

POLI 395 Global Political Thought Fall 2016

Maybank Hall 207 TR 10:50am-12:05pm

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Course Syllabus

“If our Founding Fathers wanted us to care about the rest of the world, they wouldn't have declared their independence from it.”

— Stephen Colbert

Course Description

Global Political Thought is another way of saying non-Western Political Thought. This is something that gets short shrift in much of Political Science. We start with the assumption that there is indeed something called “The West.” But once we travel out of this geographical and historical space, can we say that political thought changes according to how the “Non-West” defines itself? Or does it change according to how “The West” defines, elevates, or dismisses it based on similarity or difference? Or does it change at all? Do culture and historical context matter? These questions matter because they compel Political Science to consider how to better construct and categorize its ideas about politics across time and space.

To get at these questions, this course sits at the intersection of Political Theory and Comparative Politics. We will look closely at a range of scholarly works by non-Western thinkers in order to challenge some central political ideas of the so-called Western Canon. Much of this “Global” literature grows directly out of the reactions to Westernization of the non-Western world from around the 19th century to present. These reactions were quite critical, and certainly not trivial. At the same time, this literature allows us to examine a range of perennial political issues from a variety of non-Western perspectives. We can compare them to see if we can draw some generalizations about how politics works across different modes of political thought.

In other words, we will use this class to examine whether or not our default setting for political thought – Western political thought – is universal. Or do alternative modes of political thought have their own distinct logic derived from different contexts? We may also ask whether or not the whole intellectual exercise of distinguishing categories of Western and non-Western Political Thought, not to mention using fancy Western words like epistemology (the study of knowledge), and ontology (the study of being and the relations of things) are fundamentally Western academic constructs, and whether or not any of this matters to understanding how politics works. We will round out the class by critically examining the notion of American Exceptionalism, and see where this fits into the larger picture of Global Political Thought.

Course Objectives and Methodology

Students should come away able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of readings, analyze texts critically, effectively write papers, increase the quality of student's reading, writing, debate and critical thinking skills
- Improve student's understanding of how different theories define and approach the issue of development
- Distinguish their own views from those of others and can defend their own perspective

The course will be taught through readings, lectures, and class discussions:

- *Readings.* Reading primary sources is the best way to understand Global Political Theory. For each three-week part of this class, students will read an entire book, supplemented by weekly companion pieces that correspond to specific topics. This is an upper-level class, and students should expect to read 30-50 pages per class session. Students are expected to have completed the readings *before* these class sessions. Keeping up with the readings will be vital to your overall course performance, and it will be difficult to catch up if you fall behind. The knowledge acquired in the readings will be cumulative. That is, each week you will be introduced to new ideas that will become part of the "tool-box" you will use to analyze readings and lectures in subsequent weeks.
- *Lectures.* Each week will feature a specific topic and a corresponding lecture that will essentially serve as the "textbook" for the class, undergirding the readings and class discussions with key terms, concepts, and historical context.
- *Discussions.* Class discussions will be fundamental to this class and students are expected to participate. For one session each week, a different pair of students will lead a class discussion.

Course Requirements

Evaluation will be based on the following exercises:

- *Critical Review Essays (50% of grade).* For each major part of the course, students will write a 1,000-word thought essay. These essays must demonstrate comprehension of the text and the ability to explicate the text. Above all the essays should critically analyze and unify the central arguments of the books and companion pieces for that particular part of the course. Essays should be typed, double-spaced typed, with regular margins, 12 pt font, in Times New Roman, with page numbers, with a word count at the bottom, and stapled in the top left corner. They will be progressively weighted throughout the semester, giving students a chance to hone the skill of writing such essays. Essays are due on the following dates:

September 20th (5%), October 11th (10%), November 1st (15%), November 22nd (20%)

- *Final Essay (25%)*. Students will have an opportunity to tie together the arc of the course in a final, unifying essay that should reflect an “accumulated wisdom” of the semester. This Final Essay will be 2,000 words and is due the last day of class on **Monday, December 1**.
- *Leading a Discussion (10%)*. Each Thursday, a pair of students will prepare a 10-minute presentation on the week’s readings and lead a class discussion. These presentations should include a concise summary, a critical analysis, and discussion questions for the rest of the class. Pairs and presentation days will be established according to the size of the class.
- *Class Participation (15%)*. The quality of this class depends on the quality of discussion therefore students are expected to participate in class. Participation in the intellectual life of the campus is also part of this grade and students will receive credit for attending the key events that will be announced in advance.

Course Policies

Grading Scale

A	93-100	A-	90-92	B+	88-89	B	83-87	B-	80-82
C+	78-79	C	73-77	C-	70-72	D+	68-69	D	63-67
D-	60-62	F:	Below 60						

Attendance Policy. Attendance is **REQUIRED**. Tardiness is not cool.

Submission of Work. Late work will not be accepted. Work submitted electronically will not be accepted. “**My computer crashed**” = “**My dog ate my homework.**”

Honor Code. All students are expected be familiar with the College of Charleston Honor Code, and to abide by it. Violations will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately. More is found here: <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

Learning Disabled. If you have a documented learning disability, please let me know as soon as possible so special arrangements can be made for certain class requirements.

Other Special Circumstances. I normally will do business with anyone who lets me know in advance of any special circumstances. But please note that the expression “it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission” was not invented by a College Professor.

