This course introduces students to traditional philosophical issues concerning politics. Students will actively engage in an analysis of normative issues using historical insight as well as contemporary approaches. Among these issues are the nature of legitimate authority, political obligation, natural rights, equality and justice. The course emphasizes selections from the major works of such political philosophers as Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx and Mill.
CSU GE Area C: Arts, Literature, Philosophy and Foreign Languages
   C2 - Humanities
CSU GE Area D: Social, Political, and Economic Institutions
   D8 - Political Science, Government, and Legal Institutions

PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:

demonstrate knowledge of important findings, theories, and changing issues relevant to political science.

manage information and prepare and present their work effectively.

demonstrate critical thinking about political issues and evaluate theories’ and arguments’ major assertions, background assumptions, the evidence used to support assertions, and their explanatory value.

COURSE LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:

1. Evaluate the usefulness of each body of theory towards a better and more comprehensive understanding of political life and political institutions.

2. Identify the position of at least one philosopher regarding the legitimacy of the state.

3. Analyze the different assumptions and values about human nature and reality embedded in each body of theory and examine the way these starting premises shape the question asked and conclusions reached.

4. Demonstrate critical thinking through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the course content and present their work effectively.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Analyze the role of government and the relationship between government and individuals

2. Describe and critique the contributions of classic and contemporary political theorists

3. Evaluate various approaches to such normative questions as the nature of legitimate authority, political obligation, natural rights, equality and justice.

4. Debate normative standards of political behavior and processes

5. Apply normative standards of political behavior to specific case studies

COURSE CONTENT:

LECTURE CONTENT:

Course Content Outline (with suggested readings)

A. Introduction to Political Philosophy and Thinking about the State
   1. Plato - The Allegory of the Cave
   2. Veil of Ignorance
   3. Plato - Crito
B. Justifying the State
   1. Aristotle’s Politics (Books I & II)
   2. Niccolo'Machiavelli, The Prince
   3. Thomas Hobbes, Leviathan
C. Nature and Purpose of the State: Obligations to and from the State
   1. Adam Smith, The Wealth of Nations(excerpts)
   2. Marx & Engels, Manifesto of the Communist Party
   3. Jurgen Habermas, Three Normative Models of Democracy
4. Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*
5. Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace*
6. John Stuart Mill, *Considerations on Representative Government*

D. Balancing Natural Rights, Human Nature, and the State
   1. John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government (excerpts); Letter Concerning Toleration*
   2. Jean-Jacques, Rousseau *Of the Social Contract*
   3. David Hume, *Of the Original Contract; A Treatise of Human Nature*

E. Liberty & Justice
   1. Plato, *Republic* Book I and II
   2. John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty; The Subjection of Women*

F. Ruling the State: Authority, Power, and Equality
   1. Robert Nozick, *Anarchy, State and Utopia*

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A. Lecture:
B. Online:

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES:

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading Assignments
Objective quizzes or exams that identify key concepts such as the state and/or identify key elements of philosophical positions;
Short essay exams that examine key issues such as the relationship between the state and the individual;
Critical analysis/research papers that examine and critique philosophical positions as they pertain to current issues.

Out-of-class Assignments
Reading assignments within textbook and additional web sources;
Interactive discussions utilizing the Blackboard shell - discussion board - component;
Research pertaining to philosophical issues.

Writing Assignments
1) Written exams, essays and papers focused on evaluating and analyzing normative arguments;
2) Assignments, both in class and written, that will compare and contrast various arguments;
3) In-class discussions during which students will informally present their ideas.

METHODS OF STUDENT EVALUATION:

Midterm Exam
Final Exam
Short Quizzes
Written Assignments
Essay Examinations
Objective Examinations
Report
Projects (ind/group)
Problem Solving Exercises
Oral Presentations
Demonstration of Critical Thinking:

1. On written assignments and/or essay questions, students will demonstrate the ability to evaluate and analyze the theoretical positions concerning such issues as the relationship between man and the state, natural rights, justice and equality.
2. On written assignments and/or essay questions, students will compare and contrast the theoretical positions of two or more philosophers concerning such issues as the relationship between man and the state, natural rights, justice and equality.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration:

1) Written exams, essays and papers focused on evaluating and analyzing normative arguments;
2) Assignments, both in class and written, that will compare and contrast various arguments;
3) In-class discussions during which students will informally present their ideas.

TEXTS, READINGS, AND RESOURCES:

TextBooks:

LIBRARY:

Adequate library resources include: Non-Print Materials

Comments:

Attachments:

Attached Files