

Course Outline

“Opinion, whether well or ill founded is the guiding principle in human affairs.” Letter, June 18, 1788, Alexander Hamilton.

Is this **true**? Is this the explanation for both the intelligent and the incomprehensible statements people make and the actions they take, especially with reference to politics? In this course we will examine the origins and development of some of the most widespread and significant political ideologies, both as an objective in and of itself and also so as to gain some insight into why people take the positions that they do on contemporary hot topics.

You will read original source materials by writers from the most prominent and provocative ideological traditions. Together we will study each tradition from its origins to the present and will conduct comparisons among ideologies regarding the theorists' understandings of human beings, their political goals and political institutions.

As we explore these traditions, hopefully we will also find a comprehensible foundation for positions on immigration, welfare, school prayer, healthcare, climate change and a plethora of topics.

Learning Objectives

With this course you will be able to identify, assess and evaluate statements, speeches and written materials from a variety of ideological persuasions. You will be able to offer critiques of these materials regarding their internal consistency and substance. You will be able to argue your agreement or disagreement with the writer's ideas.

Course Requirements

Exploration and comprehension require discussion, therefore, discussion and participation in class are *essential* as is evidence that you have read the required reading assignments *before* class. To that end there will be reading quizzes (due before class) and entries on discussion forum. There will be a few pop quizzes, two midterms. There are three short papers with debates. Lastly, there will be a final exam.

The best way to stay on top of the course requirements is to check the Assignments/Course Schedule document in Canvas. There you will find a full and

complete class by class set of readings, assignments and instructions. The imbedded calendar in Canvas and notifications function are also quite useful.

Optional Textbooks

Terrence Ball and Richard Dagger, Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal (United States: Addison Wesley Educational Publishers, 2005/6)

Terrence Ball and Richard Dagger, Ideals and Ideologies: A Reader (United States: Addison Wesley Educational Publishers, 2006).

Attendance

When you sign up for a course, you should be in class. When you understand the material we need your insights and observations and when you don't we need your questions.

Learning is both an individual and a collaborative experience. Also there will be some in class assignments which will count toward your final grade. Come to class. ***Three sick days allowed.***

Make Up Policy

If you cannot take an exam at the scheduled time because of health or personal problems, you may take a make-up exam subject to the following conditions:

1) You must notify me before the exam. If you are going to miss an exam, you will know ahead of time. Send an email, call, do not use carrier pigeons. If you do not let me know before the exam, you will receive a zero for that exam.

2) No one may take more than one make-up exam except under extraordinary circumstances.

Honor

The university's Academic Integrity Policy is available via the web at:

<http://ww.uncg.edu80/Leg/Policy/Honor%20Policy.html>