



New Course

GOVT - 205

Catalog Course Title: Political Theory: Issues and Texts

Name and contact information for future correspondence:

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Academic Unit - School/College:

- CAS
- KSB
- SOC
- SIS
- SPA
- SPExS
- Other:

Teaching Unit - Department or Program: GOVT

Date effective: Fall 2016

Required Signatures	Name	Signature	Date
Teaching Unit Chair or Director	Saul Newman		3/9/16
EPC Chair	Susan Glover		4/18/16
Primary Academic Unit Assoc. Dean	Jessica Waters		4/19/16
Second Academic Unit Assoc. Dean			
Faculty Senate Chair			
Provost's Designee (VPUG or VPGR)			

Date sent to the Office of the University Registrar:

I. Identifying Information

- a) Proposed effective date: Fall 2016
- b) Academic Unit: School of Public Affairs
- c) Teaching Unit: Government
- d) Course Title (Generally a limit of 30 characters including spaces)
Political Theory: Issues and Texts
- e) Course Number: GOVT205
- f) Credits: 1
- g) Prerequisites: Permission of Instructor Required
- h) Course description for University Catalog (Generally a limit of 50 words)
This course explores contemporary debates in political theory by meeting with visiting scholars and public intellectuals from across the country. Students will participate in discussion groups and read supplemental texts related to the lectures and debates sponsored by the Political Theory Institute and have private meetings with its speakers.
Grade type
 - i. A/F only X
 - ii. Pass/Fail only
 - iii. A /F and Pass/Fail
- i) Expected frequency of offering
 - i. Every Fall
 - ii. Every Spring
 - iii. Every Summer
 - iv. Alternate Falls
 - v. Alternate Springs
 - vi. Alternate Summers
 - vii. Every term X
 - viii. Irregularly
 - ix. Other
- j) Note all that apply:
 - i. General Education course
 - ii. Online course
 - iii. Hybrid course
 - iv. Rotating topics course X
 - v. Individually supervised course, such as Internship, Independent Study, Research Course, Thesis, Dissertation
 - vi. Research Methods course
 - vii. AU Abroad Programs course
 - viii. Other study abroad course (offered directly by Academic Unit, not through AU Abroad)

II. Rationale

- a) Please explain the main purpose of the new course, including whether it will be a requirement for an existing or proposed program or an elective, and how the new course relates to the existing courses in the program and department. *Note: if the course will be required for an existing program, submit a corresponding Minor Change to Program proposal.*
The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the professional applications of political theory and to serve as a bridge between the Introduction to Political Theory course (GOVT 105) and the higher level political theory courses which focus more specifically on a particular historical period or theme. This course will be an elective and

if taken three times it can count towards one of the elective courses for the Political Science major.

- b) Will the course require students to pay a special fee associated with the course? If so please provide a justification for this additional cost to students. NO
- c) Has the course previously been offered under a rotating topics course or an experimental course number? If so:
 - i. Semesters/year offered Fall 2015, Spring 2016
 - ii. (It was also offered in Spring 2015 as eleven different Independent Studies.)
 - iii. Course number GOVT 396
 - iv. Instructor: Alan Levine (S15); Sarah Houser, (F15, S16)
 - v. Enrollment: S15: 11; F15: 12; S16: 14
 - vi. What observations and conclusions were derived from the previous offering(s) that now lead to proposing this course as a permanent part of the curriculum?
The course was very popular and well-received by students. It was proven to have a constituency, so the decision was made to make it a permanent offering.
- d) Please indicate other units that offer courses or programs related to the proposed course and provide documentation of consultations with those units. NONE
- e) Estimate the enrollment per semester. 12-17
- f) Does your teaching unit's classroom space allotment support the addition of this course?
YES
- g) Are present university facilities (library, technology) adequate for the proposed course? YES
- h) Will the proposed course be taught by full-time or part-time faculty? Full-time
- i) Will offering the new course involve any substantial changes to the scheduling of existing courses? NO
- j) What are the learning outcomes for the course?
 - 1) Students will recognize the normative foundations of many contemporary public policy debates.
 - 2) Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and question the argument of academic articles in political theory.
 - 3) Students will identify major schools of thought within political theory.
 - 4) Students will demonstrate the ability to interact professionally with scholars and public intellectuals in both formal and informal settings.
- k) How will those outcomes be assessed?
Students will be graded on their completion of assigned reading and participation in discussions with the class and with the visiting speaker. After each meeting students will be assigned a grade from 1-5 based on their attendance and the quality of their participation. Students will also be required to write a paper at the end of the semester which explores more in depth one of the topics covered during the semester or the work of one of the speakers.
- l) What are the competencies that students are expected to demonstrate for the course? Please attach a draft syllabus. Students must show ability in critical political theory thinking and an enjoyment of its challenges.

