

COURSE OUTLINE

Course Code / Title : HA4019 Methods in Political Theory

Pre-requisites : HA1002

No. of AUs. : 4

Contact Hours : 52

Course Aims

This course is designed to provide you with a general introduction to certain of the most significant traditions within the field of political theory. It focuses in particular on the relationship between normative political thought and the methodologies deployed in the production and study of this thought. Within the field of political theory, questions regarding method tend to be obscured or ignored by practitioners and students alike. This course will thus aim to correct this lack by highlighting some of the most important methodological approaches to the practice of political theory. It will examine both the theoretical assumptions guiding the various methods, as well as how the methods are concretely applied in the formulation and analysis of political thought. Examples of methodological traditions that will be studied include: analytic political philosophy, realism, esotericism, contextualism, dialectical analysis, immanent critique, hermeneutics, genealogy, and comparative political theory.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO)

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

1. Identify the key theoretical frameworks and methodologies characterizing the study of political theory.
2. Situate these frameworks and methodologies within the development of precise historical traditions of political thought.
3. Summarize the relation between methodology and the normative theory it articulates.
4. Use your analytic skills to review and critically interpret complex textual material.
5. Present the results of your analysis in a coherent and logical way, both orally and in writing.

Course Content

Week 1 – Introduction and Overview

Week 2 – What is Political Theory?

Week 3 – Political Theory against Political Philosophy?

Week 4 – Analytical Political Philosophy
Week 5 – Realism
Week 6 – Esotericism
Week 7 – Contextualism
Week 8 – Dialectical Analysis
Week 9 – Immanent Critique
Week 10 – Hermeneutics
Week 11 – Genealogy
Week 12 – Comparative Political Theory
Week 13 – Student Presentations

Course Assessment

Class Participation	: 10%
Critical Reading responses	: 10%
Short Essay	: 30%
Major Essay	: 50%
Total	-----
	100%