

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code / Title : HA3022 The Origins of Modern Political Theory

Pre-requisites : HA1002

No. of AUs. : 3

Contact Hours : 39

Course Aims

This course will examine several key texts of early modern political thought. We will investigate how these texts laid the foundation for the development of a variety of modern concepts and ideas that continue to inform our understanding of political life and reality today. Through reading the work of theorists such as Niccolò Machiavelli, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Thomas More, Jean Bodin, and Étienne de La Boétie, we will engage a variety of important contemporary issues, including the relation between the theological and the political, the political function of utopian thought, the nature of sovereignty, political realism, and voluntary servitude.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

1. Identify most of the key theoretical formulations leading to modern political thought.
2. Explain the connection between early theoretical formulations and principles of modern political theories using a genealogy of political vocabulary.
3. Interpret contemporary political practices in light of the concepts studied.
4. Analyse and interpret complex textual material related to political science.
5. Present your opinions on various political concepts in a coherent and logical way.

Course Content

Week 1: Introduction and Overview

Week 2: Martin Luther on secular authority

Week 3: John Calvin and the re-establishment of the theological-political relation

Week 4: Thomas More and the historical basis of utopian thinking

Week 5: Thomas More and the outlines of Utopia

Week 6: Jean Bodin on the nature of sovereignty

Week 7: Jean Bodin on the commonwealth and resistance

Week 8: Machiavelli's virtuous prince

Week 9: Machiavelli's defense of the popular republic

Week 10: Machiavelli and republican expansion
Week 11: Machiavelli and institutional renovation
Week 12: La Boétie on voluntary servitude
Week 13: Review and conclusion

Course Assessment

Class Participation	: 10%
Critical Reading responses	: 20%
Short Essay	: 30%
Final Essay	: 40%
Total	-----
	100%