

PSC105 - Summer Exploring Political Issues

Catalog Description

With this course we explore some of the more contentious political topics currently being debated, and at the same time examine political ideologies and competing theories about freedom, justice and equality throughout history and around the world. The position people take on a hot topic frequently reflects or is grounded in a political perspective. Challenge your political opinions and rethink your responsibilities using introspective examinations of current global political issues. Defy yourself. Define yourself.

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.
- Understand the difference and relationship between an ideology and a political party.
- Understand the historical conditions that gave rise to the ideals and ideologies discussed.
- Apply ideologies to current political issues/contemporary problems in politics.
- Understand why and how so many different ideologies claim to promote democracy.
- 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.

Not Required, but Helpful: Terrence Ball and Richard Dagger. Political Ideologies and the Democratic Ideal. United

States: Addison Wesley Educational Publishers, 2011/2012. (Selections will also be available in the course)

- 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 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 formatting and a plagiarism guideline to reliable sources please visit: <http://library.uncg.edu/depts/ref/qil/styles.asp>. The APA guide is the first item, the plagiarism guideline is number seven on the list.
- There is a separate document, an assignments calendar that lists the exact order in which we will work through the course content and what is due when. A key accompanies the directions.

Teaching Strategies

To enable student achievement of the learning goals, I will

1. Observe your daily work and (a) assess your achievement and (b) make recommendations for improvement in achieving.
2. Respond to your e-mails or phone calls in a timely manner.

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF COURSE ACTIVITIES AND GRADING

Discussion Forum Prompts: There are ten discussion forum prompts in the course, one in each unit except the summary unit. Each post is worth 10 points.

Quizzes: There are ten short multiple-choice “puzzle” quizzes in the course, one in each unit except the summary unit. Each quiz is worth 19 points. There will be a 15 minute time limit on these puzzles.

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.

We will complete two of these Hot Topic assignments this summer.

Exams: There are three exam assignments 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 exams contain a written

component, like an essay, in which you must explain your thinking or expand on your ideas. In grading your project, we will use the provided rubric as we 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 exam is worth 100 points (50 for the test and 50 for the exam written component). You will have 20 minutes for the puzzle portion of the exam.

We will fully complete two exams (I & III) for this summer session and partially complete exam II.

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. Throughout the course, prepare for the essay by keeping notes about the ways people use ideologies to make decisions. The Final is worth 180 points (80 points for the exam and 100 points for the second part of the project).

Academic Honor Code: Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course. Refer to the UNCG academic integrity site: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>.

Technical Help: While we are familiar with the course content, I am somewhat hopeless when it comes to many technical issues. Please call 336-256-TECH or email: onlinehelp@uncg.edu.