

The Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Syllabus

Modern Political Thought - 56120

Last update 28-09-2023

HU Credits: 2

Degree/Cycle: 1st degree (Bachelor)

Responsible Department: Political Science

Academic year: 0

Semester: 1st Semester

Teaching Languages: Hebrew

Campus: Mt. Scopus

Course/Module Coordinator: Yiftah Elazar

Coordinator Email: yiftah.elazar@mail.huji.ac.il

Coordinator Office Hours: after class or by appointment

Teaching Staff:

Dr. Yiftah Elazar

Course/Module description:

Philosophical ideas about politics shape the way we think about the political world. Familiarity with them provides us with tools for better understanding the academic conversation in political science and the public discourse about politics and for critically analyzing them. In this course, we will read influential texts in political thought, from the 17th century until the 20th century, and discuss concepts, values, and ideologies that arise from them. In the first part of the class, we will discuss the philosophical foundations of liberal democracy. In the second part, we will discuss the enlightenment and the rise of modern ideologies. The aim of this class is to attain knowledge in political thought as well as experience and skill in analyzing and interpreting complex philosophical texts.

Course/Module aims:

Knowing central ideas of modern political philosophy and understanding some of the philosophical foundations of the academic and public conversation about politics today.

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Knowing central ideas of modern political philosophy and understanding some of the philosophical foundations of the academic and public conversation about politics today.

Experience and skill in analyzing and interpreting complex philosophical texts.

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction: Lectures, discussion in class, written assignments

Course/Module Content:

Subject to changes -

The state and sovereignty (Hobbes)

The republic and the sovereignty of the people (Rousseau)

The liberal state (Locke)

The separation of powers: moderating sovereign power (Montesquieu)

Modern democracy and the new despotism (The Federalist and Tocqueville)
Enlightenment (Kant and Condorcet)
The French Revolution (The declaration of the rights of man and of the citizen, Sieyes, Robespierre)
Conservatism (Burke)
Feminism (Wollstonecraft and de Gouge)
Liberalism (Mill)
Socialism (Marx and Engels)
Nationalism and Fascism (Mazzini and Gentile)

Required Reading:

The syllabus will be published toward the beginning of the semester

Additional Reading Material:

Grading Scheme:

Written / Oral / Practical Exam 60 %
Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 40 %

Additional information:

subject to changes