Language, Philosophy and Culture
Texas A&M University
Core Curriculum Cover Sheet
Initial Request for a course to be considered for the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

1. This request is submitted by (department name): TAMU-Qatar, Liberal Arts

2. Course prefix and number: POLS 203

3. Texas Common Course Number: Click here to enter text.

4. Complete course title: Introduction to Political Theory

5. Semester credit hours: 3

6. This request is for consideration in the following Foundational Component Area:
- Communication
- Mathematics
- Life and Physical Sciences
- Language, Philosophy and Culture
- Creative Arts
- American History
- Government/Political Science
- Social and Behavioral Sciences

7. This course should also be considered for International and Cultural Diversity (ICD) designation:
- Yes
- No

8. How frequently will the class be offered? 1-2 times per year

9. Number of class sections per semester: 1

10. Number of students per semester: 25

11. Historic annual enrollment for the last three years: n/a

This completed form must be attached to a course syllabus that sufficiently and specifically details the appropriate core objectives through multiple lectures, outside activities, assignments, etc. Representative from department submitting request should be in attendance when considered by the Core Curriculum Council.

12. Date

13. Submitted by:

   Course Instructor

   Approvals:

14. Department Head

   Date

15. College Dean/Designee

   Date

For additional information regarding core curriculum, visit the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website at www.thecb.state.tx.us/corecurriculum2014

See form instructions for submission/approval process.
Texas A&M University
Core Curriculum

Initial Request for a Course Addition to the Fall 2014 Core Curriculum

Foundational Component Area: Language, Philosophy and Culture

In the box below, describe how this course meets the Foundational Component Area description for Language, Philosophy and Culture. Courses in this category focus on how ideas, values, beliefs, and other aspects of culture express and affect human experience. Courses involve the exploration of ideas that foster aesthetic and intellectual creation in order to understand the human condition across cultures.

The proposed course must contain all elements of the Foundational Component Area. How does the proposed course specifically address the Foundational Component Area definition above?

POLS 203 introduces one of the foundational elements of human experience: interaction under governance. The basis of this course is the analysis of how traditions, ideas, cultures and practices shape considerations on what types of state systems are just, efficient, egalitarian, and the like. In particular, this course examines how different ideas and ideologies shape the creation of order – as seen in policies, institutions, and laws – that have resonance across national and cultural boundaries.

Core Objectives

Describe how the proposed course develops the required core objectives below by indicating how each learning objective will be addressed, what specific strategies will be used for each objective and how student learning of each objective will be evaluated.

The proposed course is required to contain each element of the Core Objective.

Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information):

POLS 203 requires students to investigate the logic, ethics, and salience of various ideas as they shape governing bodies and concepts. To do so, students will process information from primary texts, secondary texts, historical events/documents, and intersubjective interactions. Through their papers as well as in-class discussions, the students will learn how to examine their own views critically, as well as how to negotiate the differences of ideas between differing perspectives.

Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication):

POLS 203 will increase student communication skills both in written and oral forms. An extended part of the course is dedicated to discussion: this will require students to present complex philosophical and ethical ideas in a manner accessible to other students. Moreover, the focus on discussion will train students in “thinking or their feet,” insofar as they must both formulate their arguments logically as well as create these arguments quickly in the midst of ongoing discussion. The paper assignments will also increase their expression of ideas, as it will pressure the students to write logical and concise arguments that go beyond mere presentation of opinion, but rather extended reflection and analysis.

Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities):

POLS 203 is, in effect, a course dedicated to civic responsibility, as it requires students to explicate what is just and right in political circumstances, and why it is so. This explication encourages for the individual student an
understanding of his/her own responsibilities as a citizen (be it in a local community, a nation, or the world). More to the point, it also confronts the student with differing views and perspectives: the emphasis on discussion leads students to realize the similarities and differences that exist between peoples and ideas. It is in the interaction, conflict, and compromise between the views of the student and other theories – and more practically, between the student and other students – that each student learns the role of social responsibility in interpersonal and political interaction.

Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making):

As POLS 203 focuses on political ideas and decisions, a core element of the course is personal responsibility. In choosing ideologies to support or combat, and in explaining choices on the importance of some ideas over others (such as justice over freedom, or equality over justice), students realize the relevance and importance of their decisions. In considering the consequences of their ideas, and the need to take responsibility for both the positive and negative aspects in their political ideas, students will gain a broader understanding of the “hard choices” of politics, and how the initial starting-point of an ethical/political idea may lead to unintended, and undesired, consequences. The decision to accept these results, or instead to change one’s views to another view (also containing positives and negatives), will strengthen the students’ grasp of the burdens and benefits of choices.

