

Course Objectives/Course Outline
Spokane Community College

Course Title: Political Philosophy

Prefix and Course Number: POLS 204

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, a student should be able to:

- Understand political thought and important answers.
- Find a means of citizen participation in contemporary political decision making
- Be familiar with the basic knowledge of political philosophy
- Recognize the most important writings on political philosophy
- Demonstrate a greater awareness for citizen participation in seeking just solutions to political issues
- Be adept at identifying an author's theses.
- Develop adequate arguments in written form.
- Provide applicable knowledge and understanding skills of contemporary political/philosophical problems.

Course Outline:

- I. Classical Political Theory
 - A. Origins of Political thought
 1. The Polis
 2. Ethical Values vs. Ethical Relativism
 3. Implications
 - B. Classical Thinkers
 1. Socrates
 2. Plato
 3. Aristotle
- II. The Main Questions of Political Philosophy
 - A. The State of Nature
 1. Hobbes
 2. Locke
 3. Rousseau
 4. Anarchism
 - B. Justifying the State
 1. The Social Contract
 2. Utilitarianism
 3. The Principle of Fairness
 - C. Who Should Rule?
 1. Forms of Government
 2. America and the Forms of government
 - D. The Place of Liberty
 1. J.S. Mill
 2. Justifying Liberty
 - E. The Distribution of Property
 1. The Problem of Distributive Justice
 2. Property and markets
 - F. Individualism, Justice, Feminism
 1. Individualism vs. Anti-individualism

- 2. Rights for Women
- III. Contemporary Readings in Political Philosophy
 - A. Political obligation and consent
 - 1. Obligation and Consent
 - 2. The Principle of Fair Play
 - B. Freedom and Coercion
 - 1. The "Open Society" and its fallacies
 - 2. We Do Not have a Right to Liberty
 - C. Justice and Equality
 - 1. Communitarian and Liberal Theories of the Good
 - 2. Responsibility, Reactive Attitudes, and Liberalism in Philosophy & Politics
 - D. Democracy and Representation
 - 1. A Paradox in the Theory of Democracy
 - 2. Losing the Faith: Feminism and Democracy
 - E. Cooperation or Conflict?