

**PSC105**  
**Exploring Political Issues**  
**Spring 2016**

**Catalog Description**

This course examines various political ideologies and competing theories about government, freedom, justice and equality throughout history and around the world. The material will challenge your political opinions and get you to re-examine your responsibilities using introspective examinations of current global political issues.

**Contact Information**

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**Course Objectives**

Upon successful completion of the course students will be able to:

- Define an ideology and realize that ideologies are dynamic, not static.
- Define and distinguish between ideological frameworks.
- Understand the difference and relationship between an ideology and a political party.
- Explain the three Spheres of Politics (that ideologies organize differently): Government, Economy and Society.
- Understand the historical conditions that gave rise to the ideals and ideologies discussed.
- Determine which ideologies have been successful, which have failed, and why.
- Apply ideologies to current political issues.
- Understand why and how so many different ideologies claim to promote democracy.
- Explain why freedom and democracy are essentially contested concepts.
- Create and defend an argument from two sides using evidence.
- Identify, assess and evaluate policies, speeches, and written material from a variety of ideological perspectives

**To be successful in this course:**

- Submit all of the assignments ON OR BEFORE the required date and time; post Discussion Forum responses in Canvas. **No assignments will be accepted over a week late and will be penalized 10% a day.** If an assignment is due January 1, it must be in by 11:59 PM. Anything after that is late.
- Your writing must reflect the course materials and answer the required questions. NOTHING replaces doing the reading, completing the newsstand elements, thinking through the questions at hand, and writing a thoughtful response. This is the challenge of the online format. If you do additional research, you must cite your sources. If your writing is a quick rewriting of established sources (for example, from online encyclopedias or Wikipedia) as opposed to a thoughtful consideration of the course

content, you will receive minimal credit for the assignment. Your grade will reflect the completion and the quality of the assignments you turn in.

- Please let me know if you have questions or need additional information. I will answer your questions as quickly as possible. The best way to reach me is through email as I check it often.
- In the following weeks, you will spend a great deal of time in a small group sharing what you have seen and read, and building a written response to questions posed in the course. Everyone has a valid point of view. You are expected to respect your peers and instructors by communicating often and in appropriate language.
- The writing you complete for this course must be written in APA or MLA format. Additionally, the sources you use for your written assignments should be reliable and trustworthy. To view a quick guide to APA and MLA formatting and a plagiarism guideline to reliable sources please visit: <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/qil/styles.asp>.

## **GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ACTIVITIES AND GRADING**

Activities for the course total 1000 points and consist of the following:

**Readings:** In order to complete the assessment components of the course, you need to complete the assigned readings built into the newsstand elements carefully and thoroughly.

**Discussion Forum Prompts:** There are ten discussion forum prompts in the course, one in each unit except the summary unit. Each post is worth 5 points and accounts for 5% of your grade. These will be posted in canvas with your group. In Canvas, click People to find your group.

**Quizzes:** There are ten short multiple-choice “puzzle” quizzes in the course, one in each unit except the summary unit. Each quiz is worth 15 points and accounts for 15% of your final grade. There will be a 15 minute time limit on these puzzles. If you go over the time limit, canvas will close the quiz. If you have technical problems, let me know ASAP.

**Hot Topic:** Each unit has one Hot Topic assignment that applies the unit’s concept to current political issues. These projects take substantial work. Please allow at least 45 minutes to complete these assignments. To be successful, you should read all of the material for the unit and take the puzzle quiz prior to beginning the Hot Topic. Each of the Hot Topic assignments contain a written component in which you must explain your thinking or expand on your ideas. In grading your project, I will use the provided rubric as I consider whether you met the requirements of the particular project description and whether or not your work demonstrates an understanding of the course content. The Hot Topics are worth 35 points each and accounts for 35 percent (350 points) of your final grade. These will be submitted through the Assignments tab in Canvas.

**Unit Tests:** There are three unit tests or exams in the course that apply the concepts from the preceding units. (For example: exam 1 reviews your understanding of units 1, 2, and 3). Each exam has a cumulative quiz that assesses the preceding units. Please allow at least 45 minutes to

complete these assignments. Each of the unit exams contain a written component in which you must explain your thinking or expand on your ideas. In grading your project, I will use the provided rubric as I consider whether you met the requirements of the particular project description and whether or not your work demonstrates an understanding of the course content. Each unit exam is worth 100 points (50 for the multiple choice test and 50 for the written component) and accounts for 30% of your final grade. You will have 25 minutes for the puzzle portion of the exam. . Again, if you go over the time limit, canvas will close down.

**Final:** The final is a two-part project. The first part is a multiple-choice and true/false exam. You will receive one hour for this part. The second part is an elaborate case study that will challenge your understanding of the concepts you have learned throughout the course. After completing the second part, you will be required to complete a written product that is 1-2 pages in length. You will need to demonstrate your understanding of the ideologies in the scenario. A simple explanation of what happened in the scenario will not be sufficient. Throughout the course, prepare for the essay by keeping notes about the ways people use ideologies to make decisions. The Final is worth 150 points (50 points for the exam and 100 points for the second part of the project) and accounts for 15% of your final grade.

Please complete the activity Plagiarism and Citations under the Modules section. Complete the quiz and it will be extra credit.

### **Grading Scale**

Grades	Points
A	900 – 1000
B	800 – 889
C	700 – 799
D	600 – 699
F	599 and below

**Academic Integrity Policy : The submission of your first assignment is an acknowledgement that you have read, understood and abided by the UNCG Academic Integrity Policy.** Remember that plagiarism is a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy and assume that any work you submit will be run through an online plagiarism checker. Refer to the UNCG academic integrity site: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

**Technical Help:** While I am familiar with the course content, I am not as good with some of the technical issues. (Why won't this video load in my browser?) Please call 336-256-TECH or email: [onlinehelp@uncg.edu](mailto:onlinehelp@uncg.edu).