

Political Science 301

Modern Political Ideologies

Fall Quarter, 2007

M, W, F: 1:30-2:35pm

076 University Hall



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Office Hours: Mondays, 2:45-4:00; Wednesdays 10:00-11:15; and by appointment

Course Objectives

Political ideologies are sets of ideas and beliefs that people hold about political regimes, institutions, and the relationships between individuals, groups, and governments. Political ideologies allow people to simplify political and social life, and they may be used to either rationalize or challenge the state of current affairs.

In this course, we will examine the major ideologies that impact political life at the international, national and individual levels. We will approach each political ideology in its appropriate context, including its historical development, its major tenants, and its applications to the political world and contemporary society.

The aim of this course is to present ideologies as they are understood by their believers, together with criticisms made by their opponents. This course is intended to generate informed discussion and debate about political ideologies, and should be used by students to help clarify their own perspectives on issues of politics and society in the contemporary world.

Course Materials

One textbook is required for this course. Required readings beyond the text can be accessed through electronic reserve in the Dunbar Library (directions included at the end of the syllabus).

Nancy S. Love, editor, *Dogmas and Dreams: A Reader in Modern Political Ideologies*,

(Note: Third Edition), Congressional Quarterly Publishers, 2006 .

Students are also strongly encouraged to participate in the classroom studio for PLS 301, available on the University's WINGS portal (<http://wings.wright.edu>). After entering your WSU username and password, go to the "Academics" Tab and then find "My Courses." Here you will find each of your WSU courses. Click on "PLS 301" to open our course studio.

The instructor will post review guides, internet links, handouts and other important material to the WINGS studio. In order to use WINGS, students must

use their Wright State University e-mail account. For questions about your WSU account, password, etc., please contact Computing and Telecommunications Services (CATS) at 775-4827.

Student Responsibilities

Attendance at *all* class sessions is extremely important for success in this course, since the class is designed to elicit student participation and input. Students are expected not only to think critically about what constitutes each ideology, but to also take what they have learned and apply it to the world around them. If you must miss a class session, it is up to you to receive the lecture notes from another student, and to take upon yourself the responsibility of finding out any changes made in the schedule for class readings, exams, or assignments.

Participation is a formal part of your grade and it will be measured in multiple ways. Attendance is a necessary but insufficient element of this part of each student's responsibility. Students with more than 4 unexcused absences will receive a zero for the participation portion of their grade. It will be assumed that students come to class having closely read and carefully thought about the assigned material.

Final grades will be based on the following:

Reflection Paper:	5%
Exam #1:	20%
Response Assignments: (2):	20%
Exam #2:	30%
Final Paper:	20%
Participation:	5%

NOTE: All assignments must be completed to receive credit for the course.

Make-up exams will be administered only if arranged at least 24 hours before the scheduled exam is to be taken. Acceptable documentation will be required, and the scheduling of such exams is at the discretion of the professor.

Instructions for Writing Assignments

Reflection Paper: Due Wednesday, September 12th at the beginning of class

What are your basic beliefs about government and politics? For example, what authority do you think governments should possess? Do you believe it is proper for the government to lessen hardships (financial, physical, etc.)

experienced by some members of society? Should political leaders set moral and cultural standards for citizens? Should (or do) religion and politics mix? How would you define "freedom," and what do you think governments should do to help promote it? Finally, why do you hold the political perspectives that you do?

In 3-5 pages, typed and double-spaced, please sketch your own political socialization, by which is meant your experience and understanding of politics. Highlight how your life experiences have influenced your views. Briefly describe the things in your life, such as family, party affiliations, occupations, ethnic background, friendships, school experiences, study abroad, etc. that have contributed to your political attitudes.

It may help you to frame this discussion in terms of particular beliefs that you hold on some issues, such as affirmative action, abortion, indigenous ("first peoples") rights, environmental sustainability, public funding for education, genetic research, or gun ownership. With these issues, be sure to include both your opinion and *your sense of the source of your views*. As we begin our study of the evolution of political thought and action, it will be helpful for each of you to reflect on some of the reasons why you hold particular beliefs.

The first topic's lectures, class discussions, and readings should be particularly helpful in writing this paper. After the paper is returned to you, save it. You will need to turn it in with your final paper assignment at the end of the quarter.

3-5 pages; 5% of your grade

Response Assignments: Due throughout the quarter

As a way to help students understand the material and integrate it into their own views on politics, students will need to complete brief writing assignments based upon the readings. These assignments will be directly related to issues we will be discussing in class and will encourage students to spend time considering important issues before class. Throughout the quarter, there will be four assignments distributed, and each student is required to complete two of them. Late writing assignments and e-mail submissions will **not be accepted**. Students with excused university absences need to meet with the professor in advance of the absence to facilitate the timely completion of these assignments.

Response assignments need to be thoughtfully prepared as formal papers. Any sources used for these assignments, including course texts and internet sites must be acknowledged in a list of "sources cited" for each paper.

2-3 pages each; 20% of your grade

Final Paper: Due November 14th by 3:00pm (exam week)

So where do you stand? Pick the subgroups of 2 political ideologies that we have covered in this class: the ideology that most speaks to you and your political beliefs, and the ideology with which you most disagree (example: neo-classical liberalism versus traditional conservatism --- do not vaguely compare liberals and conservatives). In the first section of the paper, briefly explain the most