

PSC 105 - Political Issues



Graham 207
MTWR 10:10 am - 12:10 pm
blackboard.uncg.edu

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Course Objectives

The more the world changes, the more everything seems to stay the same but how do we explain and evaluate these changes? For example, can the government help overcome the problems affecting society or is the government merely a necessary evil? How do we weigh the importance of individual rights versus order and stability? Or, what are the politics of identity and what role should they play in the government?

This course is not designed to provide you with the definitive answer to questions like these but, rather, to provide you with a general understanding of the factors likely to affect how different people will view these questions and the disparate solutions they will propose. To do this our course is divided into three primary sections. In the first section we will consider the nature of the government by touching on ideas like anarchy, democracy, and autocracy. In the second section we will look at four political ideologies that have played an important role shaping the events of the past two centuries. The final section of the course will examine more recent movements and consider whether, for example, liberation ideologies or green ideologies represent anything more than the basis for modern social movements.

Course Requirements

Overview	50%	Exams
	30%	Participation
	20%	Response Papers

Exams

There will be three in-class exams throughout the summer session. Each exam will be a combination of short answer and essay questions that will test your understanding of important concepts as well as your ability to apply them to current issues. The exams will not be cumulative insofar as how they deal with the specifics of each section of the course. There are overarching concepts, however, that can (and will) make an appearance in multiple sections and exams. The current dates for all three exams are: July 2 (10%), July 16 (20%), and July 30 (20%).

Participation

Although this course is listed as being a “lecture,” the relatively small size is perfect for a seminar-style course. To that end we will blend lectures that cover key points with in-class discussions of the readings and contemporary political issues. Your final participation grade

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will reflect your overall performance during both the lectures and the discussions as well as your participation outside of the classroom. Attendance will be taken daily and each student is allowed two absences for any reason at all--excused or unexcused--without penalty. Please keep in mind that merely attending every class does not necessarily equate to participating in class you would like to receive a participation grade that is above average.

Response Papers

Throughout the summer you will write four response papers. In each instance you will be asked to reflect upon some of the key themes of the course. For example, is individual freedom of choice more, or less, important than the maintenance of a stable and orderly society? In responding to a question like this you must be prepared to evaluate the readings assigned in the class and defend your own position on these issues. More details about the response papers can be found on the course Blackboard site. The current due dates for all four papers are: July 2, July 9, July 16 and July 23.

Other Guidelines

Technology in the Classroom

Modern technology is a wonderful thing; my cell phone is a “smart phone,” and I am a huge fan of all “Web 2.0” has to offer such as having a Facebook account and using Twitter. However, I also believe these services have no place in the classroom during our class time. Please turn off your cell phones and only use laptops to take notes while you are in Graham 209 otherwise your participation grade could be severely affected.

Policy on Late Work

Late work will not be accepted. If you have a commitment scheduled for the day of an assignment that cannot be rescheduled, you should contact me well before that date so we may discuss options. In the event that you miss an assignment because of a documented emergency, you or your agent must contact me as soon as possible so we may discuss options. **In all instances, you are better off communicating with me sooner rather than waiting until the end of the semester.**

Student Conduct Code

The Academic Integrity Policy of UNCG is in effect in this class and all others at the University. I am committed to treating violations of this policy seriously and urge all students to become familiar with its terms set out at academicintegrity.uncg.edu.

Required Textbooks

Ball, Terence and Richard Dagger. 2009. *Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal*. 7th Edition. New York, NY: Pearson Longman. (a.k.a. **Textbook**)

Ball, Terence and Richard Dagger. 2009. *Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader*. 7th Edition. New York, NY: Pearson Longman. (a.k.a. **Reader**)

Additional reading assignments listed on the detailed course schedule will be posted as PDF files on Blackboard. The list of assigned readings is subject to change as the semester progresses. However, I will inform you of any additions or changes in advance.

Course Schedule

Introduction	25 June	Introduction to Political Issues Readings: Textbook #1; Reader #1
The Government	29	Anarchy and Autocracy Readings: Reader #11, 22, 42
	30	Democracy Readings: Textbook #2; Reader #2, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8
	1 July	The Government and the Economy Readings: N/A
	2	Exam (10%) <i>Response Paper #1</i>
Political Ideologies	6	Liberalism (I) Readings: Textbook #3; Reader #12, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18
	7	Liberalism (II) Readings: Russett and Oneal (PDF)
	8	Conservatism (I) Readings: Textbook #4; Reader #24
	9	Conservatism (II) Readings: Reader #29, 30, 31 <i>Response Paper #2</i>

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	13	Socialism and Communism (I) Readings: Textbook #5; Reader #33, 35, 36
	14	Socialism and Communism (II) Readings: Textbook #6; Reader #38, 39, 40
	15	Fascism Readings: Textbook #7; Reader #46, 48
	16	Exam (20%) <i>Response Paper #3</i>
Political Ideologies?	20	The End of History? Readings: Fukuyama (PDF)
	21	Liberation Ideologies (I) Readings: Textbook #8
	22	Liberation Ideologies (II) Readings: Reader #49, 50, 51, 55, 56, 57
	23	Green Ideologies (I) Readings: Textbook #9 <i>Response Paper #4</i>
	27	Green Ideologies (II) Readings: Reader #60, 61, 62
	28	Globalization Readings: Textbook #10; Reader #65, 68, 69
	29	The Future and Political Ideologies Readings: Textbook #11
	30	Exam (20%)

Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to provide an overview of the course. You cannot claim any rights from it. While the information included within the syllabus should be a reliable guide for the course, scheduling and dates may change. Official announcements are always those made on Blackboard and in lecture.