Please be aware that instructors should be prepared to submit samples/examples of student work as part of the future course recertification process.
Texas A&M University
International and Cultural Diversity Cover Sheet
Request for a course to be included in the University Graduation Requirement for International and Cultural Diversity

1. This request is submitted by (department name): Texas A&M University at Qatar/Liberal Arts

2. Course prefix and number: POLS 203

3. Texas Common Course Number: Click here to enter text.

4. Complete course title: Introduction to Political Theory

5. Semester credit hours: 3

6. Frequency the class will be offered: 1-2 times per year

7. Number of sections per semester: 1

8. Number of students per semester: 25

9. Historic annual enrollment for the last three years:
   2012-2013: na
   2011-2012: na
   2010-2011: na

10. Statement on how this course meets the criteria for International and Cultural Diversity:

    In this globalized world, citizens of every nation are confronted with big issues that arise from politics. What is freedom? What is the state? What does equality mean? What is justice? Drawing on the insights from contemporary political theory, including east and the west, this class will address these and other questions. In addition, students will be challenged to examine their own beliefs and learn to express their conclusions logically and clearly.

11. Course Instructor

12. Department Head

13. College Dean/Designee

Submit this form and current course syllabus to fso-ccc@tamu.edu or Kristin Harper, TAMU 1125.

See form instructions for submission/approval process.
Texas A&M University - SAMPLE SYLLABUS
POLITICAL SCIENCE 203 – Fall 2013
INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY

Phillip W. Gray
4423-0645
Office: 328F Texas A&M Engineering Building

Class: S/T/H 13:00-13:50, Rm 115
Office Hours: T/H 10:00-12:30; by appointment
email: phillip.gray@qatar.tamu.edu

Course Description and Objectives
Some of the greatest questions faced in human history arise in politics. What is freedom? What is the state? What does equality mean? In answering these questions, numerous ideologies have developed, including liberalism, conservatism, and many others. In discussing what the government should or should not do, whether certain actions are just or unjust, or what equality means in practice, the critically-minded individual should know how to analyze and consider terms and ideologies used in the political sphere. In this course, students will learn critically to examine the ideas and ideologies of political theory, how to examine one’s own beliefs and preferences, and how to express these beliefs logically, clearly, and succinctly.

Prerequisites:
None

Core Objectives for the Social and Behavioral Sciences Component Area:
1. Critical Thinking (to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information)
2. Communication (to include effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication)
3. Social Responsibility (to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities)
4. Personal Responsibility (to include the ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making)

Student Learning Outcomes:
Over this course, students will
1. develop their abilities in critically examining the language and logic of politics, as used historically as well as currently
2. augment their skills in conveying their considerations of political topics in clear, concise, and thorough manner.
3. enhance their understanding of cross-cultural and cross-ideological beliefs, as well as the means by which global citizens can interact across the political spectrum.
4. apply their ideas and preferences with the responsibility for choice as well as the logical/likely results of their ideas and choices.

Required Reading


Should the discussion of these topics require other texts, these will be provided by the professor, by electronic reserve a: the library, through the course’s E-campus page.

**Grading Assessment:**
- Midterm Examination 20%
- Final Examination 20%
- First Paper Assignment 25%
- Second Paper Assignment 25%
- Class Discussion 10%

**Grading Scale:**
- A = 90 – 100
- B = 80 – 89
- C = 70 – 79
- D = 60 – 69
- F = 59 and below.

**Assignments:**

**Exams**
There will be two exams in this course – a midterm (20% of final grade) and a (non-cumulative) final exam (20% of final grade). The format of these exams will consist of essay questions. The midterm will cover material from the beginning of the semester until the date of the midterm, and the final exam will cover all material from the lecture after the midterm until the end of semester, although it will assume knowledge of the previous information. Make-ups for exams will only be given if the student has a university excused absence and follow university guidelines. It is the student’s responsibility to confer with the instructor to arrange a day for the make-up examination.

**Papers**
A major aim for the papers is to demonstrate your ability to use critically and analytically the concepts and theories covered in class, either in a theoretical argument or focusing on a more particular case or event. It is not meant to be an exercise in summary, and it is not meant to be a mere exposition of one’s opinions. Rather, the two should demonstrate your ability to make and support an argument, both in itself and against possible objections, using the theories, concepts, and ideas presented through the texts and lectures.
Each paper must be at least 10-12 pages in length (not including cover page and bibliography), using Times New Roman font at 12 point size. The papers should be double-spaced. The page margins should be 1 inch on the top and bottom, 1.25 inches on the left and right sides. You must cite at least 10 sources from reputable (especially academic) sources. These would include academic journals, books from university presses, government documents, and others. The term paper should use the APSA citation system, as described in the Style Manual for Political Science. The term paper should have page numbers. The cover page should have your name, the title of the paper, and the course number.