Center for Student Learning. The Center for Student Learning’s (CSL) academic support services give assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and they are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843) 953-5635.

Required Readings

The following books are available at the campus bookstore:

Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (Monthly Review Press 2001)

Patrick Chabal, *Africa: The Politics of Suffering and Smiling (Global Political Theories)* (Zed Books 2009)

Franz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove Press 2005)

Eduardo Galeano, *The Open Veins of Latin America: Five Centuries of the Pillage of a Continent* (Monthly Review Press 1997)

Mohandas Gandhi, *'Hind Swaraj' and Other Writings* (Cambridge University Press 2009)

Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (Vintage Books 1979)

All other readings will be available on OAKS.

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<https://www.facebook.com/CollegeOfCharlestonAfricanStudiesProgram>

Course Outline and Readings

1. August 23-25: Introduction

Stefany Ann Goldberg, "Animal Planet: Where the Wild Things are... and Where They're Not," *The Smart Set* (Drexel University), <http://thesmartset.com/article/article07101201.aspx>

Immanuel Kant, *Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch*, 1795

Part I: Frameworks

2. August 30-September 1: Comparative Political Theory and Political Culture

Said, Introduction and Chapter 1, pp. 1-110

Andrew March, "What is Comparative Political Theory?" *The Review of Politics* 71 (2009), pp. 531-565

Ruth Lane, "Political Culture: Residual Category or General Theory?" *Comparative Political Studies*, October 1992, 25, pp. 362-387

3. September 6-8: Postcolonial Theory

No class Thursday, September 8 for EISA Conference

Said, Chapter 2, pp. 113-197

Aimé Césaire, pp. 31-78

4. September 13-15: Elites, Masses, and Gender

Said, Chapter 3, pp. 201-328

Janice Boddy, *Civilizing Women*, pp. 1-9, pp. 179-221

Part II: Nationalism and Violence

5. September 20-22: Nationalism

****FIRST ESSAY DUE SEPTEMBER 20****

Fanon, pp. 1-96

Amilcar Cabral, "National Liberation and National Culture," in Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman, *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory* (Columbia University Press 1994), pp. 53-65

6. September 27-29: Violence

Fanon, pp. 97-180

Che Guevara, *Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 32-73

Mao Zedong, *The Red Book of Guerrilla Warfare*, pp. 25-49

7. October 4-6: Non-Violence

Gandhi, pp. 13-117

Bethan Staton, "Despite crackdown, Palestinians organize for long-term peace," *Waging Nonviolence*, July 7 2014

<http://wagingnonviolence.org/feature/amidst-crackdown-palestinians-organize-long-term-peace/>

Part III: Aid & Development

8. October 11-13: Neo-Imperialism

****SECOND ESSAY DUE OCTOBER 11****

Galeano pp. 1-58

Kwame Nkrumah, *Neo-colonialism: The Last Stage of Imperialism* (International Publishers 1965), pp. ix-xx, pp. 239-259

9. October 18-20: Dependency

Galeano pp. 59-170

Fernando Henrique Cardoso and Enzo Faletto, *Dependency and Development in Latin America* (University of California Press 1978), pp. 1-73

10. October 25-27: New Imperial Outsiders

Galeano pp. 173-285

David Rieff, "The Road to Hell is Paved with Viral Videos," *Foreign Policy*, March 14, 2012

http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/03/14/the_road_to_hell_is_paved_with_viral_videos_kony_2012

Teju Cole, "The White Savior Industrial Complex," *The Atlantic*, March 21, 2012
<http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2012/03/the-white-savior-industrial-complex/254843/>

Part IV: Political Authority

11. November 1-3: Types of Authority

****THIRD ESSAY DUE NOVEMBER 1****

Chabal pp. 1-64

Juan J. Linz & Alfred Stepan, Chapter 3, "Modern Nondemocratic Regimes" in *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), pp. 38-54.

12. November 8-10: Religion and Authority

*****No Class Tuesday, November 8 for Fall Break*****

Chabal pp. 65-126

Roxanne L. Euben, *The Enemy in the Mirror: Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism*, Chapter Three, pp. 49-92

13. November 15-17: Perspectives on Democracy

Chabal pp. 127-185

Wei Pan, "Toward a Consultative Rule Regime in China," *Journal of Contemporary China*, (2003), 12(34), pp. 3-43

Part V: Revisiting Western Political Thought

14. November 22: American Exceptionalism

*****No Class Thursday, November 24 for Thanksgiving Break*****

****FOURTH ESSAY DUE NOVEMBER 22****

Seymour Martin Lipset, *American Exceptionalism: A Double-Edged Sword* (W.W. Norton & Co. 1996), excerpt:

<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/longterm/books/chap1/americanexceptionalism.htm>

Uri Friedman, “‘American Exceptionalism’: A Short History,” *Foreign Policy*, July/August 2012
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/06/18/american_exceptionalism?page=0,1

Stephen M. Walt, “The Myth of American Exceptionalism,” *Foreign Policy*, November 2011
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/10/11/the_myth_of_american_exceptionalism?hidecomments=yes

Robert Putnam, “Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital,” *Journal of Democracy* 6:1, Jan 1995, pp. 65-78
<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/assoc/bowling.html>

15. November 29: Last Class and Wrap-up

****No class Thursday, December 1 for ASA Conference****

*****FINAL PAPER DUE IN CLASS*****

NOTE: Additional readings may be assigned and the course outline may be adjusted to serve the needs of the class.