III. Catalog Copy

- a) Please attach a course description as it is to appear in the University Catalog, following the format of the current catalog.
GOVT-205 Political Theory: Issues and Texts (1) This course explores contemporary debates in political theory by meeting with visiting scholars and public intellectuals from across the country. Students will participate in discussion groups and read supplemental texts related to the lectures and debates sponsored by the Political Theory Institute and have private meetings with its speakers. Usually offered every semester. *Prerequisite: GOVT-*

**DRAFT SYLLABUS
FOR NEW COURSE GOVT 205**

**Political Theory: Issues and Texts
GOVT 205 (1 CREDIT)
T 8:10pm, Ward 203
Prof. Sarah Houser
Office: Ward 215
Office hours: Wednesday and Thursday 3-4pm
And By Appointment
Email: houser@american.edu
Phone: (202)885-6263**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course explores contemporary debates in political theory by meeting with visiting scholars and public intellectuals from across the country. Students will participate in discussion groups and read supplemental texts related to the lectures and debates sponsored by the Political Theory Institute and have private meetings with its speakers.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

You are not required to purchase any texts for this course. All required readings will be available on Blackboard and will be sent to students via email before each event.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

- 1) Students will recognize the normative foundations of many contemporary public policy debates.**
- 2) Students will demonstrate the ability to identify and question the argument of academic articles in political theory.**
- 3) Students will identify major schools of thought within political theory.**
- 4) Students will demonstrate the ability to interact professionally with scholars and public intellectuals in both formal and informal settings.**

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- 1) Readings:** Reading selections chosen by speakers will be emailed to students the weekend before our scheduled Tuesday meetings and posted on Blackboard. Students are expected to complete the reading assignments and come prepared to discuss them.
- 2) Attendance and Participation:** Students are required to attend scheduled meetings and lectures and participate in group discussions. The majority of your grade will be decided by your attendance at and thoughtful participation in these discussions. Students can be excused from attendance when the events conflict attendance in other classes and the professor has been notified of such conflicts at the beginning of the semester. However, all students must attend at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of scheduled events in order to pass this class. Since participation is essential to this class please examine the schedule carefully for conflicts before the ADD/DROP period ends
- 3) Assignments:** Students are required to complete a 5-7 page paper which explores more deeply one of the topics discussed over the course of the semester or the work of one of our speakers. Topics will be chosen in individual consultation with the professor. This paper is

due at the time assigned by the registrar for the final exam for this class period. Papers should be submitted via Blackboard. No email submissions will be accepted. This paper must be all the student's own work and collaboration with other students is not permitted. All sources for the paper must be cited with either parenthetical citations or footnotes and the paper must include a bibliography.

GRADING:

Participation in scheduled events and meetings will be graded on a points scale with one point given for attendance at each event or meeting and up to 4 points given for participation. Points are assigned on the basis of quality of participation, not quantity. At the end of the semester the student will receive a grade for participation based on the number of points accumulated as a percentage of the total number of points possible.

Final Papers will be graded on a typical A-F scale. There is some variation in what these grades mean to various instructors, so here's a brief guide:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	Below 60

A-level papers and essays will be extremely well written, concise, excellently argued, comprehensive and insightful. A-level papers will contain some insight or interpretation of the text which goes beyond what was discussed in class. They will completely answer all parts of the question asked, will present a clear and well-structured argument in support of their thesis, and will consider potential objections or counterarguments.

B+ papers and essays meet all of the preceding criteria completely yet fail to provide any insight or interpretation other than the one presented in class. Those papers which are insightful yet fail to meet all other criteria may also be awarded a B+

B papers and essays are average. They may contain some minor interpretative mistakes or fail in some way to completely answer the questions asked. Papers which contain no explicit mistakes yet fail to provide sufficient detail or explanation may also be awarded a B.

B- papers and essays meet most of the criteria outlined above and are fairly well written and yet contain one or more major interpretive mistakes or other errors.

C- level papers are below average. Papers which primarily discuss something other than the question asked, which fail to present a clear argument or exhibit a logical structure, which contain

severe grammatical problems or interpretive mistakes will be awarded grades of C or below.

D level papers are those in which an attempt has been made to answer the question asked, but nothing more.

Failure to turn in a paper will result in a zero.