First Paper Assignment (25% of final grade):
Using the textbook as a starting-point, the paper should analyze one of the “classical ideas” of political theory (such as the state, freedom, justice, or the others). The paper should discuss some of the major thinkers on the particular idea, and the paper should present the main schools of thought/areas of contention on the idea. The paper should briefly explicate the student’s preferred perspective on the idea, and explain why this perspective is correct.

Second Paper Assignment (25% of final grade):
Using the textbook as a starting point, the paper should explicate which of the “classical ideologies” they believe is EITHER the most correct OR the most incorrect. The paper should identify and examine the major thinkers of the ideology, as well as opposing views to it. A major focus of the paper will be the student’s reasoned explanation for his/her position regarding the ideology.

Discussion:
Students are expected to interact and contribute to the discussions within the course. At points during the semester, students may be required to provide “talking points” before the class sessions to facilitate discussion. Discussion contribution will be 10% of your final semester grade.

Aggie Honor Code “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do”

Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. For additional information please visit: http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/

*Note: We follow a zero-tolerance policy for violations of the Aggie honor code. If a student is found in violation of the honor code in any manner the instructors will award an “F*” for the whole course and report the case to the honor council. Remember if you are not sure ask the instructors, ignorance of the code is not an excuse. Asking an unauthorized person (not pre-approved by the instructors) to write or improve your written assignments is also a serious violation of the honor code.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy Statement: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights
protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact Dr. Eric Wilson, Director Student Affairs.

Course Schedule: Reading Topics and Assignments
POL 231-501 – Introduction to World Politics
Fall 2013

[Note – Assignments are listed on the days when they are supposed to be read]

August 25 (S): Introduction to Class
Assignment: none.

August 27 (T): Classic Ideas and Classic Ideologies
Assignment: none.

August 29 (H): What is Power?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 1-10.

September 1 (S): What is Power? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion. Prepare to discuss first paper assignment.

September 3 (T): What is the State?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 11-35.

September 5 (H): What is the State? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

September 8 (S): What is Freedom?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 36-57.

September 10 (T): What is Freedom? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

September 12 (H): What is Equality?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 58-79.

September 15 (S): What is Equality? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

September 17 (T): What is Justice?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 80-100.

September 19 (H): What is Justice? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

September 22 (S): What is Democracy?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 101-119.

September 24 (T): What is Democracy? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

September 26 (H): What is Citizenship?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 120-143.

September 29 (S): What is Citizenship? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

October 1 (T): What is Punishment?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 144-166.

October 3 (H): What is Punishment? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

October 6 (S): Review for Midterm
Assignment: none.

October 8 (T): Midterm Exam
Assignment: attend.

October 10 (H): What is Ideology?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 167-173. FIRST PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE.

October 13 (S): Eid Al-Adha – NO CLASS
October 15 (T): Eid Al-Adha – NO CLASS
October 17 (H): Eid Al-Adha – NO CLASS
October 20 (S): What is Liberalism?

October 22 (T): What is Liberalism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

October 24 (H): What is Conservatism?

October 27 (S): What is Conservatism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

October 29 (T): What is Socialism?

October 31 (H): What is Socialism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

November 3 (S): What is Anarchism?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 242-263.

November 5 (T): What is Anarchism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

November 7 (H): What is Nationalism?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 264-284.

November 10 (S): What is Nationalism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

November 12 (T): What is Fascism?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 285-308.

November 14 (H): What is Fascism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

November 17 (S): What is Feminism?

November 19 (T): What is Multiculturalism?

November 21 (H): What is Ecologism?

November 24 (S): What is Fundamentalism?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 385-404.

November 26 (T): What is Multiculturalism? (cont’d)
Assignment: prepare for discussion.

November 28 (H): What are Contemporary Ideas?
Assignment: read Hoffman and Graham, pp. 405-407; scan pp. 408-492.

December 1 (S): Concluding Thoughts
Assignment: prepare for discussion. SECOND PAPER ASSIGNMENT DUE.

December 3 (T): Review for Final Examination
Assignment: none.

December 5 (H): Final Examination
Assignment: attend.