Friedrich Hegel, Karl Marx

**Unit Three: Traditions in the Non-Western World**

This unit introduces students to non-western political thought. It introduces some key figures as well as the ideas they have come to be associated with.

Week 6: Comparative Political Theory

Week 7: Islamic Political Theory

Week 8: Hindu Political Theory

#### **Unit Four: Key Concepts in Political Theory**

This unit analyses important concepts of political theory as well as their relevance and applicability to IR.

Week 9: State and Sovereignty

Week 10: Democracy

Week 11: Rights and Citizenship

Week 12: Nationalism

#### **Reading Suggestions:**

Nicholas Rengger, 'Political Theory and International Relations: Promised Land or Exit from Eden?', *International Affairs*, 76 (4), October 2000.

Farah Godrej, 'Towards a Cosmopolitan Political Thought: The Hermeneutics of Interpreting the Other' *Polity* 41, 135-165, April 2009.

Bhargava, Rajeev and Ashok Acharya (eds.) (2011), *Political Theory An Introduction*, New Delhi: Pearson Publication

Thomas Biersteker, 'State, Sovereignty and Territory' in *Handbook of International Relations*, Sage, 2002.

Gaus, Gerald S. & Chandran Kukathas (eds) (2004), *Handbook of Political Theory*, London: Sage Publication.

Fred Dallmayr (2010), 'Beyond Monologue: For a Comparative Political Theory', in Fred Dallmayr (ed.), *Comparative Political Theory: An Introduction*, New York: Palgrave.

Roxanne Euben (2008), 'Changing Interpretations of Modern and Contemporary Islamic Political Theory', in John Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bhikhu Parekh (2010), 'Some Reflections on the Hindu Tradition of Political Thought', in Fred Dallmayr (ed.), *Comparative Political Theory: An Introduction*, New York: Palgrave.

Charles Beitz (1995), 'Sovereignty and Morality in International Affairs', in David Held (ed.), *Political Theory Today*, Cambridge: Polity.

Margaret Canovan (2008), 'The People', in John Dryzek, Bonnie Honig and Anne Phillips (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Andrew Heywood (2007), 'Nations and Nationalism' in *Politics*, New York: Palgrave.