**Course descriptor**

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| Title of the course | Political theory | | |
| Title of the Academic Programme | BA in Political Science & World Politics | | |
| Type of the course | core | | |
| Prerequisites | Introduction to Philosophy; History of Political Thought; Introduction to Political Theory; World Politics and International Relations. | | |
| ECTS workload | 4 | | |
| Total indicative study hours | Directed Study | Self-directed study | Total |
| 52 | 100 | 152 |
| Course Overview | The main goal of this course is to introduce students to the concepts and authors of the contemporary political theory, grounding students in several national theoretical traditions and encouraging them to produce analysis beyond the nation-states centered paradigm.  Students will learn about why these concepts matter, what controversies surround each of them and what the vigorous debates and disagreements about them reveals about the character of contemporary politics in the era of globalization. | | |
| Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) | By the end of the course students will have a much better understanding of the ideational, normative dimension of political science. They will learn about how to do concept analysis, and generally improve their analytical capabilities and their abilities to grasp the essence of abstract ideas. They will also learn how to speak with authority about some of the most influential thinkers in contemporary political theory from Karl Schmitt to Chantal Mouffe.  The course is targeting a number of competences from the HSE Educational standard for Political science BA program:  (ULO-2) Able to identify scientific subject  (ULO-5) Work with information: find, define and use the information from different sources which required for solving of research and professional problems (including the system approach)  (ULO-9) Able to think critically and interpret the experience (personal and of other persons), relate to professional and social activities  (PLO-1) Student is capable of posing research problems relevant to the study of political phenomena and political processes; setting particular research tasks; and putting together a research design.  **(PLO-9)** Student is capable of reporting the results of the information retrieval and analysis, academic or applied research she/he has conducted:  - in various genres (including reviews, policy papers, reports and publications pertaining to socio-political subject matter);  - and depending on the target audience. | | |
| Indicative Course Content |  | | |
| Teaching and Learning Methods | The course consists of 15 lectures (30 hours) and 15 seminars (30 hours). All lectures are supported by Power Point presentations, which are then made available to the students. Seminars follow an interactive format that includes the preparation of written answers to set questions, discussions of key readings, group presentations, etc. The course follows a conventional lecture and seminar format. But the real work is done by the students in the seminars and in their assessed essay | | |
| Indicative Assessment Methods and Strategy | **Seminar Participation**  For every seminar student should read the required reading and be able to discuss it in class and answer instructor’s questions on the content of the reading as well as on the contribution of this text to the discussion on the most important topic of Political theory.  This oral participation amount to **50%** of the cumulative grade for the course.  The other **50%** of the grade is comprised of the mark for the Essay.  Students are to write a **2000-word** essay from a choice of **set questions**:  1.Is consent necessary for legitimacy?  2. What is the best argument for the claim that we have a duty to obey the law? Does it succeed?  3. Is the value of democracy purely instrumental?  4. What does it mean to say that we have a right? Why do we have rights?  5. Why should the application of principles of justice only be restricted to the ‘basic structure’ of society?  6. What should egalitarians seek to equalise?  7. Are the principles of justice that apply within states different from the principles of justice that apply in the international realm?  8. Should the state be neutral between citizens’ competing conceptions of the good?  9. What is our best conception of liberty? On that conception, is liberty the supreme value in politics?  The deadline for submission of the essays is **May 13th**. Failure to do so will mean an automatic grade of 0 for the essay. Extensions will only be granted in exceptional cases.  The **cumulative grade** for this course is calculated as follows:   * **50%** for the seminar participation * **50%** for the essay   Should a student get a cumulative grade of **8 or higher**, they are **excused** from taking the exam.  The exam adds up to **20%** to the final mark.  *The grading formula is 0,8\*Cumulative (0,5\*Essay+0,5\*Seminars)+0,2\*Exam*.  In all cases, final marks will be rounded (up or down) to the nearest whole number (favoring student). | | |
| Readings / Indicative Learning Resources | Mandatory:  John S. Dryzek, Bonnie Honig, and Anne Phillips (2008) (eds). The Oxford Handbook of Political Theory. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199548439.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199548439.  Optional:  Jacob T. Levy (2015) (Ed.) The Oxford Handbook of Classics in Contemporary Political Theory. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198717133.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780198717133.  Robert E. Goodin (2011) (Ed.) The Oxford Handbook of Political Science. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available at: http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com/view/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199604456.001.0001/oxfordhb-9780199604456. | | |
| Course Instructor | Dmitriy Riabov | | |