Final grades will be calculated based on the following formula:

Participation and Attendance: 60%

Final Paper: 40%

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Students are expected to read and abide by AU's Academic Integrity Code. Copies of the Code are available at <http://www.american.edu/american/registrar/AcademicReg/New/reg80.html> and the Registrar's Office. The Code provides AU's policies about academic dishonesty and plagiarism. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating on exams, multiple submissions, and unauthorized collaboration. By registering for this course, you have acknowledged your awareness of the Academic Integrity Code. You are obliged to become familiar with your rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Standards of academic integrity are strictly observed in this class and violations will be followed up rigorously.

REMINDER: According to the Academic Integrity Code suspected violations must be submitted to the Dean of the School of Public Affairs for adjudication. The Dean will determine if a violation has taken place and assign appropriate punishment.

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND EVENTS:

The following is the schedule for this course for the Spring 2016 semester. It has been included in this draft as an example, but the schedule will be different every semester.

Jan 12: Tuesday Meeting, Ward 203, 8:10 pm

Reading: "Feminism and the Family" from *Family Politics* by Scott Yenor

Jan 14: Meeting with Scott Yenor, 4-5 pm, Ward 300

Jan 14: Scott Yenor, Boise State University, "Marriage: A Contract or a Community?"

McDowell Formal Lounge, 5:30-7:00 PM

Feb 1: Meeting with William Darity, Ward 300, 4-5pm

Reading: "The Economics of Reparations" *American Economic Review* (May 2003)

"From a Tangle of Pathology to a Race-Fair America," *Dissent* (Summer 2014)

Feb 1: Dinner with Debate guests, 6:30pm

Feb 1: Debate, 8 pm, Butler Board Room, William Darity and Isabel Sawhill: "The Causes of Poverty: Social Structure or Economics?"

Feb 2: Tuesday meeting to discuss debate, 8:10 pm, Ward 203

Reading: Selections from Aristotle's *Politics*, Federalist 49

Feb 23: Tuesday Meeting, 8:10pm Ward 203

Feb 25: Meeting with Prof. Daniel Doneson, 4:00pm Ward 300

Feb 25: Lecture, 5:30 pm, Dan Doneson

March 1: Meeting with Bhaskar Sunkara
Reading: "End Private Property," *Jacobin Magazine*
Interview with Bhaskar Sunkara, Nov 20, 2015

March 1: Dinner with debate guests, 6:30pm

March 1: Debate: Megan McCardle and Bhaskar Sunkara: "Can Capitalism be Fixed?"

March 3: Meeting with Les Thiele, 4pm Ward 300
Reading: "Practical Judgment, Narrative Experience and Wicked Problems"

March 3: Lecture, Les Thiele, "The Future of Human Nature: Rights and Wrongs of the Anthropocene," 5:30 pm

March 15: Tuesday Meeting, 8:10 pm Ward 203

March 17: Meeting with Colleen Sheehan, 4 pm Ward 300
Reading: Federalist 10 and 51

March 17: Lecture, Colleen Sheehan: James Madison's Republicanism, 5:30pm, Butler Board Room

March 29: Tuesday Meeting, 8:10pm, Ward 203, Shopclass as Soulcraft

April 5: Tuesday Meeting, 8:10pm, Ward 203

April 12: Meeting with Speaker, 4pm, Ward 300

April 12: Lecture, TBA, 5:30pm

May 3: Final Papers must be submitted to Blackboard by Midnight.

DISABILITY, ACADEMIC, AND PERSONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

Academic Support Center (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities and ADHD. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle-Tompkins 228.

Counseling Center (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

Disability Support Services (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical, medical, or psychological disabilities.

Writing Center in 228 Battelle-Tompkins offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. The Center offers appointments on the hour from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, and 3 to 6 p.m. on Sundays. Call 202-885-2991 to arrange a session.

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please notify me in a timely manner with a letter from the Academic Support Center or Disability Support Services so that we can make arrangements to address your needs. If your accommodations allow you to take exams in the testing center and you wish to avail yourself of that opportunity please make your appointment as soon as possible.

MEDIA POLICY:

Students are not permitted to make visual or audio recordings, including live streaming, of classroom lectures or any class related content, using any type of recording devices (e.g., smart phone, computer, digital recorder, etc.) unless prior permission from the instructor is obtained, and there are no objections from any of the students in the class. If permission is granted, personal use and sharing of recordings and any electronic copies of course materials (e.g., PowerPoints, formulas, lecture notes and any classroom discussions online or otherwise) is limited to the personal use of students registered in the course and for educational purposes only, even after the end of the course. Exceptions will be made for student who present a signed Letter of Accommodation from the Academic Support and Access Center. See: Documentation and Eligibility.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS:

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site (american.edu/emergency) and the AU information line at (202) 885-1100 for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/college-specific